

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

Book 5

16, 17 and 18 April 2013

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The Governor

The Honourable ALEX CHERNOV, AC, QC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

The ministry

(from 13 March 2013)

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Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, and Minister for Water.	The Hon. P. L. Walsh, MP
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Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Community Services, and Minister for Disability Services and Reform	The Hon. M. L. N. Wooldridge, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Mr N. Wakeling, MP

Legislative Council committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Darveniza, Mr D. Davis, Mr P. Davis, Mr Hall, Ms Lovell, Ms Pennicuik and Mr Scheffer.

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

Legislative Council standing committees

Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee — Mr Barber, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Drum, Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, #Mr Leane, Mr Lenders, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford, Mr Ramsay and Mr Somyurek.

Economy and Infrastructure References Committee — Mr Barber, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Drum, Mr Finn, #Mr Leane, Mr Lenders, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford, Mr Ramsay and Mr Somyurek.

Environment and Planning Legislation Committee — Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Elsbury, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #Mrs Petrovich, #Mrs Peulich, Mr Scheffer, #Mr Tarlamis, Mr Tee and Ms Tierney.

Environment and Planning References Committee — Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Elsbury, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #Mrs Petrovich, #Mrs Peulich, Mr Scheffer, #Mr Tarlamis, Mr Tee and Ms Tierney.

Legal and Social Issues Legislation Committee — Ms Crozier, Mr Elasmr, #Mr Elsbury, Ms Hartland, Ms Mikakos, Mr O'Brien, Mr O'Donohue, Mrs Petrovich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

Legal and Social Issues References Committee — Ms Crozier, Mr Elasmr, #Mr Elsbury, Ms Hartland, Ms Mikakos, Mr O'Brien, Mr O'Donohue, Mrs Petrovich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

Participating member

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Council*): Mr P. Davis, Mr O'Brien. (*Assembly*): Ms Kanis, Ms Richardson and Mr Wakeling.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Council*): Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Lenders, Ms Lovell and Ms Pennicuik. (*Assembly*): Mr Clark, Ms Hennessy, Mr Merlino, Dr Napthine and Mr Walsh.

Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee — (*Council*): Mr Leane, Mr Ramsay and Mr Scheffer. (*Assembly*): Mr Battin and Mr McCurdy.

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Electoral Matters Committee — (*Council*): Mr Finn, Mrs Peulich, Mr Somyurek and Mr Tarlamis. (*Assembly*): Ms Ryall.

Environment and Natural Resources Committee — (*Council*): Mr Koch. (*Assembly*): Mr Bull, Ms Duncan, Mr Pandazopoulos and Ms Wreford.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Council*): Mrs Coote, Ms Crozier and Mr O'Brien. (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr McGuire and Mr Wakeling.

House Committee — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*) Mr Drum, Mr Eideh, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, and Mr P. Davis. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Ms Beattie, Ms Campbell, Mrs Fyffe, Ms Graley, Mr Wakeling and Mr Weller.

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

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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Deputy President: Mr M. VINEY

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Deputy Leader of the Government:

The Hon. W. A. LOVELL

Leader of the Opposition:

Mr J. LENDERS

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

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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
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¹ Resigned 26 March 2013

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Tuesday, 16 April 2013

The PRESIDENT (Hon. B. N. Atkinson) took the chair at 2.06 p.m. and read the prayer.

CONDOLENCES

Hon. John Don, MBE, and William Francis ‘Bill’ Stephen, AM

The PRESIDENT — Order! I have the sad duty to advise the house of the deaths of the Honourable John Don, MBE, and Mr William Francis ‘Bill’ Stephen, AM.

I advise the house of the death on 1 April of the Honourable John Don, MBE, member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Elsternwick from 1945 to 1955. Mr Don served in a fairly turbulent period in politics in Victoria. He reached the ripe old age of 95, and he certainly had a long and interesting life.

I further advise the house of the death on 5 April of Mr William Francis ‘Bill’ Stephen, AM, member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Ballarat South from 1964 to 1979.

I ask members to rise in their places for 1 minute as a mark of respect to the memories of the deceased.

Honourable members stood in their places.

Bruce Albert Edward Skeggs, OAM

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — By leave, I move:

That this house expresses its sincere sorrow at the death on 21 March 2013 of Mr Bruce Albert Edward Skeggs, OAM, and places on record its acknowledgement of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as a member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Ivanhoe from 1973 to 1982 and the Legislative Council for the electoral province of Templestowe from 1988 to 1996.

Bruce Skeggs was born on 11 October 1932 in Sydney. He died, as I said, on 21 March 2013. His parents were Albert Edward, a director, and Ethel Chown, a musician. He was married to Evelyn Alison Gronn and had two sons and two daughters.

Bruce Skeggs is well known to many of us in this chamber. He was a person who was larger than life, and large in every sense. He was a person who was prepared to say it as he saw it, and he had some very strong commitments throughout his life. His commitment to racing, to trotting in particular, is well

known. He was a trotting commentator from 1948 to 1982.

He was an official on the Trotting Control Board, and he attended many championships. He held a world record of 34 000 trotting calls in Australia and overseas. He was a strong member of the Royal Agricultural Society and a journalist with the *Argus*. I have to say he was a person I knew only moderately well, but I knew him very much in that period of the late 1980s and early 1990s when I was very active politically. He was not just a member of Parliament but a person who was contributing strongly.

Mr Skeggs was a strong supporter of the British Commonwealth Day Movement and a supporter of many and varied causes. He had a strong commitment to the Austin Hospital, to his area and to the Ivanhoe electorate in particular. He was a strong Liberal too, being a member of the state executive between 1960 and 1973; state secretary and treasurer of the Liberal Speakers Group from 1961 until 1971; president of the Fawkner Park branch, a branch well known to me, Mrs Coote and Ms Crozier; and a political commentator on radio 3XY between 1963 and 1974. He was very active in the Heidelberg branch and was a person who was well known around the Liberal Party, around the racing circuit and around the broader community. His commitment to his community cannot be doubted. He served well in both chambers of this place, representing the Templestowe province and the Ivanhoe electorate.

I can indicate to the chamber that Bruce sat over there, because the numbers went right around in those days. Mr Hall and others in this chamber will remember his approach in the chamber very well, but I knew him as somebody whose house I visited on a number of occasions and who very often held branch meetings in his home, and that was a very homely and encouraging step for many who were new in politics.

What I would say about Bruce Skeggs, though, is that he was someone who was prepared to stand up for what he believed in. He was a strong church person, a strong Freemason and a very strong contributor, as I said, particularly to the racing industry. I think the Liberal Party can be proud of the contribution he made, and I think his community can be very proud of the contribution he made. I want to put on record the strong support of the Liberal Party and the coalition for his family and our strong support for his contribution to the community.

Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan) — Opposition members in this chamber would like to associate themselves with Mr Davis’s condolence motion for the

late Bruce Albert Edward Skeggs, OAM, a previous member of this chamber and a previous member of the other chamber when he served as the member for Ivanhoe from 1973 until 1982. We start by offering our condolences to his family and the loved ones he has left behind.

In acknowledging Mr Skeggs's service in this chamber and in the other chamber we have to say that none of us had the pleasure of knowing him personally. However, it is an interesting exercise when a member of Parliament passes away, because while the headline may read that a previous member of Parliament has unfortunately passed away, when you look into the history of the individual it is very interesting to see how they actually arrived at this point. Individuals in this place are not necessarily just members of Parliament, and looking into Mr Skeggs's background before he became the member for Ivanhoe is very interesting indeed.

As Mr Davis said, he was a trotting commentator for a period of years before coming to the Parliament. He was also very heavily involved in trotting and actually worked with his uncle from a young age, and that is probably where his interest in this area came into play. What made me pull up stumps, however, was reading that Mr Skeggs, and I had to read it a couple of times, was a founding editor of *TV Week* from 1956 to 1960. We are talking about a former member of Parliament, so reading that Mr Skeggs was the founding editor of *TV Week*, an iconic magazine for all of us — some members of the chamber might say they are a lot younger than others, but I am sure that we all have memories of that magazine and recognise how iconic it was to the entire community — was an amazing thing. It is absolutely amazing that Mr Skeggs was the founding editor of such a great, enduring magazine.

I was also interested to read that Mr Skeggs did a bit of work as a cartoonist with a number of newspapers. It would have been interesting to be in here and listen to someone witty enough to draw a cartoon, caption it and make it cutting and topical. I am sure he would have been a great member of this chamber with a great amount of wit. To reiterate, members of the opposition would like to offer their condolences to his family and loved ones left behind. Bruce Skeggs made a great contribution in both public and private life.

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — On behalf of my colleagues I want to associate The Nationals with this condolence motion for the late Bruce Skeggs. I am the only remaining member who entered the Legislative Council at the same time as Bruce Skeggs, in 1988. While I was a new

chum to the Parliament, Bruce Skeggs was not, having served as the member for Ivanhoe in the Legislative Assembly from 1973 to 1982. It is interesting to note the journey many others take to get to where they are today. Mr Skeggs took a journey through the Legislative Assembly to the Legislative Council. He was joined at that same election by another Liberal colleague who took a similar route, George Cox. Mr Cox was a displaced member for the seat of Mitcham in the Legislative Assembly prior to becoming a member for Nunawading Province in the Legislative Council. Bruce and George shared a province in this chamber, both having first been members of the Legislative Assembly.

I note that the Leader of the Government described Bruce as larger than life. In physique he was larger than life, but by nature he was a gentle man. The warmth, friendliness and respect he showed others were fine attributes that left me with a lasting memory. Much has been said about his vocation as a race caller. I was well aware of that even before I came to Parliament. He had a remarkable record in that area as well. I can also recall him breaking into song at Christmas gatherings the Parliament once had — and I see the Clerk nodding his head. At one stage in those early days, when I first arrived, Parliament had a Christmas function where members were invited to perform items of entertainment. Bruce Skeggs did an item or two. Bruce was a very proficient singer. His voice carried loud and true in this chamber as well. If we had half the voice he had and were able to convey that voice the way he did, we would feel proud.

Bruce Skeggs was a giant of a man — a man of great integrity and warmth. He was respectful of all others. He made an impression in the Liberal Party and as a member of Parliament in both chambers. On behalf of The Nationals I join with others in this chamber in expressing our sincere condolences to Bruce's family.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — In contributing to the debate on this condolence motion the Greens send our condolences to Mr Skeggs's family and loved ones.

Mr Skeggs was one of the first politicians I ever met. As a very young and impressionable university student at the Bundoora campus of La Trobe University, I was actively involved with a number of environmental issues in his electorate. I was an avid 3XY listener, so I already knew the name Bruce Skeggs. As one of the first politicians I ever met, I might have formed the view that all politicians were like him. But it is clear that he made an impression on everybody he met.

I have read the first speeches Mr Skeggs made to Parliament, both his first in the lower house and his first in this chamber, and it is clear that if he could be resurrected and brought back here today, he would walk in and be able to contribute with great proficiency to our debates. At the time he talked about state-federal fiscal relations. He talked about the costs of funding the Metropolitan Fire Brigade as they related to local councils. He talked about funding, service agreements and structures at the Austin Hospital. He gave his views on how he thought the metropolitan planning strategy for Melbourne was shaping up. He also talked about major freeway proposals across the Banyule Flats and even the necessity for good telecommunication services in outer areas. They are all topics he would have picked up and run with, just as we are dealing with them today.

It is also clear from what Mr Skeggs talked about — and he talked with great passion — in his first two speeches to Parliament, which we know people put a lot of thought and consideration into, that at heart he was an environmentalist. In those speeches he talked about a number of environmental issues in and around Ivanhoe and throughout the north, up to the Plenty River. He mentioned things that I was involved in as a very young environmentalist. In fact he championed the work of the Warringal Conservation Society, which I think was the first environmental group that I ever joined.

With those few words I reiterate that the Greens send our condolences to Mr Skeggs's family and friends and his former colleagues, who have expressed their great fondness for him. It is clear that he made a great contribution both to this place and to the electorates he served.

Mr FINN (Western Metropolitan) — It has to be said first and foremost that whichever way you look at it Bruce Skeggs was a man of substance, and considerable substance at that. When we consider the life and times of Bruce Skeggs, I cannot help but draw some parallels with myself. He was a broadcaster. He called the trots; I think they call it harness racing now, but in his day they were called the trots or the red hots. There are myriad stories that one could tell about his days calling the trots, including the fact that he was, from what I understand, an excellent tipster. At a moment's notice he would be able to tip a winner for anybody who asked him, but he never took to the punt because he believed that it was a conflict of interest. That is probably not something that we see a lot of today. Having worked with other race callers, I know that that is not their view at all.

Bruce Skeggs was also a political commentator on radio 3XY for many years. I can only imagine that

booming voice expressing the views of the Liberal Party over the airwaves back during his time on 3XY.

He was an icon of those from the other side of the Yarra or from the north and north-west of Melbourne. He did not do it all that easily to begin with. Before he was elected to Parliament he contested the federal seat of Batman for the Liberal Party on three occasions. They could not have been fun times, but he always flew the Liberal flag wherever it needed to be flown.

Then he became mayor of the then city of Heidelberg, and he became quite a legend in that role. In 1973 he was elected as the member for Ivanhoe in the Assembly, and that is when he really came into his own in terms of politics. He became something of a legend around this place and around Victoria until in 1982, with the change of government — and again, I can relate to these things — he lost his seat. That was a great shock to him and to many who believed that Bruce Skeggs would hold Ivanhoe forever. But, as we know, in politics strange things can happen from time to time. But he came back six years later, that time into this place, the Legislative Council, and stayed until 1996.

He expressed his views — how would you describe it? — very forcefully on any subject that he took a feeling toward. That is something many of us who served with him in this Parliament, although I was in the other place at the time, will very fondly remember Bruce doing. He was a fighter for what he believed to be right. He did not back off, and that is what I particularly liked about him. He knew what he believed in, and he stood up for it at all times. He was a fervent foe of communism. He led an organisation called the Freedom Coalition, which I attended many meetings of throughout the 1980s. I will carry with me throughout my life memories of listening to Bruce hold forth on the importance and joys of freedom and liberty.

Bruce's son Philip gave a fulsome summary of his life at his funeral at St George's Anglican Church in Ivanhoe East a couple of weeks ago. Mr Guy was there that day, and it was very much a celebration of Bruce's life. We revisited some of the times that we remembered and some of the times that we did not. A former member of the other house, Mr Victor Pertone, also gave a eulogy at the funeral. It very much relived a time that we perhaps might not see again. That in itself is a very sad thing.

Bruce Skeggs welcomed me very warmly into this Parliament when I was first elected in 1992, and I will never forget the warmth and support that he showed me in the first term of the Kennett government. I would

like to take this opportunity to put on the record my thanks not only for those times but also for his contribution to his state, his community and his nation. Bruce Skeggs, in my view, was a good man; he was a great man. Indeed he was a man who fought the good fight.

The PRESIDENT — I thank Mr Finn and other contributors to the condolence motion. Mr Philip Davis and I had the opportunity to work with Mr Skeggs in this place for one term of the Parliament, as indeed did Mr Hall. Mrs Peulich and Mr Finn also served with Mr Skeggs, but from the other place when Mr Skeggs was here. We saw firsthand the man who was a formidable contributor both to the Parliament and to the community.

The interesting thing about the profile Mr David Davis read into the record today, which rightly encapsulates much of Mr Skeggs's contribution, is the fact that in nearly all those organisations he was an office-bearer — not just a joiner, not just a member, but an office-bearer. Indeed in some cases he was the founder of those organisations. For instance, I know the Liberal Speakers Group, which produced many Liberal candidates and members of Parliament at its most formidable stage, was founded by Mr Skeggs in conjunction with a number of other members of the party.

He was a very clever, erudite and broad-thinking man who brought a considerable amount of wisdom to the work he did. As a journalist he was revered. As a member of Parliament he obviously took the brickbats that we all do, as well as the pats on the back. But for Mr Skeggs there were certainly a lot more pats on the back than brickbats, because he demonstrated by leading from the front and, as I said, by actually getting in and doing things. He started things and advocated for important things on behalf of the community rather than simply going along and taking perhaps a more easy road by joining an association without being a significant contributor.

Victoria needs more contributors of the ilk of Mr Skeggs. We mourn the loss of an important Victorian, and we share with his friends and family their grief at this time.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — Thank you, President, for the chamber's indulgence in allowing me to speak for a few minutes. I knew Bruce Albert Edward Skeggs. I think it is fair to say he was a formal man, so I want to be formal in my comments on his passing. As you know, President, and as has been said before, he was a politician, a Freemason, a

Rotarian, a radio personality, a community leader, a church historian, a voice of Victorian harness racing and Victorian Prior of the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem. He was a mentor, friend, grandfather, father and husband. As Mr Finn said, when summing up Bruce Skeggs you would have to say the term 'larger than life' was definitely one that described him.

Many people know Bruce Skeggs the politician, but I want to take a few minutes to go to the background of someone who I believe was a great man and great Liberal for the northern part of Melbourne. As Mr Davis said, he was born in Sydney in 1932 and was the only child of a voice coach, Ethel Chown, who was 16 years older than her partner, Bert, Bruce's father. Bruce had a tough childhood. His father did not hang around and the young Bruce Skeggs moved with his mother to the Blue Mountains. At the age of 12 his mother fell ill. She went to Sydney for care and tragically passed away. Home alone, young Bruce was not told for three days that his mother had passed away. He then spent two years living with his uncle until being packed off to spend his youth at the Church of England Boys Home at Walkerville in Adelaide.

After these tough years, which included being ignored by his father, not being allowed to attend his mother's funeral, a difficult time at school and of course life in a 1940s boys home, Bruce's paternal grandfather rescued him and took him to the family home in Adelaide. Here young Bruce Skeggs had his life's awakening when he was introduced to harness racing. With the men of the house being mad punters, Bruce threw himself into harness racing. He grew up drawing up his own race books with imaginary breeding forms and stewards reports. He even gave riders their own silks and invented a game called Trottingopoly.

We all know where his obsession and love of trotting came from, but what about radio and broadcasting? At the age of 16 he went on 5DN's *Quiz Kids* program and developed a love for the microphone, and, as Mr Finn said, it was something he loved for decades to come. In 1948, when Bruce was attending the Boort races in Victoria, the course commentator failed to show up; 16-year-old Bruce studied the form guide, borrowed some binoculars, had a go at calling the races and became an instant hit. Six trotting clubs soon signed him up as their official course commentator. In 1955 he became the official course commentator of the Trotting Control Board, the Harness Racing Board's forerunner, and he later became the commentator for the Moonee Valley Racecourse as well.

Bruce then became a journalist with the *Argus* and, as Mr Leane said, the founding editor of *TV Week*

magazine. He was also a regular racing commentator, and in 1960 he founded the *Trotting Register* — yes, he was a member of the journalists' union.

In 1958 Bruce joined the Liberal Party. He founded the Liberal speaker's group and was the voice of the Liberal Party's weekly radio show. He was a regular master of ceremonies at party rallies and functions, and in 1973 became the member for Ivanhoe in the Assembly. As Mr Finn said, after an enforced electoral retirement in April 1982, Bruce was re-elected to the Victorian Parliament in October 1988, sitting in this chamber as a member for Templestowe Province until March 1996.

As the president of the Freedom Coalition for a decade, Bruce was a warrior against communism. He was also the chairman of the Asian Pacific League for Freedom and Democracy and was on the executive of the World League for Freedom and Democracy. It was while at one of these meetings that he witnessed the September 11 attacks on New York City.

Bruce was several times the mayor of the then City of Heidelberg, his adopted part of Australia; the Deputy Grand Master of the United Grand Freemasons Lodge in Victoria; a president of the Royal Society of St George in Australia; the Australian prior of the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem; a founder and long-time head of radio 3INR in Heidelberg, and was a very big part of St George's Anglican Church in Ivanhoe. He was honoured for much of his community work by being awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee medal and an OAM, and he was recognised by the Republic of China, Taiwan.

The Bruce Skeggs I and many of my fellow Liberals remember was an active, jovial and insightful man. As Bruce's son Phil said at his father's funeral, Bruce cannot be eulogised without referring to the fact that for the time most of us knew him Bruce was a big man, not just in spirit and personality but physically. Bruce's culinary attributes became legendary. At Bruce's funeral Victor Perton, a former colleague and a family friend, told an interesting story of how he went to Brisbane with Bruce in the 1980s for a parliamentary committee trip. For dinner Vic managed to be seated between Bruce and Russ Hinze, noting that when the fresh Queensland mud crabs were served he had to get in quick to get any.

Those of us who knew Bruce, particularly those of us in the Liberal Party, knew him as a big man with a bigger heart. He was the father of four children and had a long and loving marriage to Evelyn, who passed away a few years ago. Bruce was a mentor to younger people in the

Liberal Party, like me, and an invaluable source of advice, knowledge and strength. Bruce was an Australian who gave a lot more to his community than he ever took from it. His community work, church work and social work, underpinned by strong values of freedom, liberty and fairness, are not just to be admired; they are to be held in awe. The big man with the bigger heart will be greatly missed. Rest in peace, Bruce.

Motion agreed to in silence, honourable members showing unanimous agreement by standing in their places.

RESIGNATION OF MEMBER

Hon. M. P. Pakula

The PRESIDENT — Order! I have received a letter from the Governor, the Honourable Alex Chernov. It states:

I write to advise that on Tuesday 26 March 2013, I received a letter from Mr Martin Pakula, MLC, resigning his seat in the Legislative Council. A copy of that letter is enclosed for your reference.

Upon my receipt of that letter, Mr Pakula's seat in the Legislative Council became vacant. I note that, in accordance with section 27A of the Constitution Act 1975, a joint sitting of the Council and Assembly is now required to fill this vacancy.

The letter to the Governor from Mr Pakula reads as follows:

I hereby resign as a member of the Legislative Council for the Western Metropolitan Region effective of 26 March 2013.

His resignation was effective on that date.

ROYAL ASSENT

Message read advising royal assent on 26 March to:

Education and Training Reform Amendment (Teacher Registration and Other Matters) Act 2013

Justice Legislation Amendment (Cancellation of Parole and Other Matters) Act 2013

Major Sporting Events Amendment Act 2013.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Royal Women's Hospital: funding

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question is for the Minister for Health. The incoming Premier, Dr Napthine, said in the Assembly on 20 March that health services in Victoria received

record high funding this financial year. Given that it is a fact that at least one hospital, the Royal Women's Hospital, has had a reduction of its budget by over \$600 000, has the minister taken the opportunity to make sure that the Premier is not ill informed and does not make similar comments in the future?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I thank the member for his question. The Premier was quite right in saying there has been a very significant increase in funding for health services across the state, including the Royal Women's Hospital.

Mr Jennings — How can that be?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — Would you like me to explain?

Mr Jennings — Yes, I would.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — You would? That is good.

What the member should understand is that the Royal Women's Hospital's budget has been significantly increased. Part of the Royal Women's Hospital's budget relates to insurance that was paid directly by the state. That insurance cost has fallen, and the state's funding for direct services has increased. That is a key thing. The Royal Women's Hospital received a funding increase of more than \$7 million — over 5 per cent — in 2012–13 and a further \$4 million to meet growth in demand. In 2012–13 there was a reduction in medical indemnity insurance premiums at the Royal Women's Hospital. That is a positive —

Mr Jennings — By how much?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — I can get you the exact numbers on that. The figures I am giving Mr Jennings in terms of the funding increase are important to understand. It is no good taking an unsophisticated approach in the way that Mr Jennings has done. It is important to understand that the Royal Women's Hospital did receive a funding cut as part of the commonwealth government's \$107 million cut. That is finally starting to come back. Members in the chamber will be unhappy to hear that despite the commonwealth promising to return that money, it has not been returned to every hospital around the state. This is many, many weeks later. My department offered to work over that first weekend after the federal minister indicated that the \$107 million would be returned. But, no, it has not been returned to every health service. It has been returned to the Royal Women's Hospital, as I understand it, but it has not been returned to every health service around the state.

What I can say is that the Royal Women's Hospital has increased its activity. It has done very good work, and I strongly support the role of the Royal Women's Hospital. Its funding has increased. There has been an adjustment on insurance because insurance premiums at the Royal Women's Hospital fell. As I think Mr Lenders will understand from his time at the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority, there are clear arrangements around those insurance premiums with particular health services.

What I will also say is that the government remains concerned about the outstanding \$368 million that is due to flow over the next three years and was promised by the federal government. As yet there is no commitment that the commonwealth will return that \$368 million to our health services. Hospitals like the Royal Women's Hospital will face a significant reduction in money that was promised by the commonwealth government and adjusted on the basis of a dubious and flawed population formula.

I indicate that the Royal Women's Hospital has done very well. It is a very good hospital. It is a hospital that has extremely strong support from this government and, I believe, across the chamber.

Supplementary question

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I thank the minister. I was listening to the minister in his endeavour to be sophisticated, and his answer was unconvincing in relation to a net increase in funding for the Royal Women's Hospital. The minister made a number of factual errors. He said that in this current year the levels of activity at the Royal Women's Hospital are increasing. Can he tell us whether in fact elective surgery numbers have gone up or down in this current year, and can he confirm that the waiting list for elective surgery at the Royal Women's Hospital will increase by 35 per cent during the course of this current year?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — What I can indicate is that state activity would have supported the Royal Women's Hospital very strongly. I can indicate that the Royal Women's Hospital faced a —

Mr Jennings — Who put more in, you or them?

The PRESIDENT — Order! There is room for just one supplementary question, and the minister is answering it.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — The withdrawal of money by the commonwealth has had an impact on the Royal Women's Hospital, and the hospital would have done

even better if it had not been for that withdrawal of money. Like many hospitals around the state, the disruption and the confusion that was caused by the commonwealth withdrawing money midyear has had an impact. Almost 2500 people will be on the waiting list due to the commonwealth's intervention, and the commonwealth's failure to put the money back swiftly has only compounded that problem.

Bendigo Hospital: construction

Mr DRUM (Northern Victoria) — My question is for the Minister for Health, Mr David Davis. I ask the minister if he could update the house on recent developments on the government's commitment to build a new hospital in Bendigo.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I thank the member for his commitment to the Bendigo Hospital and for his question, and I note that Mrs Petrovich and Ms Lovell have had similarly strong commitments over a long period to ensure that the Bendigo Hospital is rebuilt on a scale that is due to that city, to the north of Victoria and to central Victoria. We know that this government upscaled the smaller and restricted project that Labor had in place, lifting the funding from \$528 million to \$630 million.

Mr Jennings interjected.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — Mr Jennings and his party, including Jacinta Allan and Maree Edwards, the members for Bendigo East and Bendigo West in the Assembly, were arguing for a smaller hospital. They have still not said sorry; they have still not apologised. It does not take much to say, 'I'm sorry I advocated for the smaller hospital'. It was quite wrong of them not to do so, and they continue to advocate for a smaller hospital in Bendigo. Events have overtaken them. A preferred tenderer, Exemplar, was appointed on 5 April, which includes Capella Capital, Lend Lease and Spotless Services. This was a very competitive bid, a bid that I believe the various selection panels responded to strongly. That bid won the tender overwhelmingly, and we are now in the final phase of negotiation with the preferred tenderer, Exemplar.

We know it is not just a hospital that is being delivered to the specifications that were in the tender. Much more is being delivered, including theatres, child-care centres and supermarkets. It is a massive construction project with a whole range of different features that will be added as part of this tender outcome. There will be \$630 million worth of health services. Everything that the coalition promised is in the tender and more. Education facilities are part of the tender too.

All of this is going to be delivered, and Jacinta Allan and Maree Edwards continue to advocate for a smaller hospital. I have never heard of a local member of Parliament advocating for fewer services in their electorate; this must take the cake. It is time they got over it and apologised. It is time they said, 'We're sorry for pushing for a smaller hospital and selling out the people of Bendigo' as they did under the Brumby government by going for a half-baked hospital.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I believe the minister is debating this issue. I accept that he wanted to put on record what he perceived to be the position of certain members of the Parliament, and he did that. Now he is covering that ground a second time and has strayed into the area of debating the answer.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — I suspect you may be right, President, and I will endeavour to comply with your advice. What I can say, though, is that the government is very happy with the result of this tender. This has been a tough tender process, going down from four groups in the expression of interest stage to two in the tender process and now to a preferred tenderer.

The best and final offer process is a very tough process on tender groups, but what it has driven is massive value for the people of Bendigo, massive value for the people of northern Victoria and massive value for the people of central Victoria. People will have a health service that will serve them for the next five decades, and that service will be greater because the coalition was prepared to upscale its commitment. It was prepared to run a tough tender process that drove better value for the people of Bendigo and northern and central Victoria. This stands in stark contrast to Labor, which wanted a smaller hospital — Labor, which was not prepared to get tough with tenderers and drive a very good bargain for the people of northern Victoria. The coalition can take great credit, and Mr Drum can take great credit, Mrs Petrovich can take great credit and Ms Lovell can take credit for their strong advocacy for the Bendigo Hospital.

Austin Health and Northern Health: merger

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question is for the Minister for Health. Can the minister guarantee that patients of Northern Hospital will not be worse off, that staff will not be stacked — —

Mr Finn — Stacked? I wonder what he's thinking about!

Mr JENNINGS — I mean sacked, and that services will not be reduced as part of the government's plans to merge two of Victoria's major health services, Austin Health and Northern Health?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I welcome the opportunity to talk about Northern Health and Austin Health. I can confirm that the government is determined to see more services delivered in the northern region of Melbourne, recognising the massive population growth that is occurring there and recognising the need to make sure that there are more services there — and I know Mr Ondarchie understands that and Mrs Petrovich has been a very strong advocate for Northern Hospital. We are determined to see a stronger emergency department and stronger emergency services there. In the 2011–12 budget we committed \$24.5 million, and construction commenced in September 2012. That is a very important step.

We are also determined to see stronger paediatric services in the northern region at Northern Hospital, and we are working towards that. We are working with both Austin Health and Northern Health to look at the best service planning that will see an expansion and strengthening of services in the northern region of the city. What is important also is to recognise the great strengths in the clinical services that are available in both hospitals. It is important to recognise the very strong medical staff associations. I have certainly had strong conversations with them — very positive conversations — about how we can strengthen services in the northern region of the city, and that is certainly what we are intending to do. What I can indicate is that the funding and support to Northern Health will grow under this government, and we will see more services delivered at Austin Health and more services delivered at Northern Health.

I might add that that stands in stark contrast to what occurred with the commonwealth government, which stripped \$6.7 million out of Austin Health and \$3.9 million out of Northern Health. It has only just in the last few days put that money back. There were weeks of delay and weeks of hiatuses as the health services tried to grapple with the commonwealth cuts to their hospitals. Over the next three years Austin Health could face a further \$22.8 million in cuts under the commonwealth government's \$368 million broken promise, and Northern Health could face a \$13.5 million cut because of the commonwealth government's broken promise to Northern Health. I can indicate very clearly that the state government will be increasing funding strongly to both services.

We are determined to see recognition of the specific challenges in the northern suburbs. This of course is not what the federal Treasurer thought; he thought the population of Victoria was falling, but anyone who takes a drive out around Epping and Northern Health's region will understand that the population is growing very fast and that there needs to be a strong response by government. That is why there is the commitment of emergency department money. That is why there is a recognition of refugee needs by this government in recent times, and additional funding will be put into Northern Health to recognise the significant growth in the refugee population in the northern part of the city. I can strongly indicate to Mr Jennings that jobs will not be reduced. They will grow at Northern Health and Austin Health as the population grows and the need for services grows and this government responds very strongly.

I can also indicate that today Janet Compton has been appointed the new CEO of Northern Health. Those from the eastern region will appreciate Janet Compton's great skills. She was the director of acute health at Eastern Health, where she has been since 2006. She has worked as a chief executive officer at Calvary Health Care Bethlehem and at the Nepean rehabilitation hospital and held senior management roles at Western Health and Alfred Health. She is a person eminently qualified to act as CEO at Northern Health. She will play a very significant role in the expansion and coordination of services at Northern Health and work with neighbouring health services to get the best outcome. There are some imperatives here: recognising the population growth, making sure that paediatric services are provided and making sure that sufficient emergency services are there. This government will do that.

Supplementary question

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — Notwithstanding the rare assistance Mr Finn gave the minister by interrupting me during my question, the minister did reasonably well in actually hearing the question. I interpret his answer to give guarantees that jobs will not be lost, and he gave guarantees that services will not be reduced. In fact he gave guarantees that they would both rise. Can he then confirm or deny that it is his intention to amalgamate the Austin Health and Northern Health networks?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — What I can indicate is that the government is talking closely to the boards and to clinicians at both networks about how we can better deliver services in the northern region. We are listening to what the boards are saying, and we

are listening to what the clinicians are saying. We are prepared to look at ways of delivering those services better and of expanding those services, and that is our intention and our focus. We recognise the needs particularly in the Northern Health area, where the population is growing so fast, and we need to make sure that we have the services right in that area. We have put additional money in, we will continue to put additional resources in and we will continue to work with the staff at Northern Health and Austin Health to deliver services across the northern region.

Higher education: federal funding

Mr O'BRIEN (Western Victoria) — My question is to the Minister for Higher Education and Skills, Peter Hall, and I ask: can the minister advise the house on how reported commonwealth cuts to higher education funding will affect Victorian universities and their students?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I thank Mr O'Brien for his question and his interest in this particular matter. Friday the 13th is commonly referred to as being an unlucky day, but this time around it was Saturday the 13th when great misfortune was experienced by Victoria's higher education sector. It was on Saturday, 13 April, when the federal government announced that it was prepared to rip \$2.3 billion out of the higher education sector. That will impact severely on Victorian universities and the more than 200 000 domestic students attending Victorian universities. What the federal government has done is being commonly referred to as 'robbing Peter to pay Paul'. It is taking \$2.8 billion out of the higher education sector to help fund its proposed Gonski reforms.

An honourable member interjected.

Hon. P. R. HALL — That is outrageous, as one of my colleagues interjects. First of all, let me outline where the \$2.3 billion is initially coming from. There is going to be a fancifully called efficiency dividend applied to universities which is going to see \$900 million taken out of higher education funding over the next two years, and Victoria's likely share of that cut means Victorian universities will be down by about \$200 million over that period of time. In Mr O'Brien's electorate, for example, Deakin University will suffer a financial loss of around \$25 million and Ballarat University of around \$7 million, which again will impact severely on the services the universities are able to provide for students.

We will also see a removal of the incentive to pay higher education loan program fees up-front. That does not make logical sense. I would have thought a government with any sort of business orientation would have looked for an up-front early payment of fees. It seems retrograde that that discount for up-front payment of fees is being abolished. But what really sticks in my craw is the fact that the start-up scholarship of \$2000 which is made available for students, and particularly regional students, who are studying at university is now being abolished. When you have a difference in higher education participation rates of as much as 20 per cent between metropolitan and non-metropolitan students then it is simply illogical, unfair and discriminatory to remove that start-up scholarship. These cuts total \$2.3 billion, and if you add on the reduction in tax deductibility for higher education costs, that yields the federal government another \$500 million — in total \$2.8 billion in cuts.

Victoria's nine stand-alone universities and 200 000-plus domestic graduate students are all going to feel the impact of this, all because the federal government made promises on its Gonski reforms that it is simply unable to deliver. Indeed the criticism of this grab from the higher education sector is almost universal across the country and is led, I might add, by David Gonski himself, the chancellor of the University of New South Wales, who has said quite clearly in recent days that he is an advocate for increased funding for higher education, not decreased funding. This is an absolute outrage, and the federal government stands condemned for its decision.

Sunshine Hospital: bed numbers

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question is for the Minister for Health, and perhaps this is another interjection that Mr Finn may be encouraged to make because my question is about the Sunshine Hospital. The Sunshine Hospital was subject to commitments by the previous Labor government to rebuild 128 beds. These have recently been opened but are currently not in use because there have been no resources allocated by the Liberal-Nationals government to make them operational. Will the minister give a commitment that he will operationalise those beds by committing resources to staff those hospital facilities?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — What I can indicate to the chamber is that the government is very supportive of Western Health's efforts at Sunshine Hospital, Western Hospital in Footscray and Williamstown Hospital. We recognise the importance of Sunshine Hospital, and Mr Finn will remember a

long campaign to make sure that there were sufficient resources put in for new intensive care unit capacity and additional maternity capacity. This was a commitment in the state budget to build these features and the state government is pressing forward with them. There will be additional space and additional capacity to ensure that the intensive care unit comes on stream at Western Health, at Sunshine in particular, and that the maternity needs are dealt with at Sunshine Hospital.

I understand there is significant demand on the western side of the city in the same way that we are talking about the northern side of the city. The state government has committed additional resources to the western side of the city, at Sunshine, Footscray and Williamstown, and additional maternity resources to the Werribee Mercy Hospital as well. We understand the need, and Mr Finn will also understand that one of the things the federal Treasurer believed was that the population of the western suburbs had fallen — an extraordinary moment. I looked at the table the federal Treasurer sent to our Treasury which showed the population of Victoria falling by 11 111 people. I looked at it, and I nearly fell off my chair. I knew about the west and the additional demands out there, I knew about the north and the additional demands and the south-east of the city. The only people who think the population of Victoria is falling are part of the federal government.

Mr Jennings interjected.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — Yes, Mr Jennings, it is true that the population of the western suburbs is growing very fast, it is true that maternity demand is increasing and it is true that it is a significant challenge to keep up with that demand. The budget of Western Health has been increased significantly this year. There was a cut by the commonwealth government, and I understand the money has been returned in very recent days, but there is a concern about next year, the year after and the year after that. Some \$368 million statewide has been cut from what was promised by the federal government, and we still have not had a commitment that that money will be returned from 1 July onwards, so Western Health will need as much support as possible.

The confusion and difficulty caused by the commonwealth funding cut cannot be understated. This has made it very difficult. It has also meant that there will be some lingering effects, particularly because of the delay in the commonwealth returning that money. It has taken several months in some cases for that money to come back. It should have come back straightaway and much more quickly.

What I can say to the chamber is that the government is determined to see services expanded in the western side of the city. We recognise the demand; we recognise the maternity demand. There are some special needs for patients in that area of the city, particularly women who have a very high body mass index. There is a need to try to ensure that the best services are available for them.

This is something that the government has responded to. We understand the challenge. I believe more needs to be done, and the government will be doing more as the new budget comes forward and as we get the opportunity to focus on what is necessary in the western side of the city and other areas of Victoria. It is clear that the population is growing; it is clear that it is growing very fast in the west. It is clear that the funding by the state government to Western Health and to Mercy Health has increased, and it is clear that the specific challenges at Sunshine are being addressed. It might not be as fast as many would wish, but it is very clear that additional support is being put into Sunshine Hospital.

Supplementary question

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I thank the minister for an extensive omnibus answer that did not address the fundamental fact. The fundamental fact that cannot be denied is that the outgoing Labor government committed \$90 million to redevelop 128 beds. These facilities have been provided to Western Health at the Sunshine Hospital, but they cannot be used for health services because there is no recurrent funding for doctors and nurses to make sure those beds are used. Will the minister guarantee to provide funding to make sure that that capacity at Western Health is used?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — As the chamber will well understand, capital infrastructure is put in place: the demand for services is there and services are progressively opened. Western Health has had its budget significantly increased and, as I said to Mr Finn a moment ago, Mercy Health has also had its funding increased. That is a significant part of responding to the demand in the western suburbs.

What is concerning is that an intensive care unit (ICU) at Sunshine Hospital had been built under the previous government in 1999. What did the Brumby and Bracks governments do with that ICU? They turned it into a film studio. They filmed *Stingers* in the ICU at Sunshine Hospital. That was an extraordinary thing to do. We have responded by putting in the capacity to build the ICU capacity.

South East Water: headquarters relocation

Mrs PEULICH (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question is to Mr Guy in his capacity as the Minister for Planning. Can the minister inform the house what action the government has taken to facilitate hundreds of new jobs for the central Frankston area?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I thank Mrs Peulich for a very good question in relation to building up central Frankston and the Frankston central activities area through a magnificent announcement about regionalising jobs in Melbourne’s urban areas and bringing good jobs to good areas of Melbourne. Importantly, it is worthwhile for me to inform the chamber of the approval of amendment C90 to the Frankston planning scheme, which has facilitated what is called an incorporated document. That will change the planning scheme and allow the council to approve a \$70 million development of the South East Water headquarters in the Frankston activities area.

As Mrs Peulich would know, this is a facility which, as I said, is worth \$70 million and 700 jobs for central Frankston. It comes at a time when we need to bring jobs and job growth to areas outside of our central business area, outside of Docklands, outside of Southbank and outside of St Kilda Road. We need to get jobs regionalising into our urban areas. This amendment is so important for that reason.

This will be an enormous shot in the arm to Frankston economically. Importantly, it still allows the council to be the responsible authority on the site. It should of course be noted that the council in every way supported the government and me intervening to allow this facility to be built. The council supported it, but some people opposed it. I note that Mr Pakula, who has gone from here, said that the facility would be no more than a Taj Mahal, which was a very silly comment when you consider that it is \$70 million of the \$700 million worth of development that is needed in the southern suburbs of Melbourne.

What we will get from this development and the 700 jobs in the activities area is a commitment to the government’s plan for a 20-minute city. What we will have is jobs, and good jobs, in an activities area that has for too long been neglected. What we will do by facilitating this amendment is ensure that we are attracting what is called a ‘reverse commute’. People can live in Carrum, they can live in Mordialloc, they can live in Cranbourne or they can live in Narre Warren, and rather than commuting into the city along the same old transit corridors going to the central

business district, they will commute to Frankston for a good white-collar job. That is why this amendment is so important. That is why bringing forward a planning strategy, which is what this government is doing, to advocate for a 20-minute city, to advocate for jobs in activities areas, is so important for the sustainability and viability of our metropolis.

I simply say that this is a fantastic announcement. I thank Mrs Peulich for her question and the support that has been shown from the council for this initiative. It is one that will, in my view, go a long way to help revitalise the central Frankston area and reinforce what this government is doing — and that is to bring good jobs to activities areas and to regionalise our city, not just residentially but importantly through new employment.

Ordered that answer be considered next day on motion of Ms PENNICUIK (Southern Metropolitan).

Children: early intervention services

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question is to the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development. During the last sitting week Ms Mikakos asked the minister a question relating to the decision by Western Health to stop accepting multidisciplinary assessments for children with disabilities. I asked the Minister for Health a subsequent question the following day. Given that it has been one month since the minister and the Minister for Health were asked the questions, has the minister taken some action to fix this problem? How long will it be before families in the western suburbs are again able to access multidisciplinary assessments through Sunshine Hospital’s Children’s Allied Health Service?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development) — I thank the shadow minister for his question. It is not a month since Ms Mikakos asked that question; it was in the last sitting week of Parliament. Also Ms Mikakos’s question was actually wrong, because she indicated that these assessments were to allow children access to early childhood intervention services. The assessments for early childhood intervention services are done by the intake officers for those services. The multidisciplinary assessments that are done through Western Health are for access to the commonwealth’s autism packages and to the program for students with a disability. This funding of over \$1 million is provided to Western Health by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The funding is provided for specialist health services, mainly for assessments, for

children who are having difficulties in more than one area of development before they start school.

There has been no reduction in funding for this program, and there was no discussion between Western Health and the department before the letter was sent out. Upon being made aware of that letter, I asked representatives from my department to meet with Western Health, and they have had two meetings with Western Health. After those two meetings it was agreed they would develop an approach to prioritise and ensure that children can receive the assessment prior to entering school. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is working closely with Western Health to ensure that all children currently waiting for an assessment, who will be commencing school in 2014, will receive the appropriate assessment or therapeutic supports prior to commencing school.

As I said, Western Health wrote to services without discussing it with the department. That was a great disappointment. I do not think Western Health itself was aware of the letter that went out from one of its campuses. It was not productive, but the meetings have been productive. We are working with Western Health to ensure that these children can get those assessments that will give them access to commonwealth funding for autism. Children receiving early childhood intervention services packages in the western metropolitan district are being assessed by the intake workers for early childhood intervention services.

Supplementary question

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I thank the minister for one of the most fulsome and responsive answers that I have heard her give in this place. I do not know that the errors that have accumulated in terms of the actions taken by Western Health would help the families of the west that much at this time. Could the minister provide us with any information about when the families in question will receive more appropriate and more supportive advice from Western Health and other agencies to guarantee their children access to those programs into the future?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development) — As I said in my substantive answer, children who will be starting school in 2014 are being prioritised and Western Health will advise the families of when they will receive their assessment.

Technology sector: government initiatives

Mr FINN (Western Metropolitan) — My question without notice is directed to Mr Rich-Phillips in his capacity as the Minister for Technology, and I ask: can the minister inform the house of how the government is driving the uptake of new technologies across the Victorian economy?

Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Minister for Technology) — I thank Mr Finn for his question and for his interest in Victoria's vibrant technology sector. Mr Finn's question goes to the issue of driving the uptake of technology in the Victorian economy. In 2011 the government launched Victoria's technology plan for the future, and it had two key streams. The first was the traditional role government plays in supporting investment in technology companies and in supporting export development by our technology companies. The second related to encouraging the uptake of technology in the broader economy by those sectors and those companies that do not necessarily use technology on a broad scale, encouraging them to take up the opportunity that Victoria's technology companies offer to improve their products and develop new processes.

As part of that plan, at the end of last year I was pleased to launch Victoria's technology voucher program. This is a program that has been designed to encourage project proponents to partner with technology companies, be they ICT companies, be they biotech companies, be they nanotech companies, to use the capability and intellectual property of our technology companies to improve the products and processes of the proponent organisation. Last week I was delighted to visit the small technology cluster in Scoresby, which is a great hub of innovation where a large number of technology companies all work on either nanotechnology or microtechnology in product development. They are all clustered in the one location at Scoresby, where they are developing some unique and innovative technologies and products.

During that visit I was delighted to announce the first round of funding under the technology voucher program, a commitment to seven separate projects with grants totalling \$1.6 million. Some of the technology companies that will benefit from partnering in these projects include companies like miniFAB, Micronisers Pty Ltd, Universal Biosensors and the Melbourne Centre for Nanofabrication, among others. As these projects unfold we will see projects as diverse as the development of mobile forensic DNA fingerprinting, a project to commence pilot-scale manufacturing of a renewable solvent that does not use a petrochemical base and even the development of a Cloud-enabled

livestock weighing program for primary producers to weigh their livestock and have that data directly uploaded to their tablet devices or personal computers.

A broad range of projects is being supported under this program, which really highlights the capability of Victoria's technology sector. This benefits the proponents of these projects in getting their ideas off the ground and to market, and it creates a great opportunity for Victoria's technology companies, be they ICT, be they biotech or be they small tech, to use their intellectual property, their innovation and their knowhow to drive and develop the Victorian economy.

Higher education: Auslan courses

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — My question today is to the Minister for Higher Education and Skills, the Honourable Peter Hall. In relation to the tender process for Auslan training and delivery in Victoria in 2013–16, for which I understand a successful party was due to be announced in March 2013, I ask: when does the minister intend to announce who has been awarded the tender and will it still be possible for Auslan students to be offered classes from the middle of 2013 by that successful party?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I thank Ms Hartland for her question and her ongoing interest in this matter. Due to a couple of technical issues relating to the awarding of that contract, I now expect the contract to be signed by the end of this month, April, for the delivery of that training. I am advised that on the signing of that contract we can expect delivery of Auslan training to commence in July.

Supplementary question

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — I thank Mr Hall for his answer. I am grateful to know that it will be announced. However, can the minister give us a precise date, because obviously there is great concern about this within the community and great concern about whether classes will be able to start on time midyear?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I will see if I can find an exact date. In my original answer I was able to convey the information that we expect now to be able to sign the contract before the end of April. If I go away and ask now and find there is more specific date, I will provide that date for Ms Hartland. The second semester commences in July, and I have been given an assurance that classes for the beginning of the second semester will be up and running.

Housing: Bendigo development

Mrs PETROVICH (Northern Victoria) — My question is to the Minister for Housing, my colleague in Northern Victoria Region. Can the minister update the house on recent examples of investment in social housing in Bendigo?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing) — I thank the member for her question and her ongoing interest in those less fortunate than ourselves who need the assistance of social housing providers. Last week I was delighted to attend, along with my colleague Damian Drum, the opening of the Chapel Street, Bendigo, social housing development that has been developed by Haven using money from the Nation Building program. We were also joined at the opening by Cr Mark Weragoda and Cr Helen Leach from the City of Greater Bendigo, John Murphy, the chair of Haven, and of course Ken Marchingo, the CEO of Haven.

This is a \$6.65 million development. It is a 23-unit development, with 16 one-bedroom and 7 two-bedroom apartments, 2 of which have been modified for disability access. It is right in the centre of Bendigo, in the heart of the city, and it has a 6-star energy rating, which will mean cheaper utility bills for the residents. It also includes an e-diverter, which electronically diverts recycling and rubbish waste at the touch of a button. It is an absolutely amazing rubbish chute that I wish we had in the apartment block I have an apartment in.

At the opening we met two tenants. Rebecca is a single mother who was in effect couch surfing with her young son prior to getting access to the building in Chapel Street. She is now studying social work at La Trobe University and working to support her son. Having this secure accommodation allows her to concentrate on study and on making a better life for herself and her child. We also met Bernard, a long-term resident of Bendigo who is living in one of the disability-modified apartments. Bernard said he had been in a low-income rental in Eaglehawk for a long time. He was quite friendly with the landlord, but unfortunately the landlord needed to dispose of the property, and Bernard was left without anywhere to live. As a disabled resident of Bendigo, he now has great access to the CBD by being right in the middle of the city. As I said, this project was funded by the Nation Building program, and it is a great development for Bendigo.

When we were talking to Rebecca we were standing out on her balcony, and from there we were able to see the site of the new Bendigo Hospital, which will service Bendigo into the future — a fantastic, bigger hospital that will be delivered by the coalition. The construction of this hospital will create 770 jobs, which will be a

great boost to the Bendigo community. The new hospital will be on one site in Barnard Street, something the former government could not deliver. The new hospital will include an integrated cancer centre, something the former government was not prepared to deliver for Bendigo. It will include 372 new beds, 10 operating theatres, a mental health unit and a mother-and-baby unit. In addition to all those things, which we promised at the election, it will also have a multideck car park and a helipad on top of that car park. The car park will be on the Lucan Street site and will be connected by a bridge to the hospital.

We will also provide a 100-place child-care and wellness centre; 128 serviced apartments; 15 short-stay apartments; a new kitchen; a linen supply and handling facility within the new hospital; a 180-seat conference facility, which can be used not only by the hospital — —

Ms Broad — On a point of order, President, as I recall, the question to the minister was about social housing. The minister acknowledged in her answer to the question that this was social housing funded by the federal Labor government. She is now talking about a hospital that has not yet been built. She is not saying anything about social housing or any funding from the Liberal-Nationals government in Victoria for social housing developed by Haven or any other organisation. Perhaps she would like to come back to answering a question about social housing, public housing or affordable housing for people in circumstances like the cases she has described and what the government she is administering is going to do about affordable social and public housing for those people, rather than talking about something she was not asked about.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I can understand the minister's enthusiasm for the hospital given that she is a local member for that area, but I concur with what was the substance of Ms Broad's point of order, which is that the minister was debating and had moved into an area and to an extent that deviated quite considerably from the question that was asked. I ask the minister, in her last 18 seconds, to come back to the matter that was raised by the question.

Hon. W. A. LOVELL — It is important for people in social housing that they have access to good services, because these are the people who use the services in this town. Access to a good hospital will benefit everyone in this facility.

The funding for this facility was provided not only through the Nation Building program but also through Haven in a partnership between the state and federal governments and Haven.

Places Victoria: *Herald Sun* advertisement

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — On 21 March I took on notice a question from Mr Pakula in relation to government MPs commenting in paid government advertising, allegations he made against Mr Ondarchie in relation to a development around Aurora. I am advised that the article to which he was referring was in fact a feature article, not a paid advertisement. The article was based on a media release distributed by the member and then picked up by the newspaper. I consider that matter now answered.

Royal Women's Hospital: funding

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I may have inadvertently given the wrong information to the house on the Royal Women's Hospital. I believed that approximately \$2 million of federal funding had been restored. The hospital is still waiting for that money.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I take this opportunity to acknowledge that today is Mr Elasmars' birthday. I wish Mr Elasmars a happy birthday.

PETITIONS

Following petitions presented to house:

Schools: funding

To the Legislative Council of Victoria:

The petition of certain citizens of the state of Victoria draws to the attention of the house the Baillieu state government's decision to cut \$555 million from Victorian schools. In particular, we note:

1. funding for the VET and VCAL programs have been cut, meaning thousands of students are now missing out on opportunities;
2. the education maintenance allowance, the School Start bonus and the conveyance allowance have either been slashed or scrapped;
3. the Premier's broken promise to teachers means students will miss out on camps, excursions and other opportunities.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council urges the Baillieu state government to guarantee no further cuts to education funding will be made in the upcoming 2013–14 Victorian budget.

**By Mr SCHEFFER (Eastern Victoria)
(74 signatures).**

Laid on table.

Swinburne University of Technology: Lilydale campus

To the Legislative Council of Victoria:

This petition of certain citizens of the state of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council the state government's plans to cut hundreds of millions of dollars from TAFE funding. In particular, we note:

1. since these cuts were announced, Swinburne has announced the closure of its TAFE and university campus at Lilydale;
2. 240 local jobs will be cut, and the future of 2500 students is uncertain as a result of this campus closure;
3. with 49 000 full-time jobs already lost in this term of government, skills training has never been more important for Victorians.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council urges the Baillieu state government to abandon the planned funding cuts, guarantee no further cuts will be made and work to secure the future of Swinburne University Lilydale campus.

**By Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan)
(8 signatures).**

Laid on table.

Schools: funding

To the Legislative Council of Victoria:

The petition of certain citizens of the state of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council the Baillieu state government's decision to cut \$555 million from Victorian schools. In particular, we note:

1. funding for the VET and VCAL programs have been cut, meaning thousands of students are now missing out on opportunities;
2. the education maintenance allowance, the School Start bonus and the conveyance allowance have either been slashed or scrapped;
3. the Premier's broken promise to teachers means students will miss out on camps, excursions and other opportunities.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council urges the Baillieu state government to guarantee no further cuts to education funding will be made in the upcoming 2013–14 Victorian budget.

**By Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan)
(17 signatures).**

Laid on table.

Nadrasca community farm: future

To the Legislative Council of Victoria:

The petition of concerned residents of Victoria draws to the attention of the house the decision by VicRoads that the reservation between Springvale Road, Vermont South, and Boronia Road, Vermont, will not be required for future road purposes and the consequent development of a structure plan for the future use of the land within the reservation, with the possibility of the land being sold by VicRoads for housing and other purposes.

This could result in Nadrasca community farm having to leave its current location at Morack Road, Vermont, and ceasing its operations in providing day services for adults with intellectual and physical disabilities, adversely affecting organisations like Yooralla, Scope, Melba Support Services, Heatherwood School and Alkira.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council of Victoria urge the government to:

facilitate an affordable arrangement that will guarantee Nadrasca community farm will remain in its current location so it can continue to provide great service to the community and grow.

**By Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan)
(150 signatures).**

Laid on table.

SCRUTINY OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Alert Digest No. 5

**Hon. R. A. DALLA-RIVA (Eastern Metropolitan)
presented *Alert Digest No. 5* of 2013, including
appendices.**

Laid on table.

Ordered to be printed.

PAPERS

Laid on table by Clerk:

Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 — Minister's Order of 15 March 2013 giving approval to the granting of a licence at Camperdown Public Park Reserve.

Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984 — Notice pursuant to section 32(3)(a)(iii) in relation to Statutory Rule No. 29.

Municipal Association of Victoria — Report, 2011–12.

Murray-Darling Basin Authority — Report, 2011–12.

National Environment Protection Council — Report, 2011–12.

Planning and Environment Act 1987 — Notices of Approval of the following amendments to planning schemes:

Ararat Planning Scheme — Amendment C28.

Banyule Planning Scheme — Amendment C89.

Baw Baw Planning Scheme — Amendment C96.

Bayside Planning Scheme — Amendment C90 Part 1.

Boroondara Planning Scheme — Amendment C172.

Buloke Planning Scheme — Amendment C26.

Casey Planning Scheme — Amendment C161.

East Gippsland Planning Scheme — Amendments C89 and C113.

Frankston Planning Scheme — Amendment C86.

Gannawarra Planning Scheme — Amendment C32.

Glen Eira Planning Scheme — Amendment C93.

Golden Plains Planning Scheme — Amendments C58 and C59.

Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme — Amendments C166 Part 2 and C174.

Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme — Amendment C158.

Hepburn Planning Scheme — Amendments C55 and C57.

Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme — Amendment C87.

Kingston Planning Scheme — Amendments C117, C130 and C135.

Knox Planning Scheme — Amendments C49, C101, C110 and C111.

Latrobe Planning Scheme — Amendment C65.

Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme — Amendment C67 Part 2.

Maribyrnong Planning Scheme — Amendment C89.

Melbourne Planning Scheme — Amendments C187 and C194.

Melton Planning Scheme — Amendment C127.

Mitchell Planning Scheme — Amendment C86.

Monash Planning Scheme — Amendment C108.

Moonee Valley Planning Scheme — Amendment C109.

Moreland Planning Scheme — Amendment C83.

Murrindindi Planning Scheme — Amendment C32.

Port Phillip Planning Scheme — Amendments C88 and C93.

Stonnington Planning Scheme — Amendments C128 and C141.

Towong Planning Scheme — Amendment C27.

Warrnambool Planning Scheme — Amendment C70.

Wellington Planning Scheme — Amendment C76.

Whitehorse Planning Scheme — Amendments C108, C140, C148, C150 and C151.

Wodonga Planning Scheme — Amendments C78, C82 Part 1 and C104.

Statutory Rules under the following Acts of Parliament:

County Court Act 1958 — No. 36.

Criminal Organisations Control Act 2012 — No. 34.

Magistrates' Court Act 1989 — No. 35.

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 — No. 37.

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 —

Documents under section 15 in respect of Statutory Rule Nos. 32 to 37.

Legislative Instruments and related documents under section 16B in respect of —

An Order of Exemption for certain Guide dog organisations from the requirements of a domestic animal business of 19 March 2013 made under section 5 of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

A Revocation of Codes of Practice of 9 April 2013 made under section 7(1) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986.

Orders made under section 3.1.11 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 for the —

Constitution of the Advance TAFE Order 2013.

Constitution of the Bendigo TAFE Order 2013.

Constitution of the Box Hill Institute and the Centre for Adult Education Order 2013.

Constitution of the Central Gippsland Institute of Technical and Further Education Order 2013.

Constitution of the Chisholm Institute Order 2013.

Constitution of the Gordon Institute of Technical and Further Education Order 2013.

Constitution of the Goulburn Ovens Institute of Technical and Further Education Order 2013.

Constitution of the Holmesglen Institute Order 2013.

Constitution of the Kangan Institute Order 2013.

Constitution of the Northern Institute of Technical and Further Education Order 2013.

Constitution of the South West Institute of Technical and Further Education Order 2013.

Constitution of the Sunraysia Institute of Technical and Further Education Order 2013.

Constitution of the William Angliss Institute of Technical and Further Education Order 2013.

Constitution of the Wodonga Institute of Technical and Further Education Order 2013.

Transport Integration Act 2010 — Public Transport Performance Report for the period 1 July to 31 December 2012, pursuant to section 79W of the Act.

Wildlife Act 1975 — Wildlife (Control of Game Hunting) Notices —

No. 1/2013, 14 March 2013.

No. 2/2013, 28 March 2013.

No. 3/2013, 28 March 2013.

PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS

The Clerk — I have received a letter dated 1 April from the Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Roads headed ‘Order for Documents — Network Revenue Protection Plan 2013’.

I have received a letter dated 15 April from the Minister for Planning re report of the Potentially Contaminated Land Advisory Committee. The document referred to in the letter is hereby tabled.

I have received a letter dated 15 April from the Minister for Planning re report of the Urban Growth Boundary Anomalies Committee. The document attached to the letter is hereby tabled.

Letters at page 1004–1006.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

Membership

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — By leave, I move:

That Mrs Peulich be discharged from the Environment and Planning Legislation Committee and the Environment and Planning References Committee and that Mr Dalla-Riva be appointed in her place.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — By leave, I move:

That Mrs Peulich be a participating member of the Environment and Planning Legislation and References committees.

Motion agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

General business

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — By leave, I move:

That precedence be given to the following general business on Wednesday, 17 April 2013:

- (1) order of the day 28, motion to take note of an answer given by the Minister for Planning to a question without notice relating to Baw Baw planning scheme amendment C96;
- (2) notice of motion 547 standing in the name of Mr Tee to introduce the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rooming House Standards) Bill 2013;
- (3) notice of motion given this day by Mr Tee relating to the funding of outstanding election commitments in the 2013–14 state budget;
- (4) notice of motion 528 standing in the name of Ms Hartland referring the Accident Compensation Legislation (Fair Protection for Firefighters) Bill 2011 to the Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee;
- (5) order of the day 27, resumption of debate on motion relating to the production of certain documents in relation to the east–west link project; and
- (6) order of the day 25, motion to take note of the Victorian Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

Motion agreed to.

MEMBERS STATEMENTS

Rail: Southland station

Mr TARLAMIS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I rise to speak on yet another undelivered and broken promise by this government when it comes to public transport in Victoria. The Liberal government’s recently released network plan for the Melbourne rail system includes the much-vaunted but currently non-existent Southland station. However, unfortunately the government neglected to mention anything of substance in the plan, such as costings or even a completion date for the station. We have yet another uncosted thought bubble from this government when it

comes to public transport, which is no different from the Rowville rail line.

This comes after the Liberal government broke its election promise to build the station for \$13 million in its first term, with confirmation from a government spokesperson that that deadline and price tag have now shifted. To date only \$700 000 has been allocated in any budget, which is a clear indication that this project remains on hold. The government's acknowledgment that its promised \$13 million price tag has shifted is unsurprising, since it knows full well that Southland station simply cannot be delivered for that amount of money. But what do you expect from a government that simply moves the goal posts every time something gets a bit tough?

This recently released plan will be of little use to public transport users on the Frankston line, who will no doubt be scratching their heads next time they pass Cheltenham or Highett stations as they search in vain for the phantom station listed in the report. Unfortunately for Victorians, particularly residents in the south-east, this is just one more failure on public transport policy to add to the growing list overseen by this government, which is big on announcements but not so big on delivering on promises. Let us see what it does in the upcoming state budget, and whether any real money gets committed to Southland station. Commuters on the Frankston line deserve at least that much.

Climate change: health strategy

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — In light of recent reports issued by the Climate Commission and beyondblue, I call on the government to create a climate change and health strategy for Victoria. In recent weeks beyondblue released a book entitled *A Road Less Travelled — A Guide to Children, Emotions and Disasters*, which provides deeper insight into the long-lasting mental health impacts of disasters on children. Shortly after that the Climate Commission released a report entitled *The Critical Decade — Extreme Weather*, which confirmed that climate change is already increasing the intensity and frequency of many extreme weather events, and that there is a high risk of disasters becoming even more intense over coming decades.

These two reports add to the weight of evidence on climate change and reinforce the calls of key health groups such as the Australian Medical Association for a plan of action to prepare our health system and the community for climate change. Such a strategy would help us to avoid unnecessary health and financial costs

associated with insufficient planning and unlock the health benefits of acting on climate change. The Victorian Climate Change Adaptation Plan failed to commit to develop a climate change and health strategy, despite recognising the increased demand on health-care services associated with disasters. This gap in planning for climate change needs to be addressed immediately.

Fortuna Villa, Bendigo: sale

Mr DRUM (Northern Victoria) — I would like to inform the house that Fortuna Villa in Bendigo, the former residence of Australia's wealthiest man in the gold rush era, George Lansell, was sold by the federal government at auction last Friday for around \$3 million. At the last election former Premier John Brumby placed on the table a deal that would have seen the state government put \$7 million into a fund, with the City of Greater Bendigo putting in \$3 million, providing that the federal government would gift the property to the state, along with \$10 million to put towards a maintenance fund. This deal was never treated seriously by the federal Labor government. Time and again it said it was committed to obtaining whatever it could get for Fortuna Villa, and that it had no interest at all in gifting the property and fixing up the contaminated site.

Over the last few months there was renewed interest in a proposal put forward to the City of Greater Bendigo that would have seen the creation of a commission, which would have seen a parcel of adjacent land gifted by the state so this land could be developed with all proceeds from the development going towards the maintenance and upkeep of Fortuna Villa. However, the federal government was adamant it was going to sell the property for whatever it could get; it was never going to gift the villa to anyone. It was always going to press ahead for the sale of the property, and that is what happened last Friday.

I would like to thank the Deputy Premier, Mr Ryan, and Premier Napthine, who when made aware of this proposal to develop the adjacent land at Chum Street, committed to making that land available to the City of Greater Bendigo so that the proposal the council voted in support of could be enacted with the gifting of this land. We now hope whoever has purchased the property will make it available to be used by the public on an ongoing basis.

Public transport: Geelong

Ms TIERNEY (Western Victoria) — At a time when governments need to be making public transport a more viable option for all Victorians, particularly

regional Victorians, the Napthine government has failed on all fronts. Whether it is infrastructure, train carriages, bus services or ticketing, this government has well and truly dropped the ball when it comes to public transport.

Members opposite may be aware that over 60 per cent of passengers using the Geelong bus service network purchase short-term tickets when they use the service, but the response from this government has been to scrap short-term tickets. Members opposite may also be aware that in 2010 the Liberal Party promised a \$25 million Grovedale train station by 2014, and yet two and a half years later nothing has been done. This failure should be seen against the backdrop of a \$1.5 million commitment made in 2009 by the then Labor government to upgrade the North Shore train station in Geelong. However, when the Baillieu government was elected it rescinded the money, stating that there were more pressing projects, like the Grovedale station, a project so pressing that nothing has been done for two and a half years.

At present every station along the Geelong line has an issue that the Napthine government is ignoring, whether it is car parking, disability access, lighting or lack of public amenities and facilities. People using bus services on the Bellarine Peninsula are now not able to purchase a short-term ticket and must travel to Geelong for their closest myki outlet. The Baillieu and Napthine governments promised to fix public transport in Geelong, but to date they have done absolutely nothing, and there is no sign of it happening.

Trams: Domain interchange

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — I would like to congratulate the Minister for Public Transport, Mr Mulder, on a fantastic achievement — that is, the Domain interchange upgrade. For two weeks, and over the Easter period, the Domain interchange was completely rebuilt. It was a \$10 million refit and upgrade. I congratulate not only the minister but also Yarra Trams, which did a phenomenal job. Passengers are also to be congratulated. They had a 700-metre walk between tram stops while the entire site was completely overhauled. It was a mammoth job: people worked 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for two weeks, and it opened right on time. It was extraordinary.

I congratulate everyone who was associated with this upgrade. Workers on the site showed great consideration and were really helpful; they were informative and pleasant when dealing with passengers; they were terrific. I congratulate everyone who worked on the site. It is a great innovation. The interchange is

now working particularly well. It is salutary to realise that over 150 000 people pass through that interchange on a daily basis. Commuters were well behaved and cooperated extremely well with the contractors. I congratulate everyone concerned during that upgrade.

Government: performance

Mr SCHEFFER (Eastern Victoria) — Dr Napthine has been Premier for five weeks and he has been working very hard to distance himself from his predecessor, Mr Baillieu. That is the easy part; the hard part is distancing himself from the leadership role he played in what is a continuing government, not a new government. Dr Napthine is working to spin an illusion in the public mind that there has been a change of government, and he is doing this by reshuffling his cabinet, by restructuring government departments and through funding announcements. Dr Napthine is trying very hard to distance himself from the disastrous policies implemented under Mr Baillieu's flawed leadership — policies that have seriously harmed Victorians, with the devastating impact of TAFE funding cuts being just one example.

Dr Napthine also seeks to distance himself from the scandals, especially the plot to overthrow the former Chief Commissioner of Police, Simon Overland, that led to the toppling of the former Premier, Ted Baillieu. The most astonishing thing is that the Deputy Premier, Peter Ryan, the man whose office was at the centre of the plot to overthrow Simon Overland, is now the Minister for State Development, a promotion to potentially one of the most powerful positions in the government.

The departmental restructure is ominous for regional Victorians who will face job losses and crippling service reductions. Public service budget cuts introduced by the coalition have affected health services, including mental health, schools and training, primary industries front-line staff, Country Fire Authority services and policing right across Victoria. People in Eastern Victoria Region have not forgotten that it was Denis Napthine — —

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ramsay) — Time!

Schools: Spirit of Anzac tour

Mr KOCH (Western Victoria) — I was delighted to represent the Victorian government in leading the 2012–13 Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize study tour of Turkey, France and Belgium. We visited significant sites at Gallipoli and on the Western Front. We were

privileged to have the Minister for Veterans' Affairs join us, along with Margaret Bardwell, niece of Warrant Officer Jack Dawson Green, a pilot who was lost in action.

The Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize is an annual competition open to students in years 9 and 10 who are currently enrolled in Victorian schools. Students are asked to write or make a presentation on the significance of the Anzac spirit in today's world. From the 320 entries, the 10 winning students were: Tegan Budge, Kate Mani, Bayley Charalambous, Whitney James, Luke Stacey, Laura Carmichael, Nathan Di Teodoro, Cameron Mansell, Jasmine Davis from Ocean Grove and Sara Jacks from Ballarat, the last two representing Western Victoria Region. I commend the students on their winning entries and for the way they presented themselves during the tour. Patricia Pollard from the Department of Planning and Community Development is to be congratulated for organising and managing the tour.

My thanks and appreciation also go to other members of the tour, including Lieutenant Colonel Michelle Ager, trustee of the Shrine of Remembrance; Chief Petty Officer Anne Pahl from the Victorian RSL; the two teacher chaperones, Belinda Irving and Ben Lee; and Professor Bruce Scates, chair of history and Australian studies at Monash University, who was responsible for the cultural and historical aspects of the tour.

Single parents: government support

Ms DARVENIZA (Northern Victoria) — I wish to speak in support of the thousands of people who attended rallies across the country this past weekend to protest against recent changes to the parenting payment, particularly the Picnic in the Park protesters who met in Wangaratta. In January some 84 000 single parents were moved from parenting payments to the lower Newstart allowance. Single parents who are forced onto the Newstart allowance once their youngest child turns eight years of age are on average \$100 a week worse off. These changes to the parenting payment are forcing families in my electorate of Northern Victoria Region to live below the poverty line. Opportunities for these single mothers to find jobs with the flexibility they need in hours, access to after-school care and public transport are limited. Most of these services do not exist in country Victoria.

FamilyCare, a welfare agency in northern Victoria, strongly supports the call made by the Australian Council of Social Service and other community groups to reinstate benefits to single parents. FamilyCare

believes the measures are causing significant additional hardship in households already under considerable financial strain and are impacting on the wellbeing of children in those households. Under the Napthine-Ryan government unemployment is on the increase, particularly in regional Victoria. The government has no jobs policy. Children and single parents need to be protected, not punished, while waiting for the jobs that they need to be created.

Essendon Keilor College: centenary

Mr EIDEH (Western Metropolitan) — A few weeks ago, along with my parliamentary colleague Ben Carroll, the member for Niddrie in the Assembly, I had the pleasure of attending the centenary of Essendon Keilor College. It was a wonderful celebration of the long history of this education institution in the west, and it was great to see how many students have graduated in the college's 100 years.

I offer my congratulations to the college principal, David Adamson; the East Keilor campus principal, Ms Mary Donaldson; the Niddrie campus principal, Ms Robin Adamson; and the Essendon campus principal, Ms Jenny Barron, for hosting this very special event. I must also extend these congratulations to all of the staff who work hard on a daily basis to make this school an inviting environment that fosters and nurtures learning. I also congratulate those former students who offered reflections on their time at Essendon Keilor College, particularly Professor Graeme Davidson and Dr Kate Martin.

I was particularly impressed with the array of footballers — especially those who went on to play for the greatest club, the Essendon Football Club — who have studied at that college. Over 20 players who attended Essendon Keilor College went on to play for Essendon at either Australian Football League or Victorian Football League level. I was delighted to learn that Essendon Keilor College was the first established elite football school in Victoria. Since the program's establishment nine years ago, Essendon Keilor College has produced 13 AFL-drafted players. However, this school nurtures not only sport but also music, dance and drama. It was delightful to see all of those tied together with an emphasis on education. I congratulate all those who contributed to this wonderful day.

ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TREATMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2012

Second reading

**Debate resumed from 7 March; motion of
Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Assistant Treasurer).**

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I thank the house for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Labor Party on the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2013. I indicate to the chamber that it is the intention of the Labor Party to support this piece of legislation; however, that support will be subject to some questioning of the Minister for Health in the committee stage of the bill, as the opposition has been made aware that it is the intention of one of the parties to move an amendment to the bill and that will provide an opportunity for us to tease out some of the implementation and the practical effects of the legislation. However, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of the committee stage, it is the intention of Labor to support the bill.

This piece of legislation has been designed simply to make a number of administrative changes that hopefully may add to the sense of fairness and natural justice when it comes to donors and recipients of assisted reproductive material in terms of the gametes and embryos currently being stored by assisted reproductive facilities in Victoria. Since 2008 the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 2008 has regulated the quality of service and support that prospective parents have obtained through those services and the environment in which gametes and embryos are stored for subsequent use.

This bill has been designed to try to ensure that a more contemporary set of regulatory environments and administrative practices supports the storage and availability of those materials into the future. It will provide greater certainty within the field for providers who currently may be in breach of the existing law because they have kept material longer than they were legally eligible to under the existing legislation as the regime under which the material has been kept may make them vulnerable to prosecution. Indeed the existing law provides for criminal sanctions to apply to those providers. In some ways it is distressing to report to the Parliament and to the Victorian people that those providers have fallen foul of those legal requirements, notwithstanding the fact that the opposition does support the government's intention to, through the bill, change the provisions applying to the storage of those items to allow them to be kept for an increased length of time.

This means the state will not be likely — and in fact it is not the intention of the state, as the opposition has been informed — to prosecute those people who have fallen in breach of the existing legal framework. Rather, the state will provide those people with an extension of time to deal with the appropriate authority in order to either use those gametes and embryos to assist in the delivery of a child or, if the material is not to be used or subject to an extension of time in storage, destroy the material in accordance with the original intention of the act and the spirit of the proposed legislation. That is what the opposition will support, and that is what this bill intends to provide for.

A number of technical provisions of the bill will enable the extension of the storage period for material that has already passed its expiry date. The bill also provides that in exceptional circumstances — and in some circumstances specified by the legislation — material that has been donated and stored for under the current limit of 10 years will be allowed to be kept in storage for 20 years to enable that material to be subsequently used. The bill itself does not specify the exceptional circumstances that will guide the decisions of the panel that has been established and maintained under the existing act. However, some guidance as to those exceptional circumstances has been provided in the form of the explanatory memorandum, the statement of compatibility with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and the second-reading speech for the bill. We are given some examples of the types of exceptional circumstances in which it might be appropriate for the panel to enable material to be kept for a longer period of time.

If that material reaches its new storage limit, it has been deemed that the material will not be used, and if the panel has not made a decision to keep it in storage for a longer period of time, the panel will give very clear instructions to the facility that is holding the material to destroy it within a three-month period. However, once this legislation has passed and been proclaimed there will be an 18-month window before those facilities will be forced to take action in accordance with the law. From the end of that period of time there will be a further three months to make sure that the destruction of those items in storage has been completed.

The 18-month window is a significant issue in relation to the gestation period of this piece of legislation. Originally the government was moved to consider these matters because a number of people in Victoria had had their access to material in storage either limited or denied. Those people wanted an extension of the storage period that was not available to them under the

2008 act and sought some recourse from the government in relation to this issue.

The government commissioned Dr Andrew Perrignon to review the facts in relation to the number of items in storage and how prevalent the problem was. Dr Perrignon provided a report to the government in December 2011. I will run through some of the material that Dr Perrignon put on the record at that time. I emphasise the fact that by the time this piece of legislation is proclaimed, December 2011 will have been approximately 18 months earlier. The interesting thing is that Dr Perrignon recommended that an 18-month window be provided for these matters to be sorted out. In terms of the speed by which the government has responded to this issue, the Parliament has not dealt with it for almost 18 months and it will certainly be 18 months before the provisions are enacted. Those 18 months have been lost.

The window of 18 months is important in a theoretical legal sense, if not in fact in a practical legal sense. If during the course of the last 18 months any action had been taken, particularly if these materials had been destroyed, then the legal recourse would have been thrown up in the air. The government had the ability, if it chose, to enforce the existing provisions of the law within the last 18 months, which would have meant it falling foul of the policy prescriptions that underpin this piece of legislation. There is in fact a legal gap. The law, once it is passed by Parliament, will not retrospectively cover that 18-month period. It will establish an 18-month window into the future.

In my view that is the reason this piece of legislation should have been brought before the Parliament earlier. This legislation was second read in the Legislative Assembly in December 2012. It has certainly not been a priority of the government in its legislative program, because it has been brought on for debate in the Legislative Council in April, some five months later. I put that on the public record not because I am opposed to what this legislation intends to do but to indicate that the government has been very reluctant to bring it forward, to enact it and to fill in the gaps that have been identified. I encourage the government in similar circumstances in the future to bring in legislation at the earliest opportunity to deal with problems.

Following the 19 complaints that had been raised with the government, Dr Perrignon did some research and discovered that at least 285 circumstances had occurred where material had been subject to an application for an extension of time and that all those applications had been rejected because they were outside the storage period. Of those 285 circumstances where the material

was stored in clinics, in 78 per cent of the cases the clinics remained in contact with the gamete provider, in 49.5 per cent of the cases the gametes were initially stored due to the risk of premature infertility, in 2 per cent of cases they were stored for people with spinal injuries, in 30 per cent they were stored for use in planned assisted reproductive technologies, in 13 per cent they were donor stores, and in 4 per cent they were stored for men due to undergo vasectomies. That is a bit of a snapshot of the reasons for and the demography of some of the people who had chosen to use this opportunity in terms of the assisted reproductive facilities within the state of Victoria.

However, unfortunately some facilities, because of their administrative practices, had fallen foul of the legislative requirements. There was no great consistency in the administrative recordkeeping, in the approvals processes or in the templates of advice that had been gathered by these services. When these services subsequently wanted to contact their clients to alert them to the fact that their storage time was drawing to a conclusion and that a decision had to be made about the use of gametes and embryos, there was not a high degree of confidence in the field that individuals were contactable or able to make informed decisions, and this led to a slippage in the overall storage of this material across Victoria by a number of these agencies, which meant that inevitably errors occurred in terms of strict compliance with the law.

Dr Perrignon was concerned about that. He provided advice to the minister to make sure that the law was amended to enable these circumstances to be roped in to the amended regulatory structure of the law; hence the recommendation to provide an 18-month window of opportunity to amend the administrative practices, procedures and guidelines that cover the field to ensure procedural fairness and consistency. It would also result in greater certainty in the decisions being made by the facilities and their clients in terms of the appropriate authority to keep material in storage or to provide extensions of time so that the material could be used by donors or allow them to agree to the transfer of the use of this material to others for assisted reproductive technology. Dr Perrignon's suggestion was that once that opportunity had been afforded then guidance would be given to the panel that is empowered under the existing act to make decisions about who could get access to this material over a longer period.

As a result we have been given one very narrow legislative direction about circumstances under which donors who have provided material in anticipation of reduced fertility or who are undergoing treatment may make decisions about the way they undertake family

planning. Cancer has been identified as a reason a young male may store biological material in anticipation of his fertility being reduced due to his cancer treatment, which may subsequently allow for decisions to be made over a 20-year window of opportunity for him and his loved ones.

The guidelines that have been created are specific and clear about other circumstances. Examples are outlined in the second-reading speech as being exceptional, but in themselves they are not terribly exceptional matters. They really relate to the loss of contact between a facility and its clients and the uncertainty or unwillingness of a client to make a decision, or in fact a situation where contact cannot be made. The act says that when considering exceptional circumstances the panel will have some recourse to the existing act to provide some guidance, but if you look at the 2008 act in terms of the principles that guide action, you see that they do not provide much guidance to the panel. I would argue that the panel will have to be quite astute and rigorous in making sure that exceptional circumstances do not become normal circumstances and part of the normal decision-making framework, because it has been the intention of the Parliament previously, and I believe it is the intention of the Parliament today, to talk about permitting the extension of the storage of this material in truly exceptional circumstances rather than it being the default or normal situation.

Certainly those I have consulted to assist me to determine my policy framework in response to this legislation have made it pretty clear that they want it to continue to be exceptional. They expect me to ask the minister how he will guarantee that they continue to be exceptional circumstances rather than the normal or default position.

One of the reasons that is important is because stakeholders from various vantage points at one level welcome the fact that there is a recognition within the legislation — or certainly within the second-reading speech — that the panel is charged with the responsibility for making decisions about whether the storage should be extended beyond 10 years and that the panel requires some assistance to deal with what will be in practice an increase in the number of cases that come before it and the decisions it will be forced to make. To assist in the administrative decision-making process, the intention of the government has been to free up the quorum requirements for the panel to enable a subset of the panel to be legally constituted. It is described as a 'division' of the panel and is smaller than the full panel. That has been welcomed because there seems to be a fairly reasonable recognition by the

government of the increased workload, particularly over the next 18 months once the bill has been proclaimed, to deal with what the government purports to be a backlog of decisions that the panel is required to make. That would be supported by most people.

What is of concern to many people, and it is a matter that will be further considered later today, is whether it is appropriate for a division of the panel to delegate the responsibility to make that decision to one person. Certainly in the opposition's view it is an arguable call, and I understand that Ms Hartland will be making a submission to this debate that in her view, and in the view of the citizens she has consulted, one panel member may be insufficient to provide confidence and certainty regarding the rigour which should apply to the decision making.

We in the Labor Party are well disposed to listen Ms Hartland's argument and to the response by the minister. We will determine whether the Labor Party will support an amendment if one comes forward because we certainly support the intention of providing greater rigour, certainty and confidence in the decision-making framework, and if that may be assisted by two or more members of the panel making that decision rather than it being delegated to one person, then that may be something we would support. Having said that, we would seek as a minimum requirement undertakings from the minister about the quality, consistency and transparency of the decision making.

The last matter I would like to refer are the provisions in the bill to roll over the opportunities that currently exist, but which are emphasised in the bill, for gametes and embryos to be used in circumstances where one of the original donors has died but gave consent prior to their death for the material to be used. The panel is able to make the decision to allow the material to be used in accordance with those wishes if it believes that the decision satisfies the other requirements of the act and is in accord with the spirit of the act. It is important for people in the community to understand that that provision is currently available. It will continue to be available, but it is emphasised that obtaining consent prior to death is a very important prerequisite in relation to this decision-making framework. In terms of an appeal, it is clearly anticipated that if the panel makes an adverse decision from an applicant's perspective, that decision may be challenged at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal within a statutory time frame. Those matters have been clarified, tidied up and affirmed in the current legislation.

As I indicated to the chamber when I commenced my contribution, it is my considered view that on balance

the government's response to the Perrignon review and the circumstances of people who have sought assistance from the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act will mean that the services regulated by it will be in better order and better regulated. In fact if appropriate guidelines are developed to provide greater consistency and transparency in the decision making of the services regulated by this act, that will be a positive move. For those reasons we will support the bill, even though we think there are a number of conceptual problems, particularly in relation to the potential for blanket exceptional circumstances to determine a shift in the access, availability and length of storage of this material when it should not be the default position but should be determined by truly exceptional circumstances. In our view it would be better if those exceptional circumstances were defined within the legislation itself, but we understand they have not been.

We also draw to the attention of the chamber and the people of Victoria that it is nearly 18 months since Dr Perrignon provided his review to the minister. This bill, which has been developed in response to that review, seeks a further 18 months to make sure that administrative arrangements are put in order. Given the best structure and the best time frame, it will effectively be three years since the original review before these recommendations are enacted. We want the government to get this piece of legislation through — to proclaim it and enact it — and to support the field by developing guidelines, to support the panel in making its administrative decisions and to provide greater confidence and certainty to the people who use those services now and in the future. For those reasons, we will support the legislation.

Ms CROZIER (Southern Metropolitan) — I am pleased to be able to rise and speak on the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2012. In doing so I highlight that for many people this bill is a very important step that will provide them with certainty in relation to the extension of gametes storage, as was highlighted by the Perrignon review into embryo storage. For many people who have been affected by a serious illness, such as cancer, and who are confronting those issues, planning for a family is perhaps not foremost in their minds and therefore they may consider a 10-year period to be a long time frame. However, that time can come around very quickly. I think this bill will address many of those issues in relation to those time frames as well as providing certainty to those clinics and, as I said, those people that it will affect.

This bill seeks to amend the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 2008 to make changes to the laws

surrounding storage of gametes and embryos and will make a significant difference, as I said, to many people. The bill will do this by implementing the recommendations arising from the report commissioned by the Minister for Health that was conducted by Dr Andrew Perrignon. As I said, that report primarily focused on the storage of gametes, both sperm and ova, but found that similar issues applied to the storage of embryos and that many of the issues surrounding those aspects can be applied here.

I was pleased that the Royal Women's Hospital in its statement following the announcement by the minister supported the review by Dr Perrignon. In that statement the hospital says:

The Royal Women's Hospital looks forward to working with Dr Perrignon to resolve the unintended consequences from the act for the benefit of Victorian families.

I think that is what this legislation does. When the act was first formulated the consequences we have subsequently found were unintended. The problem with the act is that it provides that human embryos and gametes must not be stored for longer than 10 years without the permission of the Patient Review Panel. Section 31 of the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Act 2008 prohibits the storage of gametes for more than 10 years unless the permission of the Patient Review Panel has been sought. Unfortunately the Patient Review Panel has strictly interpreted section 31 of the act and determined that the limit of 10 years is absolute and that any application for an extension of storage time must be made by the patient before the 10 years is up. Contacting those patients to enable that to occur has sometimes proved to be very difficult. Section 33 of the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 2008 also contains a limit on the storage of embryos, but it is a five-year limit. As I said earlier, this has had undesirable consequences when the facility or institution storing the patient's matter cannot be contacted.

There are many clinics still holding embryos and gametes because they have not wanted to risk the consequences of disposing of the material and destroying any chance of those young people to have a family. At present there are a number of both males and females who will be impacted by the laws as they currently stand. It also means that a significant stockpile of gametes is being stored. This bill will put a stop to that scenario and remedy the unforeseen consequences of the previous act.

As I mentioned earlier, once this issue was raised with the minister he undertook to commission an independent review which was conducted by

Dr Andrew Perrignon, an accomplished general practitioner and formerly CEO of Northern Health. Dr Perrignon was asked to look at practical means to ensure that there is fair treatment for men and women and their families where sperm or other reproductive tissues have been stored and the storage deadline is approaching or has passed; procedures and mechanisms to reasonably advise those whose sperm is stored within the terms of the current Victorian law; procedures and arrangements that should be adopted by health services and hospitals to comply with the law while providing reasonable protection for those who have sought their services in good faith; whether the current legal arrangements and administrative mechanisms in existence in Victoria should be altered to provide a fairer approach consistent with the objectives of the current legislation and with current evidence; and whether any changes should be made to current legislation or administrative arrangements, and, if so, what the recommended changes should be.

Dr Perrignon undertook that review and there was significant consultation with a number of major clinics that provide gamete storage services, including Melbourne IVF, Monash IVF, the Royal Women's Hospital andrology unit, City Fertility Clinic and Ballarat IVF. In doing so I believe input was also sought from a number of patients and families who were going to be affected by the review. The review found that there needed to be improvements to policies and procedures as well as application processes surrounding these issues to ensure that those who deposit gametes, as well as their partners and families, are dealt with much better when storage deadlines arise. It also found there needed to be better communication.

The bill also enables improved governance arrangements for the Patient Review Panel to ensure it can perform its statutory functions and operate more efficiently. In doing so a number of changes have been proposed for the panel. I note the concern of Mr Jennings around one person on the member panel making some of those decisions. But time is critical when you are dealing with gametes about which storage decisions need to be made. In relation to those storage-sensitive issues, clause 11 of the bill makes it clear that the effect of these amendments will be to allow the Patient Review Panel to operate more flexibly and efficiently — for example, the amendments will allow the Patient Review Panel to be constituted by a single member in order to determine time-sensitive application for an extension of the storage period as expeditiously as possible.

Time is critical and it was thought that this was a much more efficient way of doing things and that it would

give more certainty to people who would be affected by those changes. I am sure the minister will answer in more detail during the committee stage of the bill if that question arises. This is a fairly common-sense position for the panel to take, especially around the time-sensitive components.

As mentioned earlier, the bill also extends the storage period for gametes from 10 to 20 years in circumstances where the sample has been sourced from a young adult and where it has been certified by a doctor that due to health reasons and medical implications that person may be medically infertile from their treatment. It will also provide more latitude for clinics storing gametes and embryos to allow them a three-month grace period to destroy the samples in storage after the storage expiration period has arrived.

The flaws of the previous legislation have been identified and those concerns have been dealt with. The bill goes a long way to providing certainty for those young people who perhaps through the unintended consequences of having medical treatment and becoming infertile can have some improved certainty through the storage of their gametes should they consider having a family in future years. It gives more certainty to the clinics that are operating in this field. I again congratulate and commend Dr Perrignon on the review that he undertook and appreciate the input from all those who provided that information. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — The two previous speakers have completely outlined all the technical reasons why we are debating this bill, so I am not going to go over that again. It is quite clear that this type of legislation is necessary. Often what we see with medical technology, especially technology such as IVF, is that the technology begins and then at some stage legislation has to catch up with that technology and the way it is administered. I thank the government for having done this review, because obviously the review was about making assisted reproductive treatment more efficient, making it easier to deal with and making it better for people who actually have material in storage. I take up Mr Jennings's point that we probably should have been debating this legislation several months ago because the review has been finished for quite some time.

We have one major problem with the bill and it is around the issue of a single-member panel being able to make decisions. My concern about this is that this is incredibly sensitive work, it is very important and it is very personal, and I believe we need to have at least two members on the panel. As I understand it from

reading the legislation, five members make up the Patient Review Panel, so I do not understand why we cannot have two people reviewing these decisions. I understand the time-sensitive nature of some of these decisions and that it is going to take some time for everybody to be notified et cetera, but I think having two people reviewing these decisions is incredibly important.

Another amendment I had intended to pose for this bill, but I was told by the clerks that it would be outside its scope, is that in previous legislation when we were dealing with the issue of IVF for same-sex couples, a police check was imposed in that bill. I have had a number of complaints from people about that provision and, interestingly, they have been from heterosexual couples whose ability to access IVF has been delayed, sometimes by 6 to 12 months. As many people would be aware, often people seeking IVF are in their late 30s and time has become very critical. One couple approached me and I found their case to be intriguing. They had spent almost 10 years living and working in England, and it was going to take them a huge amount of time and effort to pull all of their records together. They were actually unsure as to whether they would be able to fulfil the police check element of it.

While we cannot deal with it now — and I see Mr David Davis is nodding in some agreement — I urge the government to review that section of the act because I think it is unfair and it is causing a great deal of distress. Only two weeks ago another couple approached me on this very issue, so I urge the government to consider the matter. If the government does not do that, Ms Pennicuik and I will discuss whether it would be appropriate for us to introduce an amendment to the bill, because I am very aware that she has also had a number of complaints. At the time that we debated the bill dealing with IVF for same-sex couples we did talk about this matter. Ms Pennicuik attempted to amend that bill but the amendment was not successful.

I will talk more during the committee of the whole about my reasons for believing that we should have at least two members on the panel dealing with these issues. Like Mr Jennings, in committee I will ask a number of questions of the minister about how the matter will be administered. Rather than seeking a briefing on this bill, I have had a fair bit of email correspondence with the minister's office, which was extremely helpful. But in some areas it has been a little confusing about the sensitivity of how it is going to work. I advise the house that they are the kinds of questions I want to ask during committee when I move my amendment.

Mr VINEY (Eastern Victoria) — This legislation obviously deals with quite complex issues, but I must say I find some of the processes that are proposed in the bill to be unnecessarily complex. Essentially what this bill is about is managing the storage and the extension of storage periods for gametes and embryos. Clearly these are emotional issues for the people involved and are very sensitive. But I would have thought the most important thing for us to do in terms of legislation is to make the management of those things as simple and understandable as possible.

What we seem to have here is a set of processes that involve management with extensions and extensions on extensions that are based on varying criteria. I am happy to confess that I am not an expert on this and do not have a magic solution. But one would have thought that people involved in the management of this field would be able to find a more straightforward process than what is proposed here. It all seems very legalistic and I suspect the proposed legislation will be open to quite a lot of legal debate.

What we find is that there is a set period for the storage of gametes and embryos. These periods can be extended in particular circumstances; examples have been given, and I will not go through them all. In the case of someone whose gametes are taken at an early age on the basis that they are likely to have early infertility, the period of storage is then extended from 10 years to 20 years. What becomes unclear is the process adopted when the storage ends. There may be circumstances where those periods can be extended in some instances with the consent of the donor, but it appears there is also the capacity for these decisions to be extended by the Patient Review Panel.

In circumstances where the donor cannot be contacted, one is left with the questions: 'How does this work? Who is the applicant? Who represents the interests of the donor? How does this get managed through the processes of that decision making?'. Overlaying all of this is the fact that under this legislation it will become a criminal offence if the people responsible for managing the storage of gametes and embryos legislation do not dispose of gametes at the end of the required period. Then the required period is extended by a further three months, because in effect the gametes or embryos must be disposed of within three months, so as a consequence that period of storage is extended by three months under the legislation. In exceptional circumstances an application to extend the period of storage beyond the set period may be granted, even when that application has been made after the expiry date when presumably under the legislation these things ought to have been disposed of.

The legislation is extremely complex. I suspect we would all be better informed if the government had been prepared to release the Perrignon report. If legislators are expected to pass such complex legislation on such a sensitive area, the report on which it is based ought to be publicly available not only for us but also for the people who inform us and the stakeholders involved who might wish to make submissions to us. It is unfortunate. I accept that there may well be good reasons elements of such a report are not released — there may be sensitive issues discussed in the report that do not need to be public — but I struggle to understand the reasons for keeping the entire report secret. The Minister for Health has a natural inclination towards secrecy. I hope that is not the basis for it, but I suspect it may be. I do not understand why this information would not be made freely available when legislators are being expected to make decisions on sensitive areas of social policy. I suspect that if a more fulsome review had been done, the legislation might have had a clearer and more understandable format.

Having said that, the opposition does not intend to stand in the way of legislation to improve the management of the storage of gametes and embryos. In relation to Ms Hartland's proposed amendment, her argument has a lot of validity. In fact the issue of the legislation providing for a single-person panel is one I would have raised in the course of the debate. As Mr Jennings has indicated, it is the intention of the opposition to listen carefully to the minister's explanation for this. Subject to the minister not being able to justify these changes to the satisfaction of the opposition, the opposition would be prepared to support the Greens proposed amendment, but we will await that explanation in the committee stage.

It appears from the bill's explanatory memorandum that the reasoning behind providing for a single-member panel is based on the complexity and extent of work the panel would undertake. If you look at the data regarding the total number of applications received by the panel for consideration of these matters, you see that in 2010 it was 379; in 2011 it was 295; and in 2012 it was 177 — that is about half the number of just two years before. It seems odd to me that the government would change the number of persons hearing these matters. We can all agree that generally wisdom lies in the collective rather than the singular; in fact in the vestibule of this very building is a mosaic bearing the words 'in the multitude of counsellors there is safety'. I would have thought that in light of the number of applications being received by the panel being half what it was two years ago, the argument that there

needs to be a shift to single-member panels is fairly thin.

It would take some degree of justification by the minister in the committee stage to convince me that somehow a circumstance where half the number of applications are made represents three times the degree of difficulty. That would be difficult to justify. In chairing the committee stage, I will be interested in hearing those explanations. However, members should consider carefully those statistics in considering the amendment proposed by Ms Hartland.

As I said, the opposition does not wish to stand in the way of a bill that proposes to make things clearer; my concern is that it does not — that it is creating something of a lawyers' picnic. The proof of the pudding will be in the eating, but I cannot see why one would create legislation that has so many layers of complexity when we are trying to create an environment to help the people this will directly affect — the donors in particular and of course recipients or proposed recipients who may have intended to receive these donations. I cannot see how having legislation that remains very complex is really progressing us far forward.

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — I am pleased to rise to speak on this bill. I am also pleased to hear that the Labor Party is not opposing it. Over the years we have debated a number of bills in this place that deal with advances in technology. I think this is one of those cases. If members cast their minds back a decade — perhaps not even as long as that — this type of bill probably would not have been possible to the extent it is today.

Whenever we have discussed or debated a bill such as this an enormous amount of respect has been shown, and we have seen that again today. My colleague Ms Crozier went into a great deal of detail on the purpose of the bill. I will just reiterate that the purpose of the bill is to amend the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 2008 to provide that gametes and embryos being kept in storage at the commencement of the bill are lawfully stored despite any expiry of the statutory storage period.

It was not so long ago that we first had this debate, one which was in some respects very emotional. Ms Hartland was particularly concerned then, as was I, about the fact that for some people the storage of gametes and embryos was going to be a major difficulty — for example, for infertile couples who had to make decisions about what they were going to do with their embryos. It is important to realise that we are

dealing with people's lives and that we understand how difficult and emotional decisions like this can be. That is also true of this debate. I am pleased to note that this bill may well provide hope for a group of disadvantaged Victorians.

The bill amends the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 2008 to permit the Patient Review Panel, in exceptional circumstances, to extend storage periods for gametes and embryos without the approval of the person who produced the gametes or where the storage period has expired. It increases the statutory storage period for gametes from an initial 10 years to 20 years where the gametes have been obtained from a child or from a person who has been certified as being at reasonable risk of premature infertility because of a medical condition or procedure. It allows time for the removal of gametes and embryos from storage after the expiry of the storage period, and it alters the constitution of the Patient Review Panel and makes other amendments to improve its operation.

I was slightly disappointed to hear Mr Viney say that the bill is complex. I think Mr Viney has acted very responsibly when we have discussed similar bills in this place. I know he understands the emotional emphasis that is placed on a bill such as this, so I was slightly confused to hear him say it is very complex, because I feel it actually deals with a very simple prospect — that is, children who may have to undergo cancer treatment will have an opportunity to have their fertility restored at some stage in the future. I think this is a remarkable thing.

Imagine those children who are going through extraordinary cancer treatment in what must be a very traumatic period of their lives and who are wondering about their long-term fertility and what that may mean in the future. It is very pleasing to note that many childhood cancers — leukaemia, for example — are now being treated successfully. Children who in years gone by would not have lived through childhood leukaemia are now not only living but going on to lead productive lives. In this instance, if their fertility is able to be addressed into the future, they can go on to be parents, which is just fantastic.

On 11 June 2011 the Minister for Health, David Davis, made a statement on the storage of gametes and embryos beyond the time legislated. He said:

The Royal Women's Hospital and other health services have faced a series of concerns over the long-term storage of sperm.

Often the sperm is stored to preserve the fertility of young men undergoing treatment, often for cancer, which may compromise future fertility.

Storage beyond 10 years should legally only occur when permitted by the Patient Review Panel.

Harsh and unreasonable outcomes appear to have occurred in some cases where it has been impossible to practically advise patients who have stored sperm of the approaching 10-year deadline.

It appears that the current law is inflexible in not providing for the Patient Review Panel to consider extension of the period of time for which sperm may be stored in these circumstances.

This demonstrates the sensitivity and understanding that the minister has shown in bringing this legislation to the chamber at this time.

Retrospective legislation is not normally desirable. In this case, however, the bill will allow currently stored gametes and embryos to be considered lawfully stored, despite the expiry of the statutory storage period, for a further 18 months. This is about treating people fairly. Patients will have 18 months to make decisions. They can then use or donate their gametes or embryos or they can apply to the Patient Review Panel to grant them a longer storage period. This will enable flexibility. Simply expanding the statutory storage period for an additional 10 years could in some cases lead to an inflexibility in the law when it comes to dealing with personal circumstances. Therefore the bill will introduce flexibility where exceptional circumstances exist.

I will not go on any longer because other speakers have already covered the bill in great detail. I want to put on the record my praise for and recognition of the Minister for Health in bringing such a sensitive issue to the Parliament. He has recognised that there is a whole cohort of people for whom this bill will make an enormous difference. I congratulate the minister and wish the bill a speedy transition.

Mrs KRONBERG (Eastern Metropolitan) — I am very pleased to rise to make a contribution in support of the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2012 as the legislation's current incarnation must have caused a lot of distress and suffering to people. If we think of the many young men under 30 who have fallen victim to testicular cancer, for instance, it would seem that very early on in their lives they have been denied a choice as basic as that of becoming a parent. I can imagine an 18-year-old man having to face treatment for cancer and making decisions at that age. He might not have had the opportunity to have established who he wants to marry or have as a life partner by the time he reaches 28. When this bill was originally passed in 2008, 10 years probably seemed an appropriate and safe period of time. Clearly the unintended

consequences of that bill have been responded to in a very thoughtful way. I congratulate the Minister for Health on engaging Dr Andrew Perrignon, whose recommendations have been adopted to a very large degree in this bill.

There is a salutary lesson here. The year 2008 was a heady year for bringing legislation to the Parliament about which people had to reach into their souls in order to judge their values. At that time there were many lobbyists from various interest groups lobbying on a wide range of legislation that affected life and death issues. I imagine that finer points of detail could well have been lost in some of the momentous social changes brought forward by legislation of that nature, so even though this bill is somewhat retrospective in nature, it is a welcome initiative. I am very pleased to see the level of support in the chamber for this bill.

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Committed.

Committee

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I seek that leave be granted for Ms Crozier, when she arrives, to sit at the table.

Leave granted.

Clause 1

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I would like the minister to take the opportunity to outline to the committee the decision-making framework of the Patient Review Panel, which is charged with the responsibility under the act of making decisions on access to material and the way in which clients of reproductive clinics may receive support in the future. Can the minister make a general statement about what he anticipates the panel's workload will be over the next 18 months following the proclamation of the bill?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I thank the member for his question. To put this in context I will read from clause 1, which sets out the purpose of the bill:

... permit the Patient Review Panel, in exceptional circumstances, to extend storage periods for gametes and embryos without the written approval of the person who produced the gametes or a person who produced gametes from which the embryo was formed ...

In responding to Mr Jennings, I want to indicate that a process was undertaken. There were deficiencies in the machinery of the act, and these problems came to light over time. They have been well discussed publicly, and we sought to conduct a review. I will go back over this so that members understand its history. We sought a review by Dr Andrew Perrignon, who is the former CEO of Northern Hospital, a medical practitioner and a person with experience in private practice. He has an understanding of patients and their needs, but he also understands the needs of the sector and the mechanics and challenges of running large organisations. I am pleased to take this opportunity to put on record my thanks to him and indeed to my department for the exhaustive work that they have done. The review involved wide consultation with the sector and with a number of individuals who had used these procedures. It attempted to understand the mechanics of the arrangements that were in place and where they could be reformed.

In talking to the industry, Dr Perrignon sought a way through that would lead to changes in the legislation, both to deal with current problems and to produce changes in practice. The department has provided the sector and the industry with a lot of guidance to make sure that their practices improve. This should be seen as two parts of the one equation. As the community understands, there were also problems with the actual functioning of the Patient Review Panel, including some rigidities that were identified. With this bill the government has taken the opportunity of putting forward some proposals to Parliament in order to improve the panel's procedures.

The recently appointed chair of the Patient Review Panel is Michael Gorton. He has done a very good job of improving the processes in this area, an area that has had a long history. Victoria has a model of regulation that is generally relevant, notwithstanding that some people may legitimately claim that reforms could be made. The Perrignon review was a sincere attempt to understand the mechanics of the industry and to deal with a set of processes involving the Patient Review Panel. The aim was to produce an outcome that is humane and that deals with often unpredictable, entirely unforeseen circumstances. These sometimes involve urgency, but regardless they are matters of great moment to people. The storage of gametes and embryos are matters of great significance to the many people who apply to use these treatments.

The Patient Review Panel has a significant task. I put on record my thanks to the members of that panel, who by and large do a very good job in making very difficult decisions. The work of the Patient Review Panel has

more than one aspect, but there is a routine and predictable aspect involving the extension of storage. On other occasions there are unique and unusual circumstances that come forward that make these challenges and decisions quite difficult.

I should probably put on record the numbers; I am not sure whether they have been fully updated. In 2010 there were 275 applications relating to storage, in 2011 there were 233 applications and in 2012 there were 135 applications. In 2010 there were 379 applications in total, in 2011 there were 295 applications and in 2012 there were 177 applications. There is probably a misconception in the chamber about those numbers. There was an increase in storage applications because there were matters that the former Infertility Treatment Authority rolled over and the series of applications made was a greater number in that earlier period. It is true to say that there are still a significant number of urgent applications, and those urgent applications come forward in an unpredictable way and unpredictable time sequence.

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — Probably the last 60 to 90 seconds of the minister's answer got close to what I was hoping to get a sense of. I appreciate the fact that the minister has taken the opportunity to give us a bit of a ready reckoner of the history of these matters, but it is really the anticipated workload that I am interested in. In the last minute the minister gave us a snapshot about what the outgoing work pattern has been and the number of applications, but my question was: how many applications does the minister anticipate having in the next year or two? That is the nature of my question.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I indicate that we do not anticipate an unmanageable number of applications. However, any increase would be managed by a single-member panel determining routine approvals for extension of the storage period. Some of these matters that come before the Patient Review Panel are enormously complex and require close examination; they are quite unique circumstances that are not in the common pattern. Those particular cases require a lot of time and preparation in terms of evidence and so forth. There are other more predictable steps for routine approvals. I make the point that while there is no anticipation of an unmanageable number of applications, new procedures and specific circumstances change in this area and there is flexibility with the panel to deal with those particular circumstances. Again, the uniqueness of each individual circumstance may require very close examination.

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — Following up on that point, this is one of the things I am unclear about. We are talking about a single-member panel, but the minister has just indicated that in some circumstances there will need to be more than one person sitting on the panel because of the complexities of a case, and obviously with any of this kind of technology it is incredibly complex. Who makes the decision about when it is going to be a single-member panel or a multi-member panel?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I indicate that matters before the single-member panel are routine matters. The panel member can always refer that back to the broader panel, but it is the intention of the chair, Michael Gorton, to develop guidelines, which will be publicly available, to indicate the narrow circumstances in which a single-member panel may be used. Other circumstances will generally go to the broader panel.

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — I would like to go further with this. I am still not sure about how this will be decided. The amendment that I propose will have more than one person on a panel. Often what may appear to be a routine matter will become complex. Would it not be more efficient to have two people on a panel rather than have a single-member panel if the matter has to be referred off and reconsidered. I suggest we need more than one person to decide on what can become very complex issues. I am still not sure about how it will be decided whether it is a single-member panel or a multiple member panel.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — Perhaps I could put it this way: the Patient Review Panel intends that only the extension of storage applications which are routine approvals will be dealt with by a single member; more complex or sensitive applications, or applications likely to result in a decision not to extend the storage period, will be determined by a division of the panel — a matter which falls under section 85(c) of the principal act — as the latter would benefit from collective consideration of a division of the panel.

As I said, to reflect this approach Michael Gorton and the panel have indicated a commitment to develop guidelines on the extension of storage periods, in consultation with assisted reproductive technology providers and relevant hospitals. The panel itself will develop those guidelines for more straightforward sorts of matters. Of course if there is something untoward, there would be the option for a panel member to refer that matter back. It would only be in those very

straightforward circumstances or predictable circumstances that guidelines allowing a single panel would apply.

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — I will have one more go at clarifying this. My concern is that what may appear to be routine may not be routine, and that the panel member might need the assistance of a second panel member; otherwise it will result in having possibly two or three hearings rather than starting with the multi-member panel. I am very concerned about that possibility because this has happened on a number of occasions when members of Parliament were expected to vote on legislation where guidelines were to be developed but they were not really sure how that was going to happen. I seek some clarity on this matter.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — To be clear on the procedure coming to the chair of the panel, the chair would make decisions, and the development of the guidelines will seek to provide those clear circumstances where a matter is more straightforward. A panel member would always have the capacity to refer a matter back, but any matter that was complex would be dealt with by a full panel in any event, so I do not think a two-member panel would resolve that. It would be easier for a single member acting within the guidelines to make those decisions. On some occasions there is an urgency about these matters — people sometimes leave these decisions until very late — and a decision may need to be made quite swiftly.

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — When I am asking this question I want the minister to know that I am clear that the guidelines are going to be created by the panel and that the chair and his panel are responsible for establishing those guidelines; I am happy about that. Will the minister give a guarantee that those guidelines will be published so that the community knows that? That is the first question.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — Yes.

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — To go to the heart of Ms Hartland's question, where is the decision made when those guidelines apply? Is the decision made by a secretariat who works for the panel? Is it made by the panel? Does the chairperson make that determination? Where is that triaging decision made about which stream they take?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — The associate, in consultation with the chair, will make that decision.

Clause agreed to; clauses 2 to 10 agreed to.

Clause 11

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — I move:

Clause 11, lines 10 and 11, omit “the chairperson or a single member” and insert “2 members”.

I will be very brief as we prosecuted this somewhat in talking about clause 1. It is even more clear in my mind now that it is necessary to have two members on a panel rather than a single member, because what starts out as being routine will become complex. If we are concerned about time limitations and the fact that these applications are often urgent, having two members of the panel make the decision will make the process more efficient. I do not understand, even with time constraints, why two members out of five cannot be available to make this decision. I would have thought that would be quite easy to do. I am not asking for the whole panel; I am asking for two members rather than one.

I also think it is an issue about ensuring that all of these decisions are made in a transparent manner. We would all agree that issues around in-vitro fertilisation have always been complex and can sometimes be controversial. We need to ensure that there are safeguards around how this decision is made, which is why I believe two panel members need to be involved rather than one.

I briefly turn to the issue of the number of applications, considering that the number of applications as both members have indicated — —

Hon. D. M. Davis — Because of the blip or the increase at the start and early.

Ms HARTLAND — As the minister indicated, and as Mr Viney indicated in his contribution, I do not see why it is that we cannot have two people dealing with these decisions.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I indicate to the member that I understand the points she makes, but I respectfully disagree with a couple of them. I do not believe that the two-member panel would be more efficient. I think it would be less efficient because these will be a small number of straightforward cases that will fit within the guidelines. I reiterate my point that the guidelines will be public.

On this occasion the government will not support the amendment. However, I am happy to ensure that 6 to 12 months into the new processes we review how this is operating to ensure that it is operating as intended and

that the guidelines are reasonable — they will be public — so that the cases are working within those guidelines. If any further change or modification is needed, I would be prepared to look at that at that point. I believe sufficient safeguards will be in place, and I think the panel is by and large working very well. The panel is made up of a very broad and cohesive group of people. From what I understand and from the information I have, the panel is generally working well, but this area of straightforward and routine decisions within the parameters of guidelines that have been developed where there is not a special complexity would be reasonably handled by one panel member within the framework of the guidelines.

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — I will make a very brief comment. My comments and my moving of this amendment are in no way a reflection on the current chair or the current panel members. I am looking to the future. We have all seen legislation pass through this house only to find out once it has passed that there are deficiencies and we have to go back and redo it. I greatly appreciate the concept of a review, but I will be pushing forward with this amendment because I think too many times we have not got it right, and I do not want this chance to go by without attempting to make sure that this legislation has rigour to it.

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I indicate to the committee, and particularly to the minister, that I appreciate his offer of a review. Opposition members note that and take some comfort from it.

In this instance we will support Ms Hartland’s amendment on the basis of confidence building. Opposition members see that, at this point in time in an area that has had a lot of concern and agitation associated with it, the burden of decision making being delegated to one person is an onerous responsibility for a member of the panel, and we think that that burden may be shared by two and thus alleviate some of the concerns.

Committee divided on amendment:

Ayes, 17

Barber, Mr
Broad, Ms
Darveniza, Ms
Eideh, Mr
Elasmar, Mr
Hartland, Ms
Jennings, Mr
Leane, Mr
Lenders, Mr

Pennicuik, Ms (*Teller*)
Pulford, Ms (*Teller*)
Scheffer, Mr
Somyurek, Mr
Tarlamis, Mr
Tee, Mr
Tierney, Ms
Viney, Mr

Noes, 19

Atkinson, Mr
Coote, Mrs
Crozier, Ms
Dalla-Riva, Mr
Davis, Mr D.
Davis, Mr P.
Drum, Mr
Guy, Mr
Hall, Mr
Koch, Mr

Kronberg, Mrs
Lovell, Ms
O’Brien, Mr
O’Donohue, Mr
Ondarchie, Mr
Petrovich, Mrs
Peulich, Mrs
Ramsay, Mr (*Teller*)
Rich-Phillips, Mr (*Teller*)

Pairs

Mikakos, Ms
ALP vacancy

Elsbury, Mr
Finn, Mr

Amendment negatived.

Clause agreed to; clauses 12 to 16 agreed to.

Reported to house without amendment.

Report adopted.

Third reading

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

That the bill be now read a third time.

In doing so, I thank honourable members for their contributions. It has been a worthwhile debate. I have committed to undertake a review of that section, and I am very happy to reiterate that.

I want to put on record my support for the work of the Patient Review Panel. On some occasions I have said to a number of members of the panel, ‘You must have the wisdom of Solomon’. These are very difficult decisions about fraught matters in people’s lives. We should not in any way underestimate those matters. I also want to thank Emma Turner and the team that support her in managing the panel and the legal work that goes behind that, as well as administrative and other challenging tasks. I want to put those points on the record because the panel is now working very smoothly. I have high hopes that the panel will continue to work smoothly and, through some of the changes made today, be able to adapt to a changing area in a flexible way and to deal with the new technologies, challenges and procedures that come forward.

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

ALPINE RESORTS AND NATIONAL PARKS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Second reading

Debate resumed from 7 March; motion of Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Assistant Treasurer).

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — I rise to make some remarks about the Alpine Resorts and National Parks Acts Amendment Bill 2013 and to indicate at the outset that the Labor opposition will not be opposing the bill. That said, I also wish to underline the sentiments of the shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change in the other place, Lisa Neville, when she remarked in the Assembly that the record of the Baillieu and Napthine governments is very poor when it comes to the environment. Labor, and indeed all Victorians, have every right to be sceptical about the government's intentions towards alpine resorts and national parks, especially the Alpine National Park.

I will outline the key features of the bill before elaborating on my introductory remarks. The bill adds to the Falls Creek alpine resort some 9.6 hectares of land on the northern foreshore of the Rocky Valley Storage, which is currently part of the Alpine National Park, along with two other 0.5 hectare parcels of land. These areas are currently utilised by the resort for snow grooming and snow clearing. As a trade-off through the provisions of the bill, an area of some 11.9 hectares currently under the Falls Creek alpine resort will be added to the Alpine National Park. This area is on the northern slopes of Mount McKay and has been identified as containing snow gum woodland and suitable habitat for the endangered alpine water skink. In summary, this bill sees no net loss of Alpine National Park. On the face of it it is a common-sense approach to transferring land already degraded and used by the resort into the alpine resort area. It offsets that land with land of undoubtedly higher environmental values.

As fortune would have it, although I have been a frequent visitor over many years to this part of Victoria, I had the great fortune of being there again just a few weeks ago and of having the opportunity over a period of several days to ride around these areas to have a good look at the areas that are the subject of this bill. If I had tried to plan it, I am quite sure that something would have come along to make it impossible, but without planning it that is exactly what happened. Over several days I was able to get a good look at the areas which are currently utilised by the resort, the area which is along the Rocky Valley Storage, as well as quite a number of other areas. Unfortunately I did not

get to sight an alpine water skink, but the photographs of it are very pretty. In terms of its appearance, in some respects it reminds me, if you put the head to one side, of something like a very small baby crocodile, but fortunately it does not grow to those dimensions; it remains very small.

I had the opportunity to have a good look at this very valuable area of the Alpine National Park and the area which was severely burnt some 10 years ago now, and to observe the very slow progress of the snow gum woodland and the surrounding habitat after the devastation of the fires of 2003. As anyone who spends time in these areas would know, it is very slow progress. It is fantastic to see the snow gums that have survived fire; the new growth comes from the base of the snow gums, leaving the completely bare remnants of the trees there for decades. It will be a long time before the regrowth gets up to the height of the previous vegetation.

That all underlines the incredible fragility of this habitat, something that I was incredibly conscious of when riding a horse along the trails. I was constantly thinking about the damage that can so easily be done to this beautiful and very fragile environment. That said, it is a great privilege to visit this area. When the Alpine National Park was created it was correct to provide for activities in the park in addition to preserving the natural environment. It has meant that many Victorians can continue to experience the park in a whole range of different ways, to value it and to be prepared to prioritise the protection and the allocation of resources to the park.

In the time I was there, which was in the lead-up to Easter, it was remarkable to see what a hive of activity the Bogong High Plains were. There were visitors ranging from day walkers, who had parked their cars in parking areas, through to very serious-looking hikers, to mountain bike riders and rock climbers and to a very small number of horseriders, of which I was one. That was before the Easter holiday break, and it was very encouraging to see so many Victorians of all ages, shapes and sizes enjoying the experience, which underlines the value that all Victorians place on it and indicates their support for the ongoing protection and resourcing of the Alpine National Park.

In outlining that experience, it is worth reflecting briefly on the importance that Victorians confer on the Alpine National Park, including access to the activities provided by alpine resorts in winter. I appreciate that for a whole range of reasons — and I say this also in my capacity, along with other members in this place, as a member representing the northern half of the state —

there is a desire to ensure that there are activities which are accessible to Victorians and to visitors to our great state, and particularly to this area, throughout the year. In addition to the winter activities, which are centred around snow, even if it is manufactured snow, at other times of the year, such as when I was recently able to visit, there are activities that enable people to experience the area and value it, and it is through that experience that we have the best prospect of all Victorians valuing this area.

If we go back in time to 1989, which was when I was most particularly associated with the park and well before I was a member, legislation in relation to these matters was fiercely debated in the Victorian Parliament, including in this house. The then Labor Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, Kay Setches, introduced a bill to amend the National Parks Act 1975 to create an Alpine National Park of some 646 200 hectares, as it was then. In so doing she created our largest national park, something which had been a vision of many people going back to the 1940s and which had progressed very slowly. The big change made in 1989 created one contiguous Alpine National Park, which meant that we protected forever — as the minister at the time, Kay Setches, said — the splendour of the Victorian Alps and linked them to the protection which had already been afforded to the alps north of the border in the Australian Capital Territory and in New South Wales.

The bill was very contentious, and there was a lot of debate at the time. A lot of compromises were made in order to achieve that outcome of a contiguous Alpine National Park. It was a magnificent initiative by the then Labor government, although certainly in times well before there were a whole range of people, including members of former Liberal governments, who had been working to progress that vision.

One of the most contentious issues around the creation of the Alpine National Park was the phasing out of cattle grazing on the most sensitive, fragile part of the Alpine National Park, the Bogong High Plains. This had been agreed to by a previous Liberal government, but members of The Nationals sought to continue cattle grazing on those parts of the Bogong High Plains and to overturn that agreement by a previous Liberal government. Fortunately the then leadership of the Liberal Party worked with the then Labor government to defeat that proposal by The Nationals. That is why it is hard to reconcile the actions of the current Liberal-Nationals government in seeking to revisit those debates and to reintroduce cattle grazing to the Alpine National Park, including, presumably, to the most sensitive parts of it, being willing to fight this

through the courts and to use for that purpose public money that might otherwise be used to protect and resource activities around the Alpine National Park. Fortunately those moves have not been successful, but we should all remember them.

Certainly those of us on this side of the house, in the Labor Party, will continue to be ever vigilant around these issues and will seek to preserve and improve that vision, which goes all the way back to the 1940s and has at different times been progressed by at least the Liberal Party along with the Labor Party. Hopefully we will one day see a return to some leadership in the Liberal Party when it comes to environmental issues.

At the outset I indicated that I support the remarks the shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Lisa Neville, the member for Bellarine in the Assembly, made in debate on this bill in that house. The Labor Party believes that Victorians have every right to be sceptical about the actions of the current government in relation to the environment. This goes back to the fact that prior to the 2010 election there was no environmental policy that set out what the Liberal Party and The Nationals' intentions were in relation to the Alpine National Park, or any other national park, and that actions taken since do not bode well for national parks.

In relation to the bill before the house, we know that the transfer of land provided for in this bill is one which has been sought for a number of years by the resort. We have every right to expect that it is supported by the resort, and I think that can be taken as a given. However, there is a lot of information to indicate that in preparing this bill and bringing it to the Parliament there has not been the desired consultation with a whole range of stakeholders, including the government agencies that have responsibility for managing and planning the future of the Alpine National Park or our resorts. Clearly that is not acceptable and is not something which should be allowed to pass unchallenged.

In addition to that, we have seen the actions of the current government in the introduction of private management of alpine resorts without a public tender process. Victorians have a lot of unanswered questions about the government's intentions at Falls Creek or anywhere else where we have alpine resorts in terms of what the future management and development will be like and who is going to be responsible for the future of our alpine resorts. If it is possible, as we have seen under this government, to have facilities which have been paid for by Victorian taxpayers simply handed to a private operator with no process but with a

commitment, as I understand it, that in the future there will be a tender process, then who is to say that this cannot happen at other alpine resorts, including the Falls Creek resort?

There has also been no information put before the Parliament or anywhere else about what development is proposed to take place in these areas which have been added to the Falls Creek alpine resort around the Rocky Valley Storage. Whilst this area is clearly degraded in its natural values, Victorians would certainly have a range of opinions about what is acceptable regarding any future development there. It is a highly visible area within the Falls Creek and surrounding Bogong High Plains region, and clearly what takes place there is going to be highly visible.

Certainly Labor's view is that Victorians should have a say about what happens in that area and the government should be open and transparent about what is proposed for that area. To date no information has been made available and this has been raised in the course of the debate in the Legislative Assembly. There is an opportunity for the government to indicate what its intentions are whilst this bill is passing through the Legislative Council. I am quite sure that all Victorians would welcome that, but to date there has been no indication of the government's intentions.

In making my remarks on this bill it is also important to refer to the recent changes that the Liberal-Nationals government has made to the departments and agencies responsible for management of the Alpine National Park. In the last budget we saw cuts of some \$130 million to environmental programs and services, including land management, biodiversity and management of our parks and forests. Despite the government's continued mantra that these funding cuts can be made without any impact on services whatsoever and without any job losses, we have seen that this is simply a false mantra and that in fact programs have been affected, jobs have been lost, offices have closed and there is less money and fewer resources to devote to our national parks, including the Alpine National Park.

Since the 2012 budget containing those cuts was brought down we have seen further changes as a result of the forced merger between the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI). The Labor opposition has raised major concerns in relation to conflicts of interest. There have certainly been major job losses, with some 400 DSE and 200 DPI jobs lost to date. As I understand it, the new Premier, Dr Napthine, has refused to rule out further job losses following the

2013 budget that will be brought down in a few short weeks. As the shadow Minister for the Arts and member for Bellarine in the Assembly, Lisa Neville, has put on the record, it is certainly the view of the Labor opposition that these decisions are likely to send environmental policy development and the protection of threatened and endangered species, including the alpine water skink, back to the Dark Ages.

It is certainly not good news for anyone who is interested in the environment and nature conservation in Victoria. That is one of many reasons that the Labor opposition is indicating its concerns and scepticism about the Napthine-Ryan government's intentions when it comes to the environment, the Alpine National Park, and our alpine resorts and their future management and development, whether it is through the existing management or the forecast private sector development which has already taken place and for which at least one government member, the member for Benalla in the Assembly, Dr Sykes, who represents this part of Victoria in particular, has indicated his support. Given that the government is indicating it supports further development in our alpine resorts by the private sector, it is incumbent on the government to indicate what its plans are and to take Victorians into its confidence about those plans.

I can indicate on behalf of the constituents who have been in contact with me about a whole range of issues in the Alpine National Park over a long period that a large number of Victorians take a very keen interest in everything that happens. In addition to the surrounding communities in northern Victoria, Victorians from the length and breadth of the state regularly visit the area, as do Australians from all around the country. From time to time I have even received information from international visitors about their experience, their concerns or their views about the appropriate management of our Alpine National Park and our alpine resorts. These are matters which Victorians value and which they have very strong views about.

That covers most of the material which is important to place on the record. In conclusion, it is important to underline that as well as being Victoria's largest national park, the Alpine National Park contains an incredible diversity of plants and animals, has a very rich cultural heritage and is the source of much of Victoria's high-quality water. These are reasons to continue to protect and improve our Alpine National Park for future generations. They are also the reasons the government needs to take great care in progressing the changes provided for in this bill. The government only touches the surface with this bill rather than having the courage to take Victorians into its confidence about

its intentions for the future, something it should rectify at the earliest opportunity.

Mrs PETROVICH (Northern Victoria) — It is my great pleasure to speak on the debate of the Alpine Resorts and National Parks Acts Amendment Bill 2013. As Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Environment it has been one of my greatest joys to work in the alpine areas of Victoria. The recent review of the alpine resorts strategy has been a long time coming. It has not been tackled with any conviction by a succession of Labor environment ministers. Many of the areas we have worked through will give some protection to the environment — to the natural beauty and the majesty of our alpine areas — and in many respects differentiate between what is a national park and what are alpine resorts.

An alpine resort is a place of recreation for a variety of pursuits, and I am a little envious of Ms Broad having ridden around the Bogong High Plains. I have not had the opportunity to do that, and it is something I would love to do, so I am envious of her. As I said, in summer and winter there are a variety of sports activities available at alpine resorts, including horseriding, and those recreational and sporting activities are valued by Victorian and international visitors. We can highlight activities around snow, such as downhill skiing, snow play and snowboarding. There is also a range of summer activities that people love to enjoy in the high country and alpine areas such as hiking, walking and horseriding. There has been an increase in mountain bike activity, which adds a commercial aspect to the area. Alpine areas are valued for their capacity to drive economic capacity for Victoria, both summer and winter.

I will highlight the differences between national parks and alpine resorts as a key to what we are doing here today. Alpine resorts are places where people live, go to school and enjoy recreational opportunities, but there are also business activities and a range of other infrastructure in those areas. Resorts are not pristine wilderness; they are not pristine bush. People participating in activities in those areas are often the custodians of the precious and sensitive areas that we need to ensure are looked after. The villages are vibrant hubs with schools, medical precincts, businesses and service industries, as well as the services required around water, sewerage, waste management and electricity infrastructure, and a range of other infrastructure items.

Members might ask why I draw on that difference today, but it is very important. Alpine resorts have a special place in our hearts. Nature-based tourism offers

a number of activities and, through the alpine strategic report, will give a much better structure for where we are heading. The report sets the tone for alpine management boards to report to the alpine resorts consultative committee and provides that committee with a business plan, an objective and an outcomes-driven focus so that there is much more certainty, something that did not happen under Labor.

We need to value Falls Creek, and it deserves a special mention today. Falls Creek alpine resort is working to increase its profile during the summer months and is promoting existing and emerging regional recreational activities.

We need to get to the core of the bill. What we are talking about today is the excision of 9.6 hectares of land on the northern foreshore of the Rocky Valley Storage, which is currently part of the Alpine National Park, and incorporating it into the Falls Creek alpine resort. The area has been disturbed, mainly as a result of the construction of the Rocky Valley Dam; it is part of the Kiewa hydro-electric scheme and is a man-made structure. The bill will also preserve two existing leases over parts of the area that are associated with the Kiewa hydro-electric scheme.

The area presents an opportunity for the resort to build on what it currently offers and to develop new recreational tourism facilities. In response to a couple of the points raised by Ms Broad around what is proposed for the land, the Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Board envisages progressing opportunities for the area in two phases. The first is in the shorter term and involves beautifying the heavily disturbed areas, installing toilets and some passive recreation areas around barbecues, tables and seating, and making improvements to the pontoon access in the Rocky Valley Storage. In the longer term, depending on funding, investment interest and planning permission — obviously there is a process around all those things — it envisages establishing facilities, including boat storage and associated facilities for athletes and a cafe restaurant. These facilities would be located in the more disturbed areas — the areas of lower grade vegetation — and they would also be part of the development process and subject to development approvals.

The other area I would like to talk about today is the area around Howmans Gap, which contains the resort's snow clearing base. This area is currently part of a government road. Prior to it being added to the resort it will be discontinued as a road under the Road Management Act 2004, so it is just sitting out there on its own. The bill also provides for the addition of

11.9 hectares to the national park. I think this is a significant part of the bill. I note that this land is currently part of the alpine resort and is situated on the northern slopes of Mount McKay.

One thing I would like to highlight today is the work that the Falls Creek management board has done on a biodiversity management system. The resort has done a significant piece of work that looks at flora and fauna and how the resort interacts around biodiversity not only within the resort but on its edges. The board is to be commended on this work. It is substantial and interacts with everything the resort does. The board is a standout in that area.

I will not talk for much longer today because I think we are going to go into committee stage. I will finish by saying that I was in the Kiewa Valley last Thursday, where this government was complimented on its focus in its response to alpine resorts, parks and to biodiversity in the area. It was also complimented on the time that representatives of the government have spent in this area. It has certainly not been a quick ski-in, ski-out opportunity. We have shown a long-term commitment to working with business, the alpine resorts and their boards and the Alpine Resorts Co-ordinating Committee to improve the operation of management and the strategic outcomes for these important areas. We have also listened to the people who are running businesses there and have understood what is occurring.

There have been some exciting impacts resulting from the work that we and the resort management boards have done. There is a whole new sphere of opportunity around the economic drivers in the area. We have seen a good uptake of altitude training opportunities here in Victoria, not only by professional cyclists but also footballers and rowers. The work around the Rocky Valley Dam will provide another range of opportunities for aquatic and recreational boating activity that I think Victorians will benefit from. I wish this bill a speedy passage.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I am not convinced by any of the contributions I have heard so far as to what it is we are actually being asked to vote for here. If this is a portent of how the government is going to set about doing commercial development in national parks, I think we should stop right here and have another think, because that is what this is. While there has been some recent discussion about commercial development in national parks, this is a development in a national park with the relevant piece of land a commercial body is interested in being excised from a national park for its purposes. It is the

same difference as far as I am concerned, and for that reason we will not be supporting the bill.

I would have thought anyone would have wanted a bit more information than what has been provided here today, except that the Parliament is meant to give the approvals first with the details to be filled in by ministers and other authorities later. Last week and the week before there was a bit of a flurry in the media about the government's proposed guidelines for developments in national parks. I should go back a little bit further to explain exactly where the guidelines themselves originated from.

The government ticked off the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) to look at regulation in the area of tourism. VCEC exists for the whole purpose of getting rid of what it calls red tape. I do not know if there has ever been a VCEC report that came back and said, 'Do you know what? The regulation in this area is just right. Leave it as it is'. Pretty much for the purposes of justifying its existence VCEC has to go around finding bad red tape that has to be removed and so the minister for the environment — and we can put both those words in inverted commas if we want — has taken the lead from VCEC and produced some guidelines. The problem with the guidelines is that they do not seem to rule anything in or out, and therefore they are not much use to an environmentalist like myself, nor, if I try to step into the shoes of a possible proponent for a development, do they tell either side what would or would not be allowed in a national park. That is what has got the public so excited about these proposals that the government is talking about without any actual proposal with any financing behind it being on the horizon.

All we get is a set of principles. They state:

Principle 1: Tourism investment opportunities will be allowed which are sensible and sensitive ...

Principle 2: Tourism investment opportunities must be determined as the highest and best use of the area of national park proposed for use.

Then environmental, social and economic outcomes will be considered. In other words, they will consider everything.

Principle 3: Investment opportunities must be consistent with the legislative objectives and purpose of national parks —

of course, otherwise you will just come back here and excise the bit you want to use and it will no longer be in a national park.

Principle 4: Investment opportunities must take account of associated risks and give regard to any risk management plans for the proposed settings, for example, bushfire and climate variability.

Hold the phone right there and tell me where in a Victorian national park we would find an area of low bushfire risk. In fact many people — including the soon-to-be member for the federal seat of McEwen, Mrs Petrovich, who has done so on many occasions — have come into this place and said people trying to get development permits to rebuild after bushfires have found the new tough requirements for bushfire safety extraordinarily onerous to meet. That is on private land. I have looked at a number of those houses and developments, and I cannot imagine any of them would be as high a risk as a major development in a national park.

We must be talking about major developments; why else would we be going to all this bother? I have worked in the ecotourism industry, and whether it be accommodation, nature experiences or hospitality, we are frequently talking about family-run businesses. If we are talking about a development so amazing that a complete set of guidelines has to be created for it, we are obviously talking about a major development. We would not go to all this trouble to put a couple of cabins into the Grampians National Park, for example, when there are many such options on private land in nearby Halls Gap. We are either talking about Club Med Grampians or we are not talking about anything at all. With the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Ryan Smith, it is usually pretty hard to work out whether he is putting forward a scary environmental proposal or just colouring in the numbers. If the proposal in this bill is any example, we will be none the wiser up until the moment that a developer lobs their plans on the desk of the relevant decision-maker, who has only one step left, and that is to tick them.

Along with these fairly meaningless principles, we have an approval process that involves some public notification, but it is fairly redundant when you consider all the other approvals that will be required. To get an approval for a major development inside a national park — to meet the requirements for bushfire safety, evacuation plans, car parking areas, wastewater and solid waste disposal and all the rest of it — would seem to be a major undertaking at any time, let alone in an environmentally sensitive area with a series of different overlays, and most likely involving federal law as well. That should be of interest to those of us who would like to be in the federal Parliament one day! The process through which the minister proposes to run his developments tells us nothing and guarantees even less. What we have been told is that:

This area —

the area to be excised —

presents an opportunity for the resort to build on what it currently has to offer and to develop new recreational and tourism facilities on the lake edge to encourage visitor use throughout the year. This change of land status will provide certainty for future planning and investment decisions.

That really does not tell us anything at all, does it? While Mrs Petrovich gave us a few more hints about what might be in store, unfortunately neither she nor other members of the current government will necessarily be around at the time, so the only thing we are voting on here is something called ‘new recreational and tourism facilities’, which is simply described as an ‘opportunity’.

There are some very real environmental issues to be addressed and some real questions to be answered about the future direction of the resort. We have pretty much been told, ‘There is a piece of lakeside, and we would like to get some of it’. Mrs Petrovich hinted at a boat ramp or boat storage facility and possibly a restaurant. Are we talking about parasailing or power boating? Are we talking about a waterslide or Hollywood in the Alps? What are we talking about?

Mrs Petrovich interjected.

Mr BARBER — I can afford to have a wild imagination, Mrs Petrovich, because there is always someone coming down the line — the worst kind of developer — who will take a pristine, tranquil and inspirational natural area and, while making money out of it, actually destroy the whole reason people want to go there in the first place. They get their development, but in the process they erode what makes people want to go there — that tranquillity, inspiration and peace. National parks and alpine resorts are one such type of place; green wedges are another. People understand instinctively why we have these respite areas, but it is up to us in Parliament to articulate that and put it into law. There are fewer and fewer of these areas and there are more and more of us, so those areas become more and more important.

I am not a downhill skier; I have actually spent most of my time in alpine resorts over the summer. That part of the bill is quite right when it says that people want to come to these areas in summer. But in summer, away from all the downhill skiing, the parties, the excitement and the rest of it, it is actually a very different experience. You are up there, seemingly much closer to the heavens and bathed in fantastic sunlight. Of course there is always the risk that at any time of the year the clouds can come over and you can suddenly find

yourself back in true alpine conditions, but there is also room to move around and spread out a little bit.

Everything I read and hear about this proposal is that it does not head towards that particular philosophy or sensibility. It is not just me as one of the three token greenies in the house who wants to know these answers; I think anybody who is a regular user of these resorts would also want to know them. While it has been said that the resort has been asking for quite some time to access this piece of land, there are other stakeholders. There are the people who currently hold the land, Parks Victoria. There is also the National Parks Advisory Council, there is a whole range of others. When we get to the committee stage of the bill we will explore who exactly has been told what and what guarantees have been given.

This is an almost completely backwards approach to some of the rhetoric that has come out about commercial development in national parks over the last couple of weeks. For that reason we will be giving this bill an extremely good going over because it may very well be that we are setting a benchmark for future developments.

Sitting suspended 6.29 p.m. until 8:03 p.m.

Ms DARVENIZA (Northern Victoria) — I am pleased to rise and make some comments on the Alpine Resorts and National Parks Acts Amendment Bill 2013. The Falls Creek alpine resort has been pursuing the changes that we see outlined before us in this bill for a number of years. The areas that are to be removed from the Alpine National Park are largely disturbed and already well and truly utilised by the resort. The areas that are to be added to the national park have been identified as containing snow gum, woodlands and suitable habitat for endangered alpine water skink.

The bill amends the National Parks Act 1975 and the Alpine Resorts Act 1983. It adds 9.6 hectares on the northern foreshore of the Rocky Valley Storage which is currently part of the Alpine National Park to the Falls Creek alpine resort. It adds two other areas of about half a hectare each to the resort. The first one is an area in Sun Valley that is currently in the national park and which contains the resort's snow grooming facilities, and the second is an area at Howmans Gap which currently contains the resort's snow clearing base. An area of 11.9 hectares on the northern slope of Mount McKay which is currently part of the resort will be added to the Alpine National Park.

The bill sees no net loss at all from the Alpine National Park. It is a common-sense approach to transferring

land, which is already degraded and used by the resort, to the alpine resort and offsetting the transfer with land of high environmental value. However, what is of concern is that there has been very limited consultation with stakeholders about these changes. Only those immediately impacted, such as the resorts, AGL and the former Department of Planning and Community Development, have been consulted — not stakeholders such as Parks Victoria and land managers. There has also been no information from the government about the potential development that is likely to occur. We have some very real concerns about this.

Although we are not opposing the bill before us today, we do have concerns about the development that could potentially occur in one area that is being excised from the resort, particularly on the foreshore of the Rocky Valley Lake. In the second-reading speech for the bill the Minister for Environment and Climate Change referred to opportunities to use the resort throughout the year, and this land will enable those opportunities to be realised. However, given the government's record so far, we are sceptical about what is proposed and whether it will be appropriate for the area.

We are also concerned that the Premier has decided to merge the departments of primary industries and sustainability and environment. Environmental policy development, the protection of threatened and endangered species, sustainability and action on climate change will be set back decades by the merging of these departments. It is imperative that we consider the impact of this merger not only on the environment but also on our rural and regional communities, of which this alpine area is one. It is in my electorate of Northern Victoria Region.

Primary producers will not be the only ones who suffer. We believe the environment will also suffer from these changes to the bureaucracy and the merging of these two important departments which carry out very important work in rural and regional Victoria in two distinct areas.

The government is going backwards when it comes to the environment. Based on its record so far, it cannot be trusted to care for and protect our national parks, or to meet the environmental challenges of our time. In the environment portfolio we have a minister who continues to lose responsibilities to The Nationals, and given their track record on the environment, that is not necessarily a good thing. The government has a very poor record on the environment; we only have to look at a few issues that certainly have been big issues in my electorate of Northern Victoria Region.

One of those issues is that almost the first act of this government after it was elected was to reintroduce cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park. Apparently its members saw our national parks as paddocks. What a debacle that has been. The commonwealth government had to step in. The state challenged that decision in the Federal Court of Australia and lost the case — and wasted taxpayers money — all to appease a few people who The Nationals made promises to during the election campaign. The Minister for Environment and Climate Change has still not outlined what he intends to do next.

Firewood collection is another debacle, showing that this government's record as far as protecting the environment goes is a poor one. The government has enabled the continuation of firewood collection without permits in our national parks. It claims it is cutting red tape, making it easier for communities, but it is far from that situation. In fact it has led to an all-out free for all. Commercial operators and people from Melbourne have been collecting large amounts of wood, leaving locals without firewood for their heating. There are people in my electorate of Northern Victoria Region who rely on the collection of firewood for their heating. The government has now been forced to introduce new regulations — putting limits on the amount collected — to try to control who collects the firewood in order to protect local residents who, as I said, rely on it for their heating.

In the 2012–13 budget funding cuts of \$130 million were made to environmental programs and services, including land management, biodiversity and management of our parks and forests. The result is less money to protect national parks. We have seen very significant staff cuts that have had a very direct impact on the ground. Jobs have been cut at Parks Victoria and in the former Department of Sustainability and Environment, bodies which have responsibility to care for and protect our national parks and to oversee changes in legislation. They now have fewer skilled front-line staff to monitor and oversight the implementation of these programs.

We have also seen significant job losses at our catchment management authorities, and fisheries research jobs at the former Department of Primary Industries have been cut in half, from 30 jobs to 15 jobs. This government's track record is not a good one. It appears that its members often make decisions on the run and then have to make more decisions to try to undo the bad decisions that were made earlier.

In conclusion, given the Napthine-Ryan government's poor record on the environment, Victorians are

absolutely justified in being sceptical about whether this government is committed to national parks in Victoria. We on this side of the chamber look forward, and I personally look forward, to hearing from the government regarding its plans for development in our national parks, because we do not believe it can be trusted. While this bill in itself does not see any trade-offs to our national parks in terms of the number of hectares that will make up this national park, and doing a land swap is a sensible decision, we do have concerns and are interested in hearing more from the government.

Mr P. DAVIS (Eastern Victoria) — I am pleased to make some brief remarks on the Alpine Resorts and National Parks Acts Amendment Bill 2013 before the house dealing with an objective of undertaking a land swap in respect of the Alpine National Park and the Falls Creek alpine resort. Before I make some general comments on the bill, I make the observation that by and large the preceding speakers — I was about to say with the exception of the Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Environment, but Mrs Petrovich has other things to contemplate, so perhaps she does not have that cap on today — did not address the objectives of the bill.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the great contribution Mrs Petrovich has made over the last two and a half years to public land management in Victoria. Having been appointed after the election of the Baillieu government in November 2010, she has taken a profound and committed interest in improving the land management of our natural estate. In particular she has had specific responsibilities in regard to bushfire mitigation and making sure that our rural landscapes are better protected from bushfire by oversighting the department's progressive ramping up of its efforts in fuel reduction burning.

Turning to the debate on the bill, I note that few of the previous speakers, other than Mrs Petrovich, addressed the objects of the bill. I did not realise that this debate was so wide ranging. I thought the bill was quite narrow, quite specific and dealt explicitly with a land swap between two different land tenures in the public estate, being the Alpine National Park and the Falls Creek alpine resort. To contemplate that speeches could be given in this place dealing with budget issues relating to departmental funding, the grazing of cattle in the high country, the guidelines for private investment in building infrastructure in national parks and firewood collections mystifies me. How could those subjects be introduced into what is a narrow debate? I am sure that the leniency and tolerance of government members allowed those comments to go unremarked. Perhaps in

winding up government speakers' contributions, I should note that I regard the comments of those opposite as being gratuitous and irrelevant.

The relevant point to make in this debate is that the Falls Creek alpine resort, like other alpine resorts, is set aside as a specific land tenure to be managed for multiple recreation purposes. Primarily the resort is used in the snow season — that is, it is a white-season playground for people who like to snow ski, whether downhill or cross country, for tobogganing or snowshoeing, or any of the other various forms. I suppose simply throwing snowballs is a part of that recreation in the winter time. Inevitably an effort is being made to refocus the assets of those alpine resorts, because the white season or ski season is a very short period and amounts to only a few months of each year. Depending on weather events, the ski season may be a very short season with limited capacity to maximise or optimise economic return on investments in those resorts. Primarily those environments are run by private sector people who risk their own capital with the encouragement of the resort managers, which are statutory government bodies. A fair bit of taxpayer money is invested in the resorts, so in order to get a reasonable return we have to extend the period of use of those resorts.

In the case of the Falls Creek alpine resort, a very specific strategic effort is being made to develop it in a way that other resorts are seeking to do — that is, to increase utilisation of the resort all year round in what is being called the green season. The green season strategy, particularly at Falls Creek, is to take advantage of the opportunity to provide high-altitude training — for example, for footballers out of season who are doing their summer training, and for other people training for elite sporting events.

I am reminded of a young girl I spent some time with. In fact Mrs Petrovich will recall that this young girl joined us in January at the Mountain Cattlemen's Association's get-together. She had driven from Falls Creek to Licola to be at the cattlemen's get-together, because she had spent her summer at high altitude training for her international elite sporting activity; she is a triathlete. That girl is but one example, and I have met many others who are interested in using opportunities to train at high altitude, and we should encourage that.

The land swap proposal contained in this bill does nothing other than ensure that there is recognition of the fact that some land presently classified under the land tenure arrangements as part of the Alpine National Park has been utilised for a long time for the benefit of the

alpine resort and has infrastructure thereupon, and some of which historically has been part of the hydroelectricity scheme arrangements. Highly impacted land abuts the alpine resort footprint, which is currently within the Alpine National Park boundary. All this bill proposes to do is excise that highly disturbed land, transfer it into the title of the alpine resort and mitigate the impact on the national park, excise some land from the alpine resort which is relatively undisturbed or mostly undisturbed — at least a corner of it is very lightly disturbed — and transfer that land back into the national park. The result of that transfer will be a net increase in area; we are talking about splitting hairs here, because the area we are talking about is not more than 12 hectares in total. In the context of the Alpine National Park, particularly if you consider that it is larger than Kakadu, I do not think it is going to make all that much difference.

My view is that the house should support the bill with acclamation and dispense with the indifference of non-government members, who want to address every other issue except for the fact that there will be a significant long-term benefit to the economic model of the Fall Creeks alpine resort from securing an appropriate land footprint. Doing so would allow the resort to develop, maximise the development of its plans and create opportunities for those who presently and in the future invest capital in the resort so that they will be able to maximise the yield on their investments for the alpine resort as a whole. That will apply not just to the private sector but will ensure that there is sufficient income coming to the alpine resort over a 12-month period so that the resort is not entirely reliant upon the ski season to generate enough revenue to maintain assets.

There is a very significant burden of responsibility on the boards of management of alpine resorts. They must not only manage the asset in a physical sense but also take into account their financial obligations — that is, to generate sufficient income to meet their expenses. Boards of management need to meet community service obligations, including appropriate environmental management. Without sufficient revenue being generated by an alpine resort boards cannot meet their requisite objectives.

I make the point that each of the alpine resorts in its own way has particular environmental programs. I was interested to hear some comments earlier this evening about something acknowledged by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — that is, providing protection for potentially threatened species at Falls Creek. I note that is similar to the program in place on the Baw Baw plateau to protect the threatened Baw

Baw frog, which I presume is a cousin of the growling grass frog. I am particularly interested in the Baw Baw frog because its domicile is substantially impacted by the Baw Baw alpine resort, which sits upon the Baw Baw plateau and straddles the Baw Baw National Park.

As has been alluded to, resort managers need to seek to accommodate some environmental objectives, notwithstanding that is not their core business. They have an obligation to do so, and the state government expects them to do so as well.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Minister for Environment and Climate Change on dealing with what was acknowledged by Ms Darveniza to be a long-running issue. This land swap has been urged upon governments for some time. It certainly was urged upon the previous government. I congratulate the Minister for Environment and Climate Change and his parliamentary secretary, Mrs Petrovich, on progressing this legislation and ensuring that this matter will be brought to a conclusion.

I look forward to the future of the Falls Creek alpine resort being sustainable and integrating with one of the other objectives I have a particular interest in, which is nature-based tourism, particularly in the Alpine National Park. We are investing in and developing the Falls Creek to Mount Hotham alpine walk as a major outdoor recreational and environmental activity.

I refer to one of the issues that no doubt will be wrestled with — and I am sure Mr Barber will join in the discussion when it comes to some conclusion — and it relates to the success we have seen in encouraging people to walk the Overland Track and Cradle Mountain in Tasmania, partly as a result of investment by the private sector in building huts. The Cradle Mountain huts are well known, and this investment has encouraged people to experience our wilderness in a way that they would have been unable to previously. I would like to think that Mr Barber might be enthusiastic about a similar opportunity to encourage Victorians to visit the alpine region.

The alpine walk would provide a very good location to attract a private sector operator to invest in this area in a discrete, sensitive way that would provide an outdoor experience for Victorians who would be unable to have that experience otherwise. Those of us who enjoy the isolation of independent walking and are happy to carry a 25-kilogram pack with tents, sleeping bags, dried food and all the rest that goes with it are perhaps limited in number. Those others who would like to sleep under the stars — that is, ‘5 stars’ — might have that

opportunity in the future. I urge the house to support the bill.

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — It gives me a great deal of pleasure to speak in the debate on the Alpine Resorts and National Parks Acts Amendment Bill 2013. In doing so I follow the extremely detailed and well-balanced contribution of the excellent Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Environment, Mrs Petrovich. I too would like to congratulate her and the minister on this piece of work and also my colleague Mr Philip Davis, who has spent a lot of time in the Alpine National Park and knows it well.

I was interested to hear Mr Barber in his contribution speak about the beauty of this area and how lovely it was to be close to the sky and the stars and to be in those wide, open, remote spaces. The Greens do not have a monopoly on hiking in this area. I too have walked all over the area, and I know it particularly well. Unlike Mr Davis I did not carry a 25-kilogram pack with a sleeping bag. At night I went back to a nice apartment to sleep, but I did walk 20 kilometres every day. For a considerable time I went out on daytrips right around this area, so I know it well. Mr Barber, Mrs Petrovich and Mr Davis have all said what a great and beautiful place it is. I reiterate those sentiments; it is a very beautiful part of the world.

It is interesting to look at the 2011 statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Falls Creek is a place where the population can fluctuate widely due to the seasonal nature of its attractions. Mr Barber said that he was not a downhill skier, but I can assure him that I have been downhill skiing. The 2011 census revealed that on census night Falls Creek was overwhelmingly empty — the census QuickStats state that in Falls Creek 16.5 per cent of private dwellings were occupied and 83.5 per cent were unoccupied. In comparison, Australia wide the reverse was true on census night — 89.3 per cent of private dwellings were occupied and just 10.7 per cent were unoccupied.

In his second-reading speech the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Mr Smith, said that the Falls Creek alpine resort is diversifying its appeal. Specifically he said:

Our alpine resorts are increasingly being valued for what they can offer visitors year round. The government wishes to further facilitate appropriate use and development of these resorts in order to increase visitation outside the snow season.

The statistical difference in the usage and non-usage of dwellings between the high point in winter and summer

has to be made closer. More people need to be using this fantastic resort all year round.

Members do not need to look too far into the past to see the high-altitude training conducted in the national park. Various football and athletic teams go up there to do their high-altitude running. Steve Moneghetti used to do a considerable amount of running in that area. A number of school groups go up there to do high-altitude training to be ready for the year ahead. Rowing is a very important and popular activity on the lake. There are a number of schools that continue to use the park during the summer period.

This is what has to happen with an asset that is so beautiful and is something that we want to share with everybody. It is therefore particularly important to see these added economic activities happening in this area. The bill deals with this issue. It enlarges the opportunity for a great deal of sport and activity and, as has been said before, the environmental aspect is going to be looked at and carefully balanced. As Mrs Petrovich said, this will enhance the opportunity for the area to increase its economic value.

The minister has said that we want to encourage more altitude training, lake events, road cycling and mountain biking, and I look at the work the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Ms Asher, and the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Mr Smith, have done in encouraging people to visit the area. Indeed there was a \$350 000 advertising campaign run by the government to encourage Victorians to visit the alpine region during the Moomba long weekend. A media release dated 7 March states:

Tourism communities in the north-east, Gippsland and the Grampians had been hit hard during this peak travel season due to recent fires, but these communities are resilient, unharmed and keen to welcome visitors back.

In the same media release the Minister for Tourism and Major Events is quoted as having said:

By supporting our industry and travelling to regional Victoria, it protects the \$15.9 billion tourism industry and the livelihoods of people in those areas ...

Falls Creek is an area that needs year-round stability for its economic development so that people will move there, go there, invest there and encourage tourism, which is an extremely important, \$15.9 billion industry for people in rural and regional areas.

Another tourist campaign was conducted through advertisements in the *Herald Sun* encouraging people to 'Have a North Easter' in the alpine region. It encouraged people to enjoy the Easter break in the

alpine area. It was a very good and well-received public relations exercise, and the people who availed themselves of the opportunity had an excellent chance to see what is up there and so beautiful.

I want to talk about the Great Alpine Road closure. I am not sure whether Mr Davis spoke about this, but this debate gives me an opportunity to talk about it because it really was quite remarkable. The VicRoads crew managed to get the Great Alpine Road open in time for Easter after it was closed because of falling trees and bushfires. I will go through some articles from the *Border Mail* and the *Wangaratta Chronicle* which paint the picture, because I think it is important to note what was happening. The Great Alpine Road is seriously beautiful. The snow gums there have the most wonderful trunks which reflect the sun and are often a beautiful red colour. They are not very big trees, but they are seriously beautiful, and that stretch of road is a particularly beautiful part of Victoria.

In an article published on 18 February the *Border Mail* reported:

There are growing fears the massive task of making the Great Alpine Road safe after the recent fires could take up to two months with one senior mountain resort manager labelling the time frame catastrophic.

That is because Easter is so important for the area. The article noted that the bushfires around Harrietville and Mount Hotham over January and February had caused much damage and concern. The fires were out of control for months, and it was very difficult for those of us in the city to realise exactly what was happening. We felt that the whole area was on fire and that there would never be an opportunity for us to look at what was happening. In fact Ms Asher and Mr Smith worked to alert people to the benefits of the area and tell them it was a very safe place to be, and it was important that the Great Alpine Road was opened. The *Border Mail* article goes on to say:

... it will rob the mountains of Easter tourism — its traditional non-winter cash cow.

In an article published on 15 March — less than one month after the first article — the *Wangaratta Chronicle* stated:

The landscape has taken a massive hit and a power of work has been carried out, but traffic movement is back on the Great Alpine Road between Harrietville and Mount Hotham much to the delight of tourism operators, workers and visitors.

Authorities worked tirelessly to ensure the road was available for use over the busy Labour Day weekend and upcoming Easter holiday period ...

Heavy rainfall —

just to add to the bushfire issue —

caused ‘slips’, which left damage to the foundations, leaving barriers set up along strained parts of the winding road.

...

Since work started repairing the road on March 4 in excess of 4000 dead and burnt trees have been felled because they were at risk of falling onto the road, and two ground tree lopper teams are clearing 200 trees a day by hand close to the road.

It is remarkable to think that so much work and effort was put into opening this road to secure the economic viability of the area by making it available to tourists on a non-winter weekend. Fast forward another 12 days, and in a media release dated 27 March the Minister for Environment and Climate Change and the Minister for Roads advised that the number of dangerous trees that had been removed had increased to around 5000. It is phenomenal to think that the VicRoads, Parks Victoria and Department of Sustainability and Environment teams worked so hard to clear the road, and they are all to be commended. I know the businesses in and around Falls Creek are very pleased with the outcome, as numbers of visitors enjoyed Easter there and availed themselves of this beautiful part of the country.

Although the bill transfers some land from the Alpine National Park to the Falls Creek alpine resort, it also transfers land back into the Alpine National Park, representing a net gain of 11.9 hectares on the northern slopes of Mount McKay. I am certain that Mr Davis and Mr Barber have both climbed Mount McKay, and I have too. The view is spectacular. According to a media release from the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Mr Smith, dated 21 February:

... the Falls Creek biodiversity management system had identified the land to be added to the national park as suitably habitable for the critically endangered alpine water skink. The land also contains snow gum woodland.

I note Ms Broad’s contribution about the skink; she went to great lengths to describe it. The land also contains snow gum woodland, and it was the snow gums that I was speaking about before, which are really beautiful trees.

In conclusion, this is a win for the environment, a win for the alpine resort, a win for the communities in the alpine region in north-eastern Victoria and a win for the Victorian, Australian and international tourists who will visit the resort. It demonstrates the government’s clear commitment to the environment, to tourism and to the community, which is really doing it tough after the fire season. I know the operators are gearing up for a very effective and fun winter period, and I encourage everyone in the chamber to tell their constituents to go

up to Falls Creek, which is a very beautiful part of the world, but to also be mindful that it is just as beautiful, if not more so, in the summer. I commend the bill to the house.

House divided on motion:

Ayes, 33

Atkinson, Mr	Leane, Mr
Broad, Ms	Lovell, Ms
Coote, Mrs	O’Brien, Mr
Crozier, Ms	O’Donohue, Mr
Dalla-Riva, Mr (<i>Teller</i>)	Ondarchie, Mr
Darveniza, Ms	Petrovich, Mrs
Davis, Mr D.	Peulich, Mrs
Davis, Mr P.	Pulford, Ms (<i>Teller</i>)
Drum, Mr	Ramsay, Mr
Eideh, Mr	Rich-Phillips, Mr
Elasmar, Mr	Scheffer, Mr
Finn, Mr	Somyurek, Mr
Guy, Mr	Tarlamis, Mr
Hall, Mr	Tee, Mr
Jennings, Mr	Tierney, Ms
Koch, Mr	Viney, Mr
Kronberg, Mrs	

Noes, 3

Barber, Mr	Pennicuik, Ms (<i>Teller</i>)
Hartland, Ms (<i>Teller</i>)	

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Committed.

Committee

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I seek leave to have Mrs Petrovich sit at the table.

Leave granted.

Clause 1

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — My question is for the minister. Within the National Parks Act 1975 there is a body known as the National Parks Advisory Council (NPAC) which has an explicit function ‘to advise the minister on any proposed excision from a park referred to it by the minister’. Was that step taken in the case of the matters being delivered under this bill?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — The proposed excisions from the Alpine National Park were not referred to the National Parks Advisory Council.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I think the members of the National Parks Advisory Council would like me to ask the minister why not.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — The proposal was not referred to the National Parks Advisory Council because the excisions from the national park will not have a significant detrimental impact on the overall value of the national park as the areas to be excised are disturbed from past uses and there will be a net increase in the total area of the park due to the proposed addition of land to the park.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — Do I take it from that answer that when the government is planning to excise an area from a national park that does have a detrimental effect it will refer it to the National Parks Advisory Council?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I am informed that that is a matter for the minister to decide.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I understand, because the act says the council is ‘to advise the minister on any proposed excision for a park referred to it by the minister’. What I am not understanding is why you would have a National Parks Advisory Council and not use it on matters like this. We are having a debate here about this proposal and what it might consist of. The government has also flagged commercial developments in national parks under some loose guidelines, and the members of the National Parks Advisory Council would probably like to know whether they want to continue in that role. I am happy to move on to another matter if the minister does not have anything further on that.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — As I understand it, there is discretion as to whether or not to refer a proposed excision to the NPAC.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — On another matter but still in relation to clause 1 and the purpose of this bill, the purpose being to facilitate a development, in the minister’s media release we are told that the purpose of this bill is to enable Falls Creek to increase summer occupancy by developing facilities for a proposed high-altitude training mecca. To find out what that might mean we have to go to another document, the *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2012*. This proposes a lakeside facility ‘offering a training area and associated storage for water sports equipment, complemented by a restaurant/cafe, interpretive centre and amenities supporting green season and winter cross-country user groups’. That is a substantial development in anyone’s terms.

The strategy also flags, with no particular location mentioned, a high-altitude training facility that would include a ‘gym/sports hall, swimming pool, plunge

pool/spa, treatment rooms and a multi-use facility supporting uses such as a community hall, cinema, function space and conferencing’. That, by anyone’s standards, is starting to talk about a massive development. That came from page 46 of the *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan*.

There has been a bit of talk tonight about nature-based tourism and how wonderful it is, but nature-based tourism is not regular, common, garden-variety tourism that just happens to be plopped into the middle of a highly sensitive and highly scenic natural area. In fact that is the opposite of nature-based tourism because it is starting to destroy the very thing that people value about nature, which is being in nature. This is plonking a mini-entertainment complex into the middle of a natural area. There are, after all, a lot of places where you can go to use a spa or pool or a cinema.

What I would like to know from the minister in regard to the passage of this bill is what further approvals would be required to construct the facilities that are described in the *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan*.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — Could Mr Barber please repeat that question?

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — After the passage of this bill, what further approvals would be required in order to construct some or all of the developments flagged in the *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan*?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — What I can say to the member is that proposals for use of buildings and works on the Rocky Valley land will require planning permission under the alpine resorts planning scheme. Permit applications in the alpine resort that include buildings and works and vegetation removal require the preparation of a site environmental management plan. The site environmental management plan details the potential environmental impacts of any proposed development and the ways these impacts may be reduced through management strategies and practices. The management plan must include a site construction management plan and a site rehabilitation plan.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — And of course it is the Minister for Planning who is the responsible authority for alpine resorts, so he issues all those planning permits and I presume a building permit. Are any other approvals required to go ahead with matters that have already been flagged under the *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan*, Minister?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — There may well be requirements under the commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999 as that act applies to the Rocky Valley land. The Rocky Valley land and the Sun Valley land are, as part of the existing Alpine National Park, also part of the Australian Alps national parks and reserves national heritage places and included on the national heritage list under the EPBC act.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I thank the minister. I am presuming that these sorts of facilities, as described in the plan, would be highly visible from many places in the Alpine National Park, but I presume there are not yet any plans the minister can show us as to what they might look like.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — What I can say in terms of the proposals for the Rocky Valley land is that the Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Board envisages progressing opportunities for the area in two phases. Firstly, in the shorter term, beautifying the heavily disturbed areas, installing toilets, barbecues, tables and seating, and making improvements to the pontoon accessing the Rocky Valley Storage.

Secondly, in the longer term, and depending on funding and investment interest and planning permission, the resort will be establishing facilities, including boat storage and associated facilities for athletes, and a cafe restaurant. These facilities would be located in the more disturbed parts of the area and would be subject to a range of development approvals.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — Did that include the gym, sports hall, swimming pool, plunge pool, treatment rooms, multi-use facility, community hall, cinema, function space and conference centre in phase 2?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — No.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — So that is what — phase 3?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — There are no current proposals or applications for development.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I know there are no applications; this is currently part of a national park. But the *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2012* refers to a number of different developments with no location mentioned. That did not come into the description from the minister and other government speakers of the so-called phase 1 and phase 2 developments. If phase 2 is long term, I would like to

know what that means. When? What has happened to the other matters that are described in the alpine resorts strategic plan?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — There have been proposals in the past for development and use of condominiums on the site. However, this is not currently being considered. Any future proposals for the use of Rocky Valley land will be subject to a range of planning and approval processes.

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — In my contribution to the second-reading debate I referred to the very keen interest, to put it mildly, that very many Victorians have about development in national parks. When I refer to development in national parks, I am taking account of the fact that currently the Rocky Valley land is in a national park and, according to the provisions of this bill, it will be transferred into alpine resort land. But the fact of the matter is that that land will continue to be where it is in a very prominent part of a national park, a very visible part, and notwithstanding the fact that its legal status changes, and that is an important matter for the making of policy and determining management of our national parks, it does not change the fact that it is within a national park.

In that contribution I also indicated that Victorians would like to know what the government's plans are. We have had a series of questions now from Mr Barber about what the government's plans are and I do not think we have advanced very far in terms of Victorians' interest and desire to know. On behalf of Victorians I want to know what the government proposes. The question I put to the minister is: has any member of the government received any proposals or met with any proponents who have proposals that they are intending to put to the government after, presumably, the passage of this bill, for leisure centre-cum-conference centre-cum-cinema-cum-condominium developments on the Rocky Valley land? I think it is important if there are proponents out there who have had discussions with ministers, with other members of the government or with departmental officers that that information should be provided to the Council and through the Council to all Victorians at this time.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I first note and thank the member for her support in the recent vote on the second reading of the bill. I think I have answered the proposals for the Rocky Valley land, indicating the shorter-term proposals and the longer-term proposals. I am not aware of any members of the government having been spoken to by 'proponents', I think was the word that was used, so I do not have any specific response to that. But in terms

of the overall region, I point to the resorts' strategic plan for 2012, which is a public document.

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — I note that the minister has no specific response to the matters that I have raised and he has not sought advice from departmental officers as to whether they have any knowledge about these matters. Perhaps if I could take this further, it would be my interpretation of the government's loosely described code of conduct for ministers that at this stage it would not be necessary for a minister to indicate if they had received such an approach, because given the status of this land prior to the passage of this bill that would not be required. Can the minister confirm that if a minister had received such an approach, then they would not be required to disclose it at this time?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I note the member's commentary, if I can call it that, about codes of conduct. I make the point that there is a ministerial code now; there was not under the previous government when Ms Broad was a minister. I note that she indicates it is her interpretation, and I think it is a very loose interpretation. I have indicated very clearly that there are two phases that the Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Board envisages progressing, and I have indicated to her, first of all, in the short-term it is beautifying the heavily disturbed areas, installing toilets, barbecues, tables and seating, and making improvements to the pontoon accessing the Rocky Valley Storage. In the longer term, and depending on funding and investment interest and planning permission, it is establishing facilities, including boat storage and associated facilities for athletes, and a cafe restaurant. These facilities would be located in the more disturbed parts of the area and would be subject to a range of development approvals.

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — It is quite clear that the minister is declining to engage with the substance of the matters I am raising and is sticking to the mantra that he has been provided with. I certainly wish to take this opportunity to place on the record that if it subsequently comes to light that, in anticipation of this bill passing through the Parliament, members of the government have been engaging with developers and leisure centre spa operators, and in relation to specific proposals, whatever stage the minister might care to refer to them as, then that will very clearly be an indication that the government was not being open and transparent about its plans following the introduction of this bill. Victorians will make their own judgement on what the government's intentions are and what was in the minds of ministers at this time that they did not choose to share with Victorians who care about our

national parks, in particular the Alpine National Park and the alpine resorts.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I thank the member for her contribution. I think she has stretched a very long bow in her interpretation. I look forward to her support on the third reading of the bill just as she supported the second reading.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — They have to get access to the lake first; that is phase 1 — it is all about that waterside real estate. Then there is phase 2, as we have heard. Phase 3 was not raised by any other member in this place until I read from a publicly available document, the *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2012*. Ms Broad will be gratified to know there is no Ferris wheel listed in the document, but after the bill passes it will simply be a matter of a planning permit signed off by a minister for that or any of the other matters that have been raised here.

I have one last matter as it relates to the purposes of the bill. Government members have continually referred to this section as a disturbed area. It is not just any old weedy patch; it is a carefully managed and monitored quarantine site for orange hawkweed, one of the most pernicious weeds in Victoria. Any earthworks or construction that takes place there would have to be rigorously supervised so that construction vehicles and personnel are not able to carry orange hawkweed seed or plant material beyond the site. One might question whether this is the best place in the world for a construction site, given that the containment of the orange hawkweed is being managed carefully by Parks Victoria and some advising scientists. I ask the minister if they are aware of this and what steps will be taken to manage and control it once they take over responsibility for the site?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — As I understand it, orange hawkweed and similar matters would be managed as part of the approvals process. I should say I understand the description of some of the larger developments in the strategic plan to apply to the village itself.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — There is actually no location mentioned in the strategic plan. My question was: given that this is effectively being managed as a quarantine site for the weed and that the government is proposing to turn it, initially, into a construction site, what plan does the government have in place to manage this weed and prevent its spread into other areas?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I am informed that this would be managed as part of the approval processes and there would be relevant controls within those processes.

Clause agreed to; clauses 2 to 7 agreed to.

Reported to house without amendment.

Report adopted.

Third reading

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

That the bill be now read a third time.

I thank members for their contributions.

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

**PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
AMENDMENT (GROWTH AREAS
AUTHORITY AND MISCELLANEOUS)
BILL 2013**

Second reading

Debate resumed from 21 March; motion of Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills).

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I welcome the opportunity to make a contribution to the second-reading debate on this bill. The bill makes a number of changes to the act, starting with amending the provisions dealing with criminal liability for an officer of a body corporate. Those amendments, which are consistent with current national standards, are not opposed by the opposition and they do not cause us any great concern. Essentially they reword the current provisions in section 128 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and replace them with broadly similar provisions that, as I said, implement new national Council of Australian Governments guidelines. Those provisions do not concern the opposition. We are, however, more troubled by some of the bill's other provisions.

Firstly, without any explanation, the bill provides for a massive expansion in the powers of the Growth Areas Authority (GAA). It is worth noting that the massive expansion of the powers of the Growth Areas Authority flies in the face of a Liberal Party commitment to abolish it. Instead of honouring the promise to abolish

the GAA the Minister for Planning proposes to massively expand its powers. That in itself is troubling.

The concern we have, and I suspect the community also has, is that once again the minister is putting himself in a central role. It is the minister who will decide where the GAA operates; it is the minister who will decide what constitutes a growth area and therefore the area for which the Growth Areas Authority has jurisdiction. We do not support the proposal.

We are concerned that any expansion of the area in which the GAA can operate is not done by *Government Gazette*, as is proposed in this bill, but ought to come back before Parliament. Currently the area of operation of the GAA is determined by legislation. The opposition believes that is the appropriate mechanism. We believe any changes to those powers ought to be overseen by Parliament. We are concerned at the centralisation of power in the minister and the lack of any accountability or public explanation as to the reason behind this change. There is no criteria for where the GAA will operate. There is no criteria for what sorts of matters the minister will take into account when deciding where the GAA will operate. We are very concerned about the failure of the minister to define and set out the exact circumstances in which he will use this power.

Our concern is magnified when we look at the interaction of these powers with those of Places Victoria. It is worth noting that the GAA has considerable powers. It can acquire property and enter into agreements and contracts. Our concern is how its work intersects with that of Places Victoria, and is twofold. What is the delineation? Will the Growth Areas Authority work in Fishermans Bend, which is where Places Victoria currently operates? Is this the end of Places Victoria? We know that Places Victoria is in deep trouble. Our concern relates to whether the Growth Areas Authority is being positioned to replace Places Victoria.

We are also concerned that the involvement of the minister in the GAA is based on his role at Places Victoria, which has turned into a disaster. We have seen a halving of the workforce at Places Victoria. We have seen a loss of some \$18 million. Peter Clarke has stepped down as chair of Places Victoria. Mr Clarke is a close associate of the former Premier. He is a failed Liberal Party candidate who was appointed as chair of Places Victoria by the minister. He had to step down because of an investigation by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission — —

Mr O'Brien — On a point of order, Acting President, I know that Mr Tee as the lead speaker for the opposition has some discretion, but I urge you to call him back to the bill as he is straying widely from its provisions.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ondarchie) — I uphold the point of order. I am prepared to give the lead speaker some leeway, but I ask Mr Tee to return to the bill.

Mr TEE — We are concerned about the sort of work that is envisaged for the Growth Areas Authority, which seems primarily to be that of Places Victoria, an organisation which is failing under the watch of this minister. We are concerned that the Growth Areas Authority will face the same predicament in 12 to 18 months time. We are very concerned about this. It is not unusual for the minister to operate in this way. It is not unusual for him to massively expand his powers without any accountability, parliamentary oversight, public explanation to the community or criteria outlining the way in which the new powers will be exercised. We do not think this is the appropriate way to do it.

We are also concerned about a further change promoted in this bill regarding amendments to division 2 that relate to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) decision which held that the Minister for Planning could not transfer responsibility for the administration or enforcement of a permit onto a local council. Our concern, which has been reflected by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and indeed a number of other councils, is that the minister will issue a permit and then force councils opposed to that permit to administer it. This will mean a council is required to administer a permit that it opposes. We are concerned at the unfairness of a situation where a council is asked to administer and enforce a permit, which is often a very expensive and time-consuming process. Enforcing a permit at VCAT can be a lengthy and expensive process, particularly for regional councils which simply do not have the resources.

The minister is forcing himself on councils when they do not support a permit. Despite not supporting the permit, councils will be required to enforce it. We do not support that provision, nor do a number of councils. In an article in the *Age* of 30 March the chief executive of the Municipal Association of Victoria, Rob Spence:

... warned that a lack of technical expertise in councils ... could force local governments to spend time and money implementing decisions that they did not want.

The article continues:

'There has been no consultation with the sector at all, which breaches the state and local government agreement', Mr Spence said. 'Councils have serious concerns about it'.

Mr Spence also said:

Council has already experienced the substantial cost and resourcing problems required to deal with these matters.

The MAV has also pointed out the costs associated with this very unfair obligation. If a council does not support a permit application, the minister forces the permit application on the council and requires the council to implement it. Seven councils, including Moorabool Shire Council, Pyrenees Shire Council and Golden Plains Shire Council, have also gone public with their concerns about this proposal. In an article in the *Courier* of 13 April, Cr Toohey said:

There's a proposal to transfer responsibility for pre-construction, construction and post-construction compliance of all wind farms on to local councils ...

Minister Guy is looking to handball significant cost shifting to local government ratepayers.

This would cost several councils who have wind farms throughout Victoria millions of dollars over the coming years ...

Cr Toohey said there had been no consultation with local government or the community about this proposed amendment to legislation.

Of particular concern was the administration of contentious planning permits that were called in by the planning minister. Cr Toohey predicted a 1 per cent rate increase per annum would be needed to do what the planning minister is trying to handball to Moorabool council.

According to the *Courier*:

Pyrenees Shire mayor Michael O'Connor said his council had written directly to the planning minister outlining their disappointment at the lack of consultation.

Golden Plains councillor Bill McArthur has said that he met with the planning minister and asked the minister to take on board some of the views of the councils involved before he progresses.

A number of councils have put on the public record their concerns about being, in their words, 'handballed' responsibility for the enforcement of a permit that they did not support. Councils have indicated that they will have to pass this cost onto ratepayers, that ratepayers will feel an annual pinch as a result of this minister's decision to force his views on councils. Moyne Shire Council has written to each upper house MP expressing its concerns. My letter was dated 27 March, and I will quote from it. It states:

The Moyne Shire Council, at its ordinary meeting held on 26 March 2013, passed an urgent notice of motion regarding the ... bill.

The motion from council was that:

... council immediately write to the Premier, the Minister for Planning and all members of the Legislative Council and the Department of Planning and Community Development expressing that it strongly objects to the amendments ...

There have been meetings with the minister where he has been asked to take on board councils' views. Councillors and the Municipal Association of Victoria have been saying there has been no consultation with them about these provisions, which will mean a 1 per cent rate increase to regional ratepayers, who will be socked the cost of implementing permit applications in these circumstances. Moyne Shire Council has written to everyone and passed an urgent motion objecting to this move.

The Attorney-General said in his second-reading speech for the bill in the Assembly that:

The bill does not remove or change the planning powers and responsibilities of municipal councils.

Moyne Shire Council says in its letter that in this respect the second-reading speech is totally incorrect. It states:

Council is of the view that the proposed changes have not been subject to consultation and were not outlined in the original consultation program and drafts of the bills where councils were invited to comment. Moyne Shire Council was not aware of this being introduced to Parliament until Friday, 22 March 2013.

Council officers worked closely with senior officers of the Department of Planning and Community Development since March 2012 regarding the enforcement of permit conditions. Not once did any of these officers see fit to inform council that such an amendment to completely reverse the current situation was being proposed.

The opposition is very concerned about this provision, as indeed we are about the other provision. We are concerned that this minister is trying to ram through changes like this over the objections of councils. We are concerned that not only is he imposing a massive cost on ratepayers — 1 per cent per annum — and not only is he imposing a massive resource burden on councils but he is doing so without any explanation, without any consultation and without any notice. Not even in the second-reading speech are people alerted to what this minister is doing through this sleight of hand. We are very concerned about the outcome, and we are very concerned about the process and the minister using this technique to ride roughshod over councils. As I said, that is the view of the opposition, but it is also the

view of a number of councils which have gone public and expressed their concerns.

The opposition will be moving a number of amendments to the bill, and I ask that they be circulated now.

Opposition amendments circulated by Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) pursuant to standing orders.

Mr TEE — In essence the amendments give councils an opportunity to opt out. The amendments say we will not give this minister unbridled and unlimited power to force costs onto councils. We will be requiring the minister to seek the consent of those councils. I do not think it is difficult for the government to contemplate that it requires the consent of local councils. We think that is a common-sense way forward. It allows the minister to continue, as is set out in the bill, but not against the will of councils. You cannot force this provision on to councils, but you can ask them. We think that is a better and a much more sensible approach.

We hope members opposite will look at this bill, not through party-political eyes, but from the perspective of regional councils that are struggling to manage their business and that do not have the technical expertise required or the resources to do what this minister will ask of them. What we are saying to members opposite is to give councils the choice. I will be moving an amendment in the committee stage which goes to those issues, and I hope for the sake of ratepayers in regional Victoria members opposite will support that amendment.

Mr O'BRIEN (Western Victoria) — On behalf of the government, I wish to respond to the suggestion that the Planning and Environment Amendment (Growth Areas Authority and Miscellaneous) Bill 2013 will not serve regional Victoria. It is quite the contrary: this bill is very much in the interests of regional Victoria. Unlike the actions of the metro-centric previous government, this bill considers the options of allowing growth to occur, not just in the metropolitan area of Melbourne, or the outer suburban areas as they are sometimes called — the growth areas presently identified in section 46AP of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

It allows the minister, where appropriate, to extend the powers and reach of the Growth Areas Authority to all parts of Victoria, including our very important and fast-growing regional areas, many of which are in Western Victoria Region, which Mr Koch, Mr Ramsay and I are proud to represent and which adjoins the very

large fast-growing region that Mr Finn represents. This government is proud to serve in a cohesive fashion the regions and this great metropolitan city of Melbourne, and for this important reason this bill will extend the powers of the Growth Areas Authority to include all of Victoria.

I wish to quickly respond to the heart of Mr Tee's contribution. Again, it was an example of a frequent habit of the Labor Party, which is doing one thing in office and then saying another thing in opposition. Essentially Mr Tee is opposed to two aspects of the bill. The first instance is in relation to the growth areas provisions. He accused the Minister for Planning of centralising the power riding roughshod over councils, acting in a way that was unaccountable et cetera. This is precisely the actions of the previous Minister for Planning, now the member for Essendon in the Assembly, Mr Madden, who issued the approvals for many of these wind farm permits which are the subject of this bill.

That has given rise to the need for the second aspect of the bill, which confers enforcement responsibility on local councils. These are powers that the coalition, during the 2010 election, promised would be conferred on local councils — that is, the powers to make decisions in relation to wind farms. We have a number of wind farms that were called in by the previous minister, Minister Madden. I think Mr Tee conceded in his submission that they were not necessarily well-considered permits but rather were contentious planning permits. Many of the provisions of those planning permits caused considerable contention in communities, and wind farm provisions, particularly in relation to noise impacts and road maintenance, have caused a fair bit of contention for many of the councils referred to by Mr Tee.

Faced with that situation, as a coalition we have committed to returning the power to grant permits for wind farms to local communities and to be respectful of those communities, but also to assist councils in making those decisions by providing them with resources of the department, including those of the flying squad. It is consistent with those commitments that these provisions of the bill also transfer the responsibility for enforcement of the planning provisions to those local authorities in the instances recognised in the bill.

It should be remembered that the decisions that arose out of the planning permit in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal case of *Woolsthorpe Wind Farm Pty Ltd v. Moyne Shire Council* [2012] VCAT 1634 in relation to the Moyne Shire Council was an action taken by the council, firstly, in a sense to

be declared as a party to the proceeding, and secondly, to be joined to that proceeding, an application that was unsuccessful. In relation to the previous government's last two months in office, seven wind energy facility projects, totalling 575 turbines, were approved or extended by former Minister Madden: at Crowlands, Berrybank, Stockyard Hill, Yaloak, Moorabool, Mortlake South and Ararat. Not a single project has been under construction.

Probably one of the most contentious wind farm developments approved under the previous government is the Macarthur wind farm, which has 55 conditions. Those conditions relate to the traffic management plan, which simply says that the council must be satisfied if there are any changes to the traffic management plan and that the council will be able to control the changes to the roads, the types of trucks driving on the roads, as well as the number and times of the truck movements. This matter has been widely reported and has been a matter of significant concern to the Moyne Shire Council, which has estimated various ranges of damages which are reported to be up to about \$14 million in damaged roads as a result of the permit. I know many constituents in that area who frequently complain about that issue.

The issues involving the Macarthur wind farm were somewhat contentious among various landowners, particularly the owners of adjoining land, and as members of Parliament we received many representations from families such as the Gardiners and others who are concerned about the impact of noise. What I can say about those matters is that whilst we cannot go back in time in relation to approvals, the coalition has ensured that in future its wind farm policy will be considerate of the concerns of adjoining landowners but at the same time will allow the wind industry to continue in Victoria and in a way that better respects local concerns.

In relation to the first aspect of the bill, in my view the important part is that powers can be granted to the Growth Areas Authority so it can consider any part of Victoria as a potential area for growth, which does not dictate that outcomes in those areas will necessarily occur. Rather, this measure allows these areas to be planned 5, 10, 15 or 25 years into the future. This aspect was sorely lacking in the previous government's Melbourne-centric Melbourne 2030 policy, which did not consider the potential of regional areas to also accommodate significant areas of growth.

The work of Regional Cities Victoria and the work of the Premier, Dr Napthine, as the Minister for Regional Cities, in conjunction with the Minister for Planning,

Mr Guy, and the Minister for Rural and Regional Development, Mr Ryan, in developing eight regional growth plans around Victoria, will ensure that for the first time the state has coordinated regional growth plans for these important growth areas. These plans will incorporate planning, infrastructure, roads and residential development in such a manner that communities will be able to foresee their futures as best as can be planned and ensure that they have the facilities they need for those growing communities. It is important both to take the pressure off Melbourne and to provide the infrastructure and the resources these growing areas need. It is also important that regional areas are able to be provided with a framework that will allow them to reach their potential into the 21st century.

On the specifics of the bill, the minister's second-reading speech outlines what is provided for in most of the important clauses. Another important aspect of the bill relates to directors liability provisions, which have been consistent with the Council of Australian Governments reforms and which will further reduce red tape and remove the disincentive for people to take up directorships of companies. Importantly this measure will restore confidence in the business community and restore faith and prosperity to this state.

This is also reflected in the action Premier Napthine has taken in conjunction with the cabinet to restructure the public service, particularly the opportunities created by a more integrated Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure. Such measures will ensure that there can be targeted responses to growth areas to enable those communities to reach their full potential, to plan together and to enjoy the benefits that Victoria as a whole has to offer, particularly in our regional areas.

I urge anyone else who wishes to engage in the opportunities that abound in regional Victoria to attend the second regional expo initiated by this government, which will be conducted this weekend. The last regional expo in 2012 welcomed 8045 visitors over three days, including 31 regional speakers who provided insight into regional opportunities, 13 different arts and cultural projects and the many different opportunities for people to consider a move to regional areas to continue this growth, which is well supported by this bill.

I note the time, and I note that other speakers wish to make important contributions to the debate on this bill. In relation to planning, it is important to remember the distinction between individual permit decisions and long-term planning. The minister has got it right in this bill, because not only does the bill provide local

councils with the resources of the Growth Areas Authority when it is necessary to make long-term planning decisions but importantly, in relation to enforcement, it is also consistent with decisions made to restore local wind farm and call-in powers to councils so that that local decision making is respected. I commend the minister for his work, and I commend the bill to the house.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — This bill is entitled the Planning and Environment Amendment (Growth Areas Authority and Miscellaneous) Bill 2013, and whenever you see 'miscellaneous' you know you have to go looking, although in the last sitting week it was the 'other matters' section of a bill that seemed to take up most of our time.

We should thank the Moyne Shire Council for working out what the 'miscellaneous' was all about. While ministers have all the powers in planning schemes, what you can rely on is that your local council will take responsibility for the outcomes, because local government is the level of government closest to the people. I hope Mr O'Brien gets a bit closer to his local councils, because if he were to spend some time talking to the Moyne Shire Council, the Pyrenees Shire Council and a range of other councils in that area about the particular representations they have made, he would learn that. He would also learn that local councils are on a pretty short feedback loop from their communities. People in local government carry mobile phones and take calls at all hours of the day and night; there really is nowhere to hide. At least state MPs come up to Melbourne from time to time and conduct business in this chamber without either full awareness or full admission of the impact votes may have on those people to whom they have to deliver.

The purpose of the 'miscellaneous' section of this bill is to make sure that someone other than Mr O'Brien's government — that is, the local councils — is to have shunted its way the responsibility for a number of major call-ins — and not just the sorts of call-ins as those that happened recently which led to a 2012 Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) case, a matter to which I will come in moment. That could include, for example, any call-in by the previous government that occurred under the same circumstances to be covered by this bill. Such matters have a long tail of responsibility when it comes to enforcing planning permits in terms of conditions. Think of a condition that may be added to certain planning permits in the event of sea level rise so that a landowner would have certain expectations. That is what I call a long tail.

Mr O'Brien — I will let Mr Finn respond to this one.

Mr BARBER — It is Mr O'Brien's minister who is signing off on such permits. I have taken the time to have a look at some of the material from Mr O'Brien's electorate. If Mr O'Brien had done the same, then he would understand what I am talking about — a long tail of responsibilities associated with the planning permit issued by a minister after a call-in are now to be shunted back to the responsibility of the local council.

Mr Tee talked a bit about his belief that what is going on is a centralisation of powers without accountability by the Minister for Planning. Yes, we are all aware that the Minister for Planning is the Emperor of Planning and can do whatever he wants under the planning scheme. We are also all aware that Mr Tee wants to be the Minister for Planning and hopes he will be in a short time. What I did not hear from Mr Tee was that his first act when sworn in —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr BARBER — I have got my own little green tea party happening over the side here to my left.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr BARBER — There is a not-so-green tea party occurring to my left.

What we did not hear from Mr Tee, the wannabe Minister for Planning, is that he would hand back some of these powers and responsibilities and at the same time load onto himself new degrees of accountability. He just said it is bad if the guy in the chair is Mr Guy, but apparently it will be ecotopia with Mr Tee in the chair.

In this case we see something going against the trend, which is the pushing of responsibility back to the local council. I wonder why this minister would want to give responsibility for planning permit enforcement, particularly in relation to wind farms, back to local councils. It has been said that local councils are not equipped to handle the complex responsibilities involved in enforcing a wind farm planning permit. What I want to know is how well the former Department of Planning and Community Development has been able to handle these ongoing questions of enforcement of conditions under the planning permit.

Recently we saw a motion in the federal Parliament introduced by Senator Madigan of the Democratic Labor Party, which notes:

... the assistant director of regional projects for the Department of Planning and Community Development in Victoria has confirmed that the Waubra wind farm, which has been under review since it commenced in 2009, has not been signed off on any noise compliance by the planning minister, Mr Matthew Guy, therefore making it non-compliant ...

It then goes on, chillingly, to say:

... to obtain accreditation from the Clean Energy Regulator, the Waubra wind farm must provide evidence that it is compliant with all state permit requirements ...

The senator was seeking a review of the accreditation process and of the accreditation of all other wind farms, and an investigation into whether these so-called non-compliant wind farms had received their renewable energy certificates.

Mr Ramsay — So-called non-compliant?

Mr BARBER — That is exactly the matter I am trying to get to the bottom of, Mr Ramsay. Is it or is it not non-compliant? We know it has a post-construction noise monitoring permit condition, and we know that the Minister for Planning, since he became the Minister for Planning, has had this matter sitting on his desk. It has been shunted around within his department — a few different people have handled the file — but it seems, as we will find out during the committee stage of the bill, that he has one more shunt to do, which is to send it back to the local council.

In the meantime, though, every single member of the federal coalition voted for Senator Madigan's motion containing a finding that Waubra wind farm is non-compliant. Without ever getting to the truth of that matter, I have asked a couple of times of the minister in this chamber whether it is or is not true, whose responsibility it would be to say so and why he thinks it is okay to let that continue on while his federal and other coalition colleagues make mischief. We want to know if it has achieved its required permit condition for a satisfactory post-construction noise monitoring study.

Certain types of planning permits have a long tail of enforcement. There is the planning permit for rock concerts at the showgrounds, for example, which is also the responsibility of the Minister for Planning. He is the responsible authority for that area. It seems that it is beyond the capacity of this minister to carry out such compliance, and yet every single member of the federal coalition has already voted for a motion that says the wind farm is non-compliant. If it were non-compliant, it would have to lose all its renewable energy certificates, and if it were to lose those, it would lose a major source of revenue, taking out the actual sale of electrons. Before we sign off on this bill it is pretty important that

we find out from the minister once and for all whether he believes the wind farm is compliant or non-compliant, or whether it has simply proven too tough for him, so he wants to quickly shunt it off to a local council.

It is not just that wind farm, and it is not just all wind farms. It is a whole range of planning permits that are not for the construction of a house here or there but for ongoing operations and a whole set of controls that go with them. At the same time the coalition is inflicting on councils every similar decision made by the former Minister for Planning, now the member for Essendon in the Assembly, Mr Madden, and a tail of Labor ministers prior to him, regardless of how well conceived those particular planning permits were. If they fall under the same category that will be affected by the bill, then their status will have changed as well. It creates a situation of moral hazard where a planning minister can sign off on preposterous, ridiculous, unenforceable or overly complex planning conditions, because they are not going to be the one who has to deal with the planning conditions as time goes on.

It is not just rural councils and wind farms that should be concerning us. We should be looking at each and every intervention that this minister has implemented in his two and a bit years as minister and asking him, 'Which ones does this bill apply to?'. That whole basket of problems is dealt with in one simple paragraph in the second-reading speech, which gives absolutely nothing away with regard to the bill's real impact. The paragraph simply finishes by saying:

As is the case now, the minister will continue to be responsible for administering certain aspects of these permits.

We need to go through the case law, we need to go through the concerns of Moyne Shire Council and we need to go through the categories of call-ins and ultimately the content of individual permits to fully understand who will be responsible for what when this bill passes.

Hats off to Moyne council and others that quickly understood the import of this bill. In fact it arose out of a point of law taken in a couple of VCAT cases in 2012, the main one being *Woolsthorpe Wind Farm Pty Ltd v. Minister for Planning* in October 2012, and I know Mr O'Brien will have read that case to get himself across the particular issue. We want to hear from the minister during the committee stage whether the bill is a response to that finding and how he expects that to play out in a number of cases. Many would have thought that the responsible authority for a permit would be determined by what the planning scheme says. However, the VCAT finding looked at the logic

of that and found in the other direction. From my understanding of paragraph 20 onwards of that VCAT case, the VCAT member argued that, as we would understand, regulations or planning schemes cannot alter the act, whereas of course the act does make provision to alter the subordinate legislation.

It is the responsible authority as listed in the planning scheme at the time of the intervention under the various provisions of section 97 onwards of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 that is the relevant consideration. As I stand here I do not have the ability to go back and find out what planning schemes said at various times.

Business interrupted pursuant to sessional orders.

ADJOURNMENT

The PRESIDENT — Order! The question is:

That the house do now adjourn.

Department of Environment and Primary Industries: jobs

Mr LENDERS (Southern Metropolitan) — The matter I raise on the adjournment tonight is for the attention of the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, who is also the Minister for Water, Peter Walsh, and it is about the new administrative arrangements and departmental restructure that the Premier announced last week. Under the proposal the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and the Department of Primary Industries will merge into one department, like the old Department of Natural Resources and Environment revisited. That is a policy issue for the government, but the issue I am raising for the minister is what the amalgamated department means for jobs in regional communities in particular and for the placement of officers and the services delivered in regional Victoria.

The Baillieu government — and now the Napthine government — was elected on a policy commitment of not cutting public service numbers; that was an unequivocal policy commitment. Of course we have seen through various iterations of mini-budgets announced on Christmas Eve and budget updates and the rest more than 4000 public sector jobs identified as having been shed. The minister has repeatedly said that no front-line services will be cut. I can certainly outline for the house and for the minister the number of front-line services that have been cut in regional areas, whether it be the DSE doggers in north-eastern Victoria or the research officers in the Department of Primary

Industries, and I could go through numerous ones that I have raised in the house before.

The action I am seeking from the minister tonight, as both the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security and the Minister for Water but most significantly as the coordinating minister in the new Department of Environment and Primary Industries, is a clear undertaking that there will not be any further job cuts in the department under the guise of efficiencies or productivity savings that are contrary to the unequivocal election commitment not to further cut the public service. To date we have seen approximately 10 per cent of staff cut out of the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Department of Primary Industries. I guess there is a sense of foreboding in the parts of regional Victoria I have been in since this announcement was made that this is simply code for further cuts to staff and service delivery. I seek from the minister an unequivocal commitment that the policy announcement of no job cuts will be honoured and that this restructure is not just another device to cut services in regional Victoria.

Consumer affairs: nightclub security

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter this evening is for the new Minister for Consumer Affairs, and it relates to liquor licensing. I know we have a new minister responsible for liquor licensing, but this is a consumer affairs issue. The matter is to do with nightclubs and is basically about how a number of nightclubs have computerised networks that scan ID cards and immediately advise club security if a patron has been involved in a range of antisocial behaviours at other nightclubs. It is a very useful tool. As I have said before in this place, the Stonnington City Council has a particularly successful accord with the nightclubs in Chapel Street that deals with police, patrons and nightclub owners.

The scanning of ID cards is a very good advance in security for patrons and for the safety of all around. The antisocial behaviour that sometimes occurs in these areas includes things like glassing, inflicting injuries that require hospital treatment, the theft of mobile phones, arguing with bouncers, using fake ID cards, selling drugs and breaking into venues, presumably to watch a music show or whatever. Some of these are particularly serious crimes; others are less serious. If an ID card comes back as belonging to someone who has engaged in antisocial behaviour, the nightclub bouncer is immediately alerted and is able to refuse entry. Victoria Police is supportive of the use of this type of technology and would like to see it expanded to other nightclubs and trouble spots. The information that is

stored is quickly wiped from the database after a period of time if a patron has caused no problems, but it can be retained for violent thugs.

This is both a deterrent and a prevention. This security measure does a few things. It helps to prevent trouble by denying entry to thugs who have caused trouble elsewhere, and it is also a deterrent, because people looking for trouble will realise that they will be barred from entering other premises. This security package will help to protect nightclub patrons who are looking for a good night out by banning thugs who are out to cause trouble. I therefore ask the Minister for Consumer Affairs to look at advising nightclubs of the availability of this technology or making it a requirement of future liquor licences.

Country Fire Authority: funding

Ms TIERNEY (Western Victoria) — My adjournment matter this evening is for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and it is in relation to Country Fire Authority (CFA) funding cuts. This year the government has cut \$41 million out of the Victorian CFA budget and \$24 million out of the budget of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. I believe the decision has placed not only firefighters but communities at risk, and these cuts have left the CFA with — —

The PRESIDENT — Order! I ask the minister whether he is picking up on Ms Tierney's matter, the minister it is directed to and the substance of the matter.

Hon. G. K. Rich-Phillips — Not the minister but the substance.

The PRESIDENT — Order! Ms Tierney might just tell us which minister it is going to.

Ms TIERNEY — The Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

The PRESIDENT — The minister assures me that he is across the issue that the member is raising.

Ms TIERNEY — That is very heartening. The CFA funding cuts have reduced the capacity for the important work that needs to be done over the firefighting season. My electorate covers the Barwon south-western area but also the Grampians, and what we have found is that in the Barwon south-west region we have had more fire activity this season than in the last four years. We have had significant fires around Portland, and we have had significant fires in the Grampians CFA district as well.

We believe the current cuts jeopardise the safety of Victorians. If this is not rectified in the state budget, it will send a very poor message not just in terms of those people who are volunteers and those who are professional full-time firefighters but also completely the wrong message to those communities that have battled so hard over the last four months. We know that fuel reduction has been limited. There has also been limited rain in the Barwon-south western region, to the extent that the fire bans will continue until 1 May this year. I call on the minister this evening to ensure that there is some responsibility in the forthcoming state budget and that there is a restitution of the moneys that have been cut from both of those budgets.

Mental health: women's facilities

Mr ONDARCHIE (Northern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter this evening is for the Honourable Mary Wooldridge in her capacity as Minister for Mental Health. Specifically I look for her support for Austin Health and in particular to consider gender-sensitive funding for Austin Health in my electorate of Northern Metropolitan Region. Women's mental health is of great concern for consumer groups, for carers, for families, for communities, for health services and for the Napthine coalition government. I am all too familiar with the importance of women's health issues from my time as executive director of the Royal Women's Hospital; it is something which is important and which I hold very dear.

To address these concerns the 2011–12 state budget included \$4 million in capital funding for modification works to improve conditions for women in mental health care. To allocate this funding the coalition government invited submissions from Victorian inpatient mental health services, with \$1 million worth of funding available in 2012–13. Ensuring that our services respect and are sensitive to women's needs and their safety is a real concern for the Napthine coalition government. Women can feel vulnerable in mixed-gender areas where there are typically more males than females and where there is limited privacy or an inability to lock rooms or protect belongings.

I want to improve the safety, security and comfort of women in mental health inpatient facilities. Women have the right to receive treatment and care free from fear of victimisation, violence, sexual assault or retraumatisation. In my short term in this Parliament I have worked closely with Austin Health, and I believe Austin Health is an ideal candidate for these grants and would put the funds to great use by making women's mental health care safer, more secure and more comfortable for women in these very vulnerable times.

I congratulate Dr Brendan Murphy and his team on the excellent services they provide in Melbourne's north, and I call on the minister to strongly consider Austin Health in the next round of upcoming grants.

Electricity: retail prices

Mr SCHEFFER (Eastern Victoria) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Energy and Resources, Mr Kotsiras, and I ask the minister to provide me with advice on how he plans to decrease electricity bills in Victoria.

The minister will be aware of reports that last year the Essential Services Commission of South Australia proposed an 8.1 per cent reduction in the electricity standing contract price and that this would mean a \$160 per year reduction in electricity charges for an average household. After reading the statement from the commission it becomes clear that the commission is not saying that the reason for the recommended lowering of the standing contract price is due to the increased quantity of electricity from renewable sources being introduced into the market; however, authoritative reports argue that this is the case and that the reason the South Australian commission made this recommendation was that the wholesale costs for electricity had fallen. The reason for the fall in the wholesale price of electricity in South Australia is that more electricity generated from renewable sources, from state-based feed-in tariffs and from wind has been introduced into the national electricity market. South Australia has the highest installed capacity of wind in Australia and the highest per capita installation of rooftop photovoltaic solar power. The case has been put that the increased availability of renewable energy in the market must be the cause of the lower price.

At the same time that prices were coming down in South Australia, the Victorian Essential Services Commission found that electricity prices in this state over the past five years had gone up by around 33 per cent. In South Australia the prices are coming down, and in Victoria they are going up at a great rate. I ask the minister to provide me with information on when the government expects that the level of Victorian renewable energy introduced into the electricity market will reach a point where it will contribute to the lowering of electricity prices, as it has in South Australia.

The fact is that the lowering of electricity prices in South Australia and the increase in prices in Victoria is occurring during a national debate over the cost of renewable energy targets and the impact of carbon pricing. According to some experts, attacks on

renewable energy target schemes exaggerate the direct cost without factoring in secondary effects, such as the impact of increased quantities of renewable energy in the market and the effect this has on lowering prices. This is what the Essential Services Commission of South Australia relied upon when it lowered the standard contract price by 8.1 per cent.

Mental health: women's facilities

Mr FINN (Western Metropolitan) — I wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Mental Health, Mary Wooldridge. It very closely follows Mr Ondarchie's comments on the subject of gender-specific mental health services. I am asking the minister for support for services in the Werribee and Sunshine areas specifically so as to provide such services for many women in the western suburbs of Melbourne.

It has to be said that the western suburbs have their own particular set of problems. We have a very large group of residents who come from non-English-speaking backgrounds, and of course that provides some difficulties in itself. There is no doubt that there are many women suffering from mental health problems who come from cultures that perhaps do not readily accept such problems, and they suffer as a result of that.

It also has to be said that in domestic violence situations the role of male partners, or indeed female partners, have a great deal to do with some areas of mental health, and this is one of the areas that we could and should be looking at. I know that some community health services have taken up these programs. The Sunbury Community Health Centre has run a program for many years that aims to teach men how to break the cycle of domestic violence and anger and touches on a number of issues which may result in mental health problems for women. That is something that should be seriously looked at by the minister and by health providers in the western suburbs.

As I said, we in the west have some specific problems. The minister has shown a great deal of interest in and is preparing to show a great deal of support for health services in the western suburbs. I ask the minister to look favourably upon requests from health providers from the west.

Single parents: government support

Ms DARVENIZA (Northern Victoria) — I wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Premier. I am very concerned about recent changes to the federal parenting payment eligibility that has shifted some 85 000 single

parents, the majority of whom are women, off the parenting payment and on to the Newstart allowance. These changes will force many families who are already struggling with the enormous task of sole parenting to live below the poverty line.

Single parents in regional and rural areas in my electorate are bearing the brunt of these changes. Not only are they being forced on to the Newstart allowance once their youngest child turns eight, leaving them about \$100 a week worse off, but the opportunities for them to find appropriate jobs which offer flexible hours, access to after-school care and public transport are minimal. In small country towns both jobs and relevant services often do not exist. Mel Taylor-Ryan, who lives in Wangaratta, has worked part time, paid taxes and cared for her two children as a single parent for the past decade. She says that the cuts have brought unprecedented hardship to her family. Some days she does not eat — —

The PRESIDENT — Order! I would like to understand how Ms Darveniza will bring this matter back to a state jurisdiction, because my understanding is that is a federal program and indeed the decision to cut it was made by the federal government. Therefore I suggest it is outside the jurisdiction of a state minister to have a particular influence on this program beyond perhaps advocacy. Is that where the member is going?

Ms DARVENIZA — That is where I am going.

The PRESIDENT — Order! Ms Darveniza, to continue.

Ms DARVENIZA — Some days Mel Taylor-Ryan does not eat as she is worried that she will not have enough food for her children.

Research commissioned by the federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has cast doubt over the value of forcing people into work that is unsuitable and inflexible. I believe employment is the best way to break the poverty cycle, but with the Victorian regional unemployment rate at 6.3 per cent — up from 5.8 per cent in December 2012 — the chances of gaining suitable employment are slim. The United Nations states that the changes to the parenting payment eligibility are contrary to some of Australia's international human rights obligations and may violate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The specific action I seek from the Premier is that he and his ministers vigorously lobby the federal government — particularly the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Financial

Services and Superannuation, Bill Shorten, who is the minister responsible — to reverse these changes to the parenting payment eligibility prior to the May federal budget. I have written to Mr Shorten, and I am yet to receive a response. In making these changes I understand that the federal government chose to ignore advice from various welfare groups, the Australian Council of Social Service and the recommendations of the federal Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights that the changes be delayed. Throughout northern Victoria the changes are causing additional hardship in households that are already under financial stress due to an increase in cost of living pressures, especially in terms of health and education. Too often this additional stress adversely impacts on the wellbeing of children in these households.

Public transport: western suburbs

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Planning on behalf of the Minister for Public Transport. This government was elected on a promise to fix public transport and to not neglect the west. I would like to remind the government of three public transport projects that need fixing in my western suburbs electorate and that should receive funding in the upcoming budget. The first is the duplication of the Altona loop single track as far as is possible. The very poor service on the Altona loop is reflected in the fact that its commuters are the most dissatisfied of the whole Melbourne Metro network and in the loop's low patronage. Residents have been forced to abandon their trains. Consultants at URS have undertaken preliminary research and have outlined and costed a feasibility study which looks at duplication of sections on the Altona loop and the installation of passing loops. It will cost just \$36 000. As far as the state budget is concerned this is chicken feed, but it is desperately needed by the Altona loop commuters.

The second matter which needs attention is the duplication and electrification of the Melton rail line and the construction of Caroline Springs station — a project which was abandoned by the coalition government upon its election. This area is the fastest growing in Australia and patronage on the Melton line is set to double by 2024, yet it is only serviced by an infrequent country train. According to a V/Line report recently obtained by my colleague Mr Barber, Melton line trains could have standing room only from day one of the regional rail link. The report describes the train service to Rockbank, Deer Park and Ardeer as being 'sparse and unattractive to users'. The report also clearly states that in order to facilitate the regional rail link services as planned, the Melton rail line must be

duplicated and electrified. This gives the government until 2015 to complete the Melton line duplication and electrification, but we had better get moving on this if we want the regional rail link to work.

The final project I will mention is a crucial inner Melbourne tram link: extending the route 82 tram via Footscray Road to Docklands and the city. The tram link is supported by both Maribyrnong and Melbourne councils. It is a glaringly obvious fit and greatly desired by the community.

While the western suburbs have public transport needs that are much greater than those I have mentioned today, these three projects are very important and are supported by the Public Transport Users Association in its budget submissions. The action I ask of the minister is that he ensure that these public transport projects receive funding in the upcoming state budget.

Housing: eastern suburbs facility

Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is directed to the Minister for Housing, Wendy Lovell. It concerns a state-run housing facility in the eastern suburbs. This facility is meant for short-term residents, especially those experiencing financial hardship. At the time this facility was established the neighbours were consulted by the minister's department and the residents accepted the type of facility it was going to be. However, they also accepted assurances that their lifestyles would not be affected by the facility being located very close to them. Unfortunately some constituents have grave concerns about the way this facility is being run. They have had occasions when they have had to call for the police and ambulances and had to speak directly to the organisation which runs the facility for the government.

The constituents have asked me to raise this matter with the minister. It has been agreed with the constituents that we should not inflame the situation by giving the location of this facility and that speaking about the neighbours in Parliament is probably not a good way to go about fixing the issue. I have the details and a letter these constituents have sent to the minister. I also have a copy of that letter, and I hope the minister at the table will not mind handing it over to the minister so she can take some direct action to get her department to seriously look into this facility, which consists of only three units with usually about five residents. There is a full-time, round-the-clock manager on the site, so I do not see why the facility cannot be run in a fashion whereby the neighbourhood does not feel threatened in any way.

Casey central east primary school: construction

Mr TARLAMIS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Education, and it concerns the construction of the new Casey central east primary school. The action I seek is that the minister commit to providing funding for the construction of the school in the upcoming state budget.

Casey central east primary school was an election commitment of the previous Labor government. It would have been the 10th new school delivered by Labor in the Assembly electorate of Narre Warren South alone. We saw the growth, we saw the need and we delivered, unlike the current government. It has ignored the plight of local primary schools that are now overflowing with nearly 1000 students each. But credit must be given, as the former government did provide funding for land acquisition in the 2011 state budget. You would have expected funding for the design and construction to follow in the 2012 state budget, yet here we are still waiting. Unfortunately this is nothing new, as we have already seen construction of the Officer special school delayed with no interim school provided for local families. I am sure that the many local families with young children do not appreciate having an empty paddock that may one day be home to a school that is needed right now.

Judith Graley, the Labor member for Narre Warren South in the other place, understands the importance of a quality education to local families and has advocated on their behalf for a new school. Ms Graley has written to the minister and raised this very important matter in the other place on numerous occasions. In fact in response to an adjournment matter raised by Ms Graley on 11 October 2012 the Minister for Education, Martin Dixon, stated that funding for the construction of the school 'will certainly be considered as part of the next budget'.

This was further to a letter from the minister to Ms Graley dated 5 May 2011, stating that the school:

... will be delivered in a timely manner to ensure that all students within the city of Casey have access to high-quality government school education.

It is time for the government to deliver on that commitment. It is time for the Premier to prove that his government, unlike the Baillieu government, actually cares about public education.

Casey central east primary school is desperately needed to cater for our fast-growing local community. Local schools are at or near capacity and urgently need relief. They cannot afford to wait as this government dithers and offers excuse after excuse. Construction of the estate in which the site for the new school is located has

already begun, and every day new families with young children are moving into their dream homes. But these families will be moving into their new homes not knowing when or even if construction will begin on the new school. Their children cannot attend school in a paddock. Casey central east primary school must be built. I ask the minister to commit to providing funding for construction of Casey central east primary school in the upcoming state budget.

Responses

Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Assistant Treasurer) — Ten members raised matters for ministers on the adjournment tonight.

Mr Lenders raised a matter for the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security.

Mrs Coote raised a matter for the Minister for Consumer Affairs.

Ms Tierney raised a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

Mr Ondarchie and Mr Finn both raised matters for the Minister for Mental Health.

Mr Scheffer raised a matter for the Minister for Energy and Resources.

Ms Darveniza raised a matter for the Premier.

Ms Hartland raised a matter for the Minister for Public Transport.

Mr Tarlamis raised a matter for the Minister for Education.

Mr Leane raised a matter for the Minister for Housing and asked me to pass on some documents.

I will pass those matters on to the responsible ministers.

I have responses to 22 previous adjournment items.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I indicate that Ms Hartland's adjournment item caused me a little bit of thought inasmuch as adjournment items are only supposed to refer to one matter and Ms Hartland raised three separate projects as part of her adjournment item. I have taken the benevolent approach that it was a budget request rather than specific items, but members are reminded that normally an adjournment item should focus on one particular request.

On that basis, the house stands adjourned.

House adjourned 10.29 p.m.



**Minister for Public Transport
Minister for Roads**

PO Box 2797
Melbourne
Victoria 3001
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DX 210410

Mr Wayne Tunnecliffe
Clerk of the Legislative Council
Parliament House
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Mr Tunnecliffe

ORDER FOR DOCUMENTS – NETWORK REVENUE PROTECTION PLAN 2013

I refer to the Legislative Council's resolution of 6 March 2013 seeking the production of:

“ a copy of the Department of Transport's Network Revenue Protection Plan for the 2012–13 financial year.”

The Government is in the process of responding to this resolution. As part of this process, the Government is liaising with affected third parties, including Public Transport Victoria. This process has not yet been finalised.

Regrettably, the Government is not able to respond to the Council's resolution within the time period requested by the Council. The Government will respond as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



Hon Terry Mulder MP
Minister for Public Transport

14 / 2013

**Minister for Planning**

Our Ref: BMIN018315

1 Spring Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
GPO Box 2392
Melbourne Victoria 3001
Telephone: (03) 9938 5990
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DX210292

Mr Wayne Tunnecliffe
Clerk of the Legislative Council
Parliament House
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Mr Tunnecliffe

I refer to the Legislative Council's resolution of 20 February 2013, seeking the production of:

"a copy of the Potentially Contaminated Land Advisory Committee report that, according to the Department of Planning and Community Development website, was submitted on 9 March 2012."

I also refer to my previous letter advising that the government required additional time to respond to the resolution.

The government has conducted a thorough and diligent search to identify the documents relevant to the Council's resolution.

I enclose with this letter the relevant document that has been identified by the government.

Yours sincerely

MATTHEW GUY MLC
Minister for Planning

15.4.13.

Enc *Potentially Contaminated Land Advisory Committee Report*

Privacy Statement

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Minister for Planning

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Mr Wayne Tunnecliffe
Clerk of the Legislative Council
Parliament House
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Mr Tunnecliffe

I refer to the Legislative Council's resolution of 20 February 2013, seeking the production of:

"a copy of the Urban Growth Boundary Anomalies Committee report that, according to the Department of Planning and Community Development website, was submitted on 4 May 2012."

I also refer to my previous letter advising that the government required additional time to respond to the resolution.

The government has conducted a thorough and diligent search to identify the documents relevant to the Council's resolution.

I enclose with this letter the relevant document that has been identified by the government.

Yours sincerely


MATTHEW GUY MLC
Minister for Planning

15.4.13
Enc *Urban Growth Boundary Anomalies Advisory Committee Report*

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Wednesday, 17 April 2013

The PRESIDENT (Hon. B. N. Atkinson) took the chair at 9.35 a.m. and read the prayer.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I inform the house that I have been advised that the Environment and Planning Legislation Committee and the Legal and Social Issues Legislation Committee will both be meeting this day following the conclusion of the sitting of the Council.

As she comes into the chamber, I also acknowledge that Ms Pennicuik's birthday is today. I wish Ms Pennicuik a happy birthday.

BOSTON: BOMBINGS

The PRESIDENT — Order! I also take this opportunity to advise the house that we have received notification from the state legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which is based in Boston, that its people are all safe after the terror incident associated with the Boston Marathon. Members would be aware that Boston is one of Melbourne's sister cities.

Our thoughts are very much with people throughout the world who are touched by terrorism. We stand shoulder to shoulder with those who are trying to address the issue of terrorism. Certainly in the case of Boston we have a strong relationship both through that sister-city relationship and also through the Boston Marathon, in which so many Australians have competed over so many years — there was Australian and indeed Victorian representation at this year's marathon.

PETITIONS

Following petition presented to house:

Nadrasca community farm: future

To the Legislative Council of Victoria:

The petition of concerned residents of Victoria draws to the attention of the house the decision by VicRoads that the reservation between Springvale Road, Vermont South, and Boronia Road, Vermont, will not be required for future road purposes and the consequent development of a structure plan for the future use of the land within the reservation, with the possibility of the land being sold by VicRoads for housing and other purposes.

This could result in Nadrasca community farm having to leave its current location at Morack Road, Vermont, and ceasing its operations in providing day services for adults with intellectual and physical disabilities, adversely affecting organisations like Yooralla, Scope, Melba Support Services, Heatherwood School and Alkira.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council of Victoria urge the government to:

facilitate an affordable arrangement that will guarantee Nadrasca community farm will remain in its current location so it can continue to provide great service to the community and grow.

**By Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan)
(39 signatures).**

Laid on table.

PAPERS

Laid on table by Clerk:

Auditor-General's Reports on —

Consumer Protection, April 2013.

Managing Traffic Congestion, April 2013.

Public Asset Valuation, April 2013.

Parliamentary Committees Act 2003 — Government Response to the Family and Community Development Committee's Report on Workforce Participation by People with Mental Illness.

MEMBERS STATEMENTS

Regional and rural Victoria: government performance

Ms TIERNEY (Western Victoria) — Regional Victoria is doing it tough, and there is no government focus on regional development. The job losses in regional Victoria are hitting communities very hard. It is not just our regional cities or our second city, Geelong; our smaller towns are also finding it hard. It is not just larger companies, such as Shell, or large manufacturing operations, with question marks over both Alcoa and Ford; it is also smaller engineering shops, cafes, retail, machinery and equipment businesses, and even hardware shops that are closing.

Portland is doing it tough. It has 6.9 per cent unemployment, with youth unemployment rates going through the roof. Portland has a unique set of circumstances. Geographically it is a significant distance from other towns and regional centres in western Victoria. It is highly dependent on two companies and has high levels of socioeconomic status indicators. It also has overwhelming natural assets that can assist in building a local sustainable economy. Government intervention is needed; a whole-of-government and whole-of-community approach is urgently needed. Locals have banded together to organise forums and a campaign under the

banner of Save Our Jobs. Yet last Wednesday night no political party representatives, except for Labor, bothered to turn up at the well-attended Save Our Jobs public meeting in Portland. Labor cares. It cares about jobs. It is Labor that cares about Portland, not the Napthine government.

Scope: family fun day

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing) — I recently had the pleasure of attending the Scope Family Fun Day with the Premier, where we made an exciting announcement for children with additional needs. The fun day was the perfect setting to tell Scope that it, along with 13 other community organisations, would deliver 500 new early childhood intervention service packages. Each of these packages is worth more than \$7000 and can help more than one child. The Premier and I were delighted to meet the many clients and families who have benefited from the hard work of Scope and organisations like it.

Road safety: Elmo Stays Safe campaign

Hon. W. A. LOVELL — I also recently joined two *Sesame Street* favourites, Grover and Elmo, to launch a new road safety campaign. The Elmo Stays Safe campaign delivers safety messages through TV ads, storybooks and activity cards with the help of some very popular monsters. It aims to prevent road and driveway deaths and injuries by educating children, parents and motorists about how to stay safe. The campaign has been developed by Kidsafe, the Transport Accident Commission, RACV, Holden, Sesame Workshop and the Victorian coalition government as part of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety.

Maryborough Community House: facilities

Hon. W. A. LOVELL — Last week I visited the much-loved 30-year-old community house at Maryborough, which has been given a \$200 000 external facelift. New facilities include a revitalised playground, a new garden, a basketball court and space for barbecues. It was great to hear that the barbecue area, with its new tables, is encouraging neighbouring residents to visit the community house. The centre attracts more than 100 Maryborough residents each week for activities including computer lessons, art and craft, and belly dancing. I would like to thank those involved, including the art and craft group present on the day, for a wonderful welcome. The Napthine government is proud to support the Maryborough Community House.

Department of Environment and Primary Industries: jobs

Ms DARVENIZA (Northern Victoria) — I wish to register my concern over the Liberal-Nationals merger of the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI). The Liberal-Nationals have already slashed 400 DSE jobs and 200 DPI jobs, and the Premier has also refused to rule out more job losses as a result of the May 2013 state budget. The Premier has promised a new 'open for business' culture with fewer bureaucratic bottlenecks. I can assure the Premier that those constituents in Cobram, Birchip, Kyneton, Ouyen and St Arnaud who can no longer go to their local DPI office do not agree. Open for business in Kerang, Echuca, Swan Hill and Rutherglen means speaking into an intercom because reception staff have been slashed.

This decision by the Premier to merge the departments will send environmental policy development, protection of threatened and endangered species, sustainability and action on climate change back decades. This merger completely goes against the coalition's 2010 election promises to restore DPI to its rightful status as the lead government agency responsible for all management issues on private land. It is just another example of how the Liberal-Nationals fail to understand what is important to rural and regional Victoria.

Ballarat: government initiatives

Mr RAMSAY (Western Victoria) — It was a good news week in Ballarat last week with the Napthine government making \$177 million of funding announcements. The week started off with the Minister for Housing, Wendy Lovell, opening the Sebastopol learning hub, which provides education and upskilling for re-entry into the workforce. The minister also announced \$50 000 for the Delacombe neighbourhood renewal projects, with artwork in Doug Dean Reserve, and \$20 000 for a South West Ballarat learning and earning program for 15 public housing tenants in the Delacombe area to participate in a pre-employment program.

I was pleased to be able to announce, on behalf of the Minister for State Development, Mr Ryan, funding of \$45 000 for a master plan for the University of Ballarat's south campus at Lydiard Street; \$70 000 for a study into the region's heritage to determine the viability of a dedicated regional archives and heritage centre; \$60 000 for the Ballarat community hub and library planning project; and \$110 000 to Ballarat Regional Tourism to fund a destinations management strategy. I was also pleased to be with Premier

Napthine, who is also the Minister for Racing, at the Ballarat Turf Club, where he announced funding of \$650 000 for a resurfacing project as part of a \$1.3 million upgrade.

But the cream of the announcements was at Alstom Australia. I was there with the Premier and the Minister for Roads, the Honourable Terry Mulder, for the announcement of \$176 million for the purchase of eight X'trapolis trains for the metropolitan lines and \$2 million for planning for high-capacity train sets. This announcement secures 130 direct and indirect jobs and gives certainty to workers like Nicole Campbell, a first-year electrical apprentice who I met last year. She loves her job, enjoys working with the company and likes living in Ballarat. This announcement means a lot to workers like Nicole and gives them both relief and excitement because it provides job certainty and has flow-on effects. These announcements are great news for Ballarat and demonstrate a commitment to Ballarat by the Napthine government, and all of this in just one week.

Boston: bombings

Mr SOMYUREK (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I rise to express my outrage at the act of terrorism yesterday morning Melbourne time at the Boston Marathon held in the USA. This bomb attack took the lives of 3 innocent people and injured at least 177 people. As I stand on my feet no organisation has claimed responsibility for this evil act perpetrated on innocent civilians going about their daily activities. The organisation or individual or individuals who committed these wicked acts of murder should understand that they have achieved nothing but the infliction of pain and suffering on innocent people. They have not done anything for their cause, whatever that may be.

Lyndhurst electorate: Greens by-election candidate

Mr SOMYUREK — On another matter, on behalf of my fellow residents of Lyndhurst I take this opportunity to express my disappointment at the Greens candidate for the Assembly seat of Lyndhurst treating the people of Lyndhurst with contempt. She has spent the campaign period overseas rather than seeking the views and opinions of Lyndhurst residents. This unprecedented act of disrespect by the Greens candidate has been noted by my fellow Lyndhurst residents. The Greens candidate going absent without leave comes on top of the Liberal Party showing its disdain for the electors by not even bothering to field a candidate in the by-election.

Special schools: Officer

Mr O'DONOHUE (Eastern Victoria) — Last week marked another significant milestone in the development of the Officer specialist school, with the appointment of Ms Sue Campbell as the principal of that school to take effect from the start of term 3. I am pleased to report to the house that construction of this most important new school is progressing well and the school is on track to be opened at the beginning of next year. It is a most exciting and important structure for the south-east growth corridor, and it represents the implementation of a major election commitment made by the coalition.

Monbulk Primary School: music program

Mr O'DONOHUE — On another matter, I refer to a press release issued on 26 March 2012 by former Premier Baillieu and the Minister for Education, Mr Dixon, in relation to the granting of funding under the first round of the Victorian coalition government's innovative school specialisation grants program. I was lucky enough to visit Monbulk Primary School early this week, and I was pleased to learn that having received some of this funding the school has received significant positive feedback from its students about its music education program, including from Breannan Timmermans. She wrote a beautiful piece about the importance of music to her school, to her as a student and the role it plays at Monbulk Primary School. I congratulate the school's principal, Ray Yates, and all those associated with the school. It is great to see that this investment is paying dividends.

The PRESIDENT — Order! On behalf of the house, I extend congratulations to Mr O'Donohue on his forthcoming appointment.

Fishermans Bend: municipal governance

Ms PENNICUIK (Southern Metropolitan) — Last night the Melbourne City Council backed away from a contentious takeover plan for Fishermans Bend proposed by the Lord Mayor, Cr Doyle. It had been reported previously in the press that although the Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy, had voiced his support for this move, the Premier, Denis Napthine, had labelled Cr Doyle's proposal 'premature'. Instead the council has called on the Premier and the planning minister to return planning control for the area to a local authority. That local authority should be the City of Port Phillip.

In the previous week the mayor of the City of Port Phillip, Amanda Stevens, had expressed outrage on

behalf of the council at the Lord Mayor's suggestion that over 200 hectares of the city of Port Phillip should be transferred to the city of Melbourne, and said that the council was best placed to make decisions about the area having undertaken extensive planning for Fishermans Bend and consulted with the community for two years. She said around 90 per cent of the renewal area for Fishermans Bend is within Port Phillip's boundaries and asked the councillors of the City of Melbourne to reject that move, which they did last night.

As I said in this place on 29 August in support of Mr Tee's motion to revoke planning scheme amendment C102, which was put forward by the Minister for Planning in July last year to rezone 240 hectares of Fishermans Bend to the capital city zone, that should not have happened, and Port Phillip City Council should be the responsible authority for Fishermans Bend.

Baroness Thatcher

Mr ONDARCHIE (Northern Metropolitan) — I rise this morning to pay tribute to and give thanks for the life of Baroness Thatcher. Margaret Hilda Thatcher was born on 13 October 1925 in Grantham, Lincolnshire. The daughter of a grocer, she went to Oxford University and graduated in 1947 with a bachelor of science degree and became a research chemist. She retrained and qualified as a barrister in 1953. She became a Conservative MP for Finchley in north London in 1959, serving until 1992. She served in Edward Heath's shadow cabinet, and was appointed secretary for education when Mr Heath became Prime Minister in 1970. She challenged Mr Heath for the leadership, and after the Conservatives were defeated in 1974 she was successful. She became the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in 1979 and won an unprecedented third term in office in 1987 with an overwhelming majority. She was appointed a peeress in the House of Lords, with the title of Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven. She retired from public speaking in 2002 after a series of minor strokes and at age 87 she sadly passed away on 8 April of a stroke. She was a remarkable woman.

I subscribe to some of her memorable quotes, including, 'Disciplining yourself to do what you know is right and important, although difficult, is the highroad to pride, self-esteem and personal satisfaction', 'You may have to fight a battle more than once to win it', and, 'It pays to know the enemy — not least because at some point in time you may have the opportunity to turn him into a friend'. She was a remarkable woman who took on the United Kingdom

and the unions. She is going to be farewelled in London today. May she rest in peace.

Health: funding

Mr EIDEH (Western Metropolitan) — I think we have a health crisis in Victoria. I begin by referring to page 5 of the *Maribyrnong Leader* of 16 March. The paper reported:

Elective surgery waiting lists were rising at Western Hospital before reduced funding began to cut deep, new data shows.

According to Victorian health services performance reports for the September and December quarters of 2012, the evidence is clear. The number of people on Victoria's elective surgery waiting lists was 43 173 in the December 2011 quarter and 47 760 in the December 2012 quarter, and the numbers went up and up in every quarter along the way — all long before the Minister for Health claiming that the federal government's cuts to funding were hurting Victorians.

Is the government also claiming — and very wrongly — that the crisis in cancer care reported in October last year was also caused by anyone other than its members' own incompetence and mismanagement of health care in our state? Two million dollars would fix that problem, yet this government prefers to upgrade ministers' offices instead. I still think of that wonderful building opened by Her Majesty the Queen — the Royal Children's Hospital. It is an outstanding facility thanks to the former Labor government, and one which members of the then opposition attacked, although they are now happy to claim it as their own. The cuts to health funding and the disaster in health care in this state are theirs and theirs alone.

The facts are that the minister has failed to claim moneys, such as \$70 million in new dental money and \$50 million to meet elective surgery targets. If he does not even bother to fill in the paperwork, then how on earth can he blame anyone other than himself?

Bruce Albert Edward Skeggs, OAM

Mrs PEULICH (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I wish to pay tribute to the Honourable Bruce Skeggs, OAM, who recently passed away. He served in the Victorian Parliament as the MLA for Ivanhoe and a MLC for Templestowe Province. In particular I wish to acknowledge and place on record his extensive service to local government and the community, as well as to the Parliament. Following significant challenges and setbacks in his early years, he made a rich contribution to the Liberal Party, his community and the Parliament.

I would particularly like to note his significant efforts in promoting democratic ideals.

TAFE sector: board appointments

Mrs PEULICH — I also want to take the opportunity to congratulate the 14 TAFE chairs recently appointed by the Minister for Higher Education and Skills, Mr Hall. The chairs will now lead Victoria's TAFE institutes according to their charters in refocusing their operations and strengthening governance to ensure TAFEs are well equipped to face the challenges of an increasingly competitive training market and provide an excellent education to those who attend them.

Baroness Thatcher

Mrs PEULICH — Lastly, I also place on record my brief tribute to Baroness Thatcher on her recent passing. I note her immense contribution through her service to the Parliament of the United Kingdom and also through helping to bring down the Iron Curtain through her relationship with Mikhail Gorbachev and former US president Ronald Reagan.

Government: performance

Ms PULFORD (Western Victoria) — In the lead-up to the delivery of the state budget in a couple of weeks Victorians are being asked to believe that we have a new government. The government's cuts to TAFE have delivered a catastrophic blow to vocational training in Victoria, yet the government adds insult to injury by telling us that there is new money invested in TAFE. Of course this money is to further embed the so-called reforms of this government. The \$50 million will in no way repair the damage wrought by cutting \$290 million, and this so-called new money will not employ a single teacher or restore a single course. It is little wonder that TAFE board chairs are being unceremoniously punted all over the state by a government that has little capacity to take on board constructive criticism.

As the budget looms, industry still waits for any sign of a vision for the state. There are mixed messages from the government about major projects, be it the Melbourne Metro rail tunnel or the east-west link, and Victorians can have little confidence that there will be dirt broken on any major project any time soon. Indeed just yesterday there were media reports that the government is holding back on Infrastructure Australia — hardly the act of a decisive, visionary government.

On renewable energy, just last week we had the Premier at the \$1 billion wind farm at Macarthur. He said, 'I think they are majestic, and I actually love them'. The government is sending mixed messages to the renewable energy industry by on the one hand professing great love and affection and on the other declaring that the 2-kilometre setback policy will not change. Victorians will not be fooled by the Premier in spite of the hype.

Russell McDonald

Mr O'BRIEN (Western Victoria) — I wish to pay tribute to the life of a life member of The Nationals, Russell McDonald, who recently passed away. Russell was born in Rochester in Victoria and first became involved with The National Party in the mid-1950s as a member of the Timmering branch in northern Victoria. His early working life involved spending time as a research engineer in the weapons research institute established by the federal government at Woomera near Adelaide.

At their father's passing Russell and his brother returned to the family farm to continue the life of a grazier. His brother, Stuart McDonald, served as a member of this house from 29 April 1967 to 4 May 1979. I spoke to Stuart on Friday, and the similarities in their lives and persons, including their voices and hearty laughs, were touching. Both were very well regarded members of their community and outstanding members of the Presbyterian Church, which they also served.

Russell received his life membership for his dedication to the party at all levels. He worked hard on both of my campaigns, and for that I am very grateful to him, as are Roger Hallam, Hugh Delahunty, John McGrath and many other members of The Nationals. Russell remained a great contributor and a person whose opinions were always valued. He will be sorely missed by his wife Shirley, his branch members, his church and his extended family.

Bell Street Mall Traders Association: harmony luncheon

Mr ELASMAR (Northern Metropolitan) — On Thursday, 21 March, a harmony luncheon was again organised by Dr Haraco, the president of the Bell Street Mall Traders Association. There were over 100 attendees this year, and the luncheon included foods from Asia, Africa and Europe. Members of the community representing all nations enjoyed sampling the many different dishes which were freshly cooked on the day. My congratulations to the traders association.

Greek Independence Day

Mr ELASMAR — On Sunday, 24 March, I attended a ceremony organised by the Australian Greek Ex-Servicemen's Association to commemorate the anniversary of Greek independence on 25 March 1821. As usual the event was well organised by the association's president, Mr George Rahovitsas, and his executive committee. It was my honour to lay a wreath outside the Darebin City Council offices in Preston.

City of Moreland: citizenship ceremony

Mr ELASMAR — On Tuesday, 26 March, I was invited to attend a citizenship ceremony held at the Coburg town hall by the Moreland City Council. The mayor, Cr Oscar Yildiz —

Mr Ondarchie — A good man.

Mr ELASMAR — A very good man — and his fellow councillors made us all most welcome and later, over some light refreshments, we were able to talk with our new Australian citizens. I congratulate the mayor, his fellow councillors and the officers of Moreland council for making this event so memorable.

Early childhood services: health and development record

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — On 8 March Thomas Christopher John Philip Taylor was born. His mother is tertiary educated, bilingual and a professional, and he is her first child. The mother is very able to research and investigate all issues around children, child growth and stability. She also has a very strong family network and a support structure. But it is very pleasing to see that under the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development, Ms Lovell — and I wish to congratulate her — a book entitled *My Health and Development Record* has been developed.

Thomas's mother has used this as her bible. It talks about appointments to keep, growth and health records, immunisation records, birth details and what to expect at the two-week, four-week and eight-week visits and so forth. It is very detailed and easy to use. It gives first mothers confidence because it is authoritative, professional and very informative. This is an excellent tool for all new parents, and I commend the minister for developing such a wonderful and very useful tool. Not all mothers are able to have the same sort of support system and education that Thomas's mother has, but this tool will enable them to take the right steps for their children as they grow into healthy young Victorians. I commend the minister.

Shrine of Remembrance: Galleries of Remembrance

Mr P. DAVIS (Eastern Victoria) — I have pleasure in making some brief remarks today with respect to next week's anniversary of Anzac Day, and I am sure that all members of this place will participate in memorial services in their constituencies. Anzac Day was officially named in 1916 to commemorate the landing at Anzac Cove in 1915. Over 8000 Australian troops died at Gallipoli, but we should not lose sight of the fact that more than 80 000 Turks also died during that encounter.

It is important for us to note the significance of the memorial of Anzac Day, but I also wish to commend the progress being made on the Galleries of Remembrance project that is under way at the Shrine of Remembrance. It has been funded by the Victorian government to ensure that the shrine is pre-eminent as a war memorial in Victoria. We cannot overstate the need to honour those who served and sacrificed their lives in defending this country, but we also need to acknowledge those of other nationalities who gave their lives in the service of defending their people.

BAW BAW PLANNING SCHEME: AMENDMENT

Mr VINEY (Eastern Victoria) — I move:

That the Council take note of the answer given by the Minister for Planning to a question without notice on 21 March 2013.

This is a minister who regularly plays to his backbench rather than getting to the facts and issues before —

Hon. D. M. Davis interjected.

Mr VINEY — That was a puerile interjection from Mr Davis. This is a serious matter about the question of jobs being lost in Gippsland under Mr Davis's watch. This government's Minister for Planning spruiks about a project in this chamber and says it is the greatest project in Gippsland. In fact his precise words were that it was 'more than Mr Lenders's government ever did in West Gippsland'. We will get to the facts in a moment. This is a minister who regularly comes into this chamber and over-spruiks, if you like. He has talked about the great things he is doing in Gippsland, which is at odds with the facts. It would do the people of Gippsland and the people of Victoria more good if we actually had some honesty about the problems we are facing in this community and what this government is doing to address them.

In particular, we can look at the status of employment in Gippsland over the term of this government. In December 2010 when this government took office there were 145 200 people employed in the Gippsland region according to Australian Bureau of Statistics data. By May 2011, five or six months later, that figure had gone down to 141 800. The figure varies a little bit from month to month; some months it goes up a tiny bit but then goes down again the next month and so on. I am being generous in saying it was five or six months because the data shows that in April it was 136 000, but we can accept that as an unusual figure.

By September the figure was 140 700; that is down nearly 5000 people. By December 2011 the total number of people employed in Gippsland had dropped to 138 900. That is 6000 jobs lost in the government's first year of office, and it continued. That is the opposition's complaint. The minister spruiked about what he said was the greatest jobs project in Gippsland's history and talked about how fantastic the project was, but we found that by March 2012 there were 131 600 jobs in Gippsland, down from the starting point of 145 200.

I will go through the latest statistics. The employment figure in February 2013 is a few thousand above the January figure, and again I am not picking out the worst months. In two full years the figure for total employment in Gippsland has dropped from 145 200 people employed to 124 200, which is some 21 000 fewer people employed in the Gippsland region after two and a bit years of this government in office. There is a reason for that. It is because this government does not pay attention to jobs.

I am seeing Mr Philip Davis shake his head. I will be interested to hear how Mr Davis tells our constituents in Gippsland why there should be 21 000 less of them employed now than when his government came to office. If Mr Davis had been paying attention to the issue of employment in Gippsland, he would know that employment growth occurs when governments pay attention to the needs of our economy, to the infrastructure investments that are required and to the environment in which jobs can be created and grown.

Let us give some practical examples of what the decline in employment has been under this government's watch. What we have seen is a number of jobs lost in the region on quite specific projects. In the same month that the Minister for Planning was spruiking his project in Warragul, the company Drypac closed its facility in Warragul with the loss of 126 jobs. I have met some of those workers who lost their jobs and the impact on those people and their families is huge. One of the

workers I met had a very ill wife, so now he is faced with dealing with both his wife's illness and the loss of employment. These are the personal results of a government failing to pay attention to the needs of our community in terms of employment.

I have raised in this place before the issue of the Telstra call centre closure in Moe where 114 jobs were lost and had what could only be described as a flippant response from the then employment minister. Around the same time as that occurred McCormack Demby Timber was closed with a further 60 jobs gone. Murray Goulburn Co-operative Co. Ltd has cut 74 jobs. The cuts to the TAFE sector have had a huge impact in our region with 32 jobs lost at Advance TAFE and 45 jobs lost at GippsTAFE.

Mr Finn interjected.

Mr VINEY — Mr Finn can respond to my speech when he wants to. What we have seen is Mr Guy claiming to be providing the greatest jobs project in Warragul and West Gippsland's history. His words were:

This rezoning is going to provide the greatest single level of job injection in Warragul's history ...

Talk about oversell! Let us have a look at Gippsland's more recent history on big projects. In contrast to the closures and job losses that I just described, let us have a look at some of Gippsland's more recent history. When the Labor Party came to office in 1999 unemployment rates in Gippsland were greater than 10 per cent. In fact the people in the Latrobe Valley today still remember the appalling state of the local economy after the Kennett government's treatment of that region; they still remember that well.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr VINEY — I must be hitting some marks here because I am getting quite a lot of interjections. It is quite good fun.

Latrobe Valley house prices had crashed to the point where people in the Latrobe Valley were somewhat trapped because they could not sell their properties and move to other regions to get jobs. Jobs had gone, house prices had crashed and the local economy showed no apparent prospects of new growth. As a result of that, on coming to office the Bracks government established the Latrobe Valley Ministerial Taskforce, and as a result of the initiatives of that period we slowly and surely saw employment grow in the Latrobe Valley and house prices stabilise and then improve. The circumstances facing people in the Latrobe Valley were

vastly improved, and this occurred as a result of considered and considerable government investment, whether it be investment in things like the regional fast rail project, which, by the way, for Mr Guy's benefit, included 1100 jobs, more than double, in fact two a half times, those involved in the project that Mr Guy is saying is the biggest jobs project in Gippsland's history — —

Mr P. Davis — That is not what he said.

Mr VINEY — I say to Mr Davis that this is Mr Guy's comment:

This rezoning is going to provide the greatest single level of job injection in Warragul's history, and it is happening under this government.

Mr P. Davis — In Warragul, correct. Three cheers; you got it right this time. You can't verbal the minister and get away with it in this house.

Mr VINEY — No amount of shouting by Mr Davis is going to change the fact that his minister oversold this project — —

Mr P. Davis — You're trying to misrepresent the minister.

Mr VINEY — We are used to his insults; we do not even worry about them. But just for the record, the minister accused the Labor Party of being boring and of being Soviet-loving apparatchiks, which most of us on this side find somewhat amusing. I listened to the minister on Jon Faine's radio program; I am not sure whether it was Jon interviewing him or someone else, but I listened to him on that program personally attacking the Leader of the Opposition because that is his manner. His manner is to overstate and oversell.

Let us have a look at some of Labor's projects. The regional fast rail project on the Gippsland line — that is, the Pakenham-Traralgon component of it — delivered 1100 jobs. Mr Davis might not like us mentioning this, but let us consider the desalination project. Over the course of that project 10 500 jobs were created. At its peak there were 4500 jobs in that project. The Latrobe Community Health Centre project in Morwell created 126 construction jobs and the Gippsland Water Factory created 300 jobs. Mr Davis could look at the police and law courts complex. I do not have job figures for it but tens of millions of dollars were invested in that complex in Morwell. These were the investments in the Latrobe Valley and West Gippsland that delivered and created the jobs that this region needed.

Mr Davis may not see people in Warragul as being among those who work in the Latrobe Valley, but I assure him that many do. Investments in the Latrobe Valley assist Warragul and investments in Warragul assist the Latrobe Valley. That is part of the region's growth and development. Therefore it is far from being the greatest single project in West Gippsland, as Mr Guy was spruiking. It may well be a good project and it may well be a project delivering a number of jobs at a time when we desperately need them, but I think the concern that the opposition has about this minister is his continued style in this place — that is, playing to his backbench for whatever purpose. Some of us speculate that it is leadership ambition, and there is nothing wrong with ambition, but I would have thought that achieving further career aspirations in politics comes from delivering and talking to the community about the things that are needed by the community, rather than playing to your backbench in this place.

When you have a look at this particular project you see it is being developed by a company called the Jana Group, which is a big operation in Warragul, West Gippsland. It is the company undertaking this particular project, the retail and commercial development zone in the area extending from Queen Street in Warragul. It is also the company that has undertaken the new housing development that sits between Warragul and Drouin. In fact, that development has made those two towns much closer to merging, which some people think is a good thing but many people do not — many people like the idea of the two towns being separated by some rural land. It is a big project and is developing a lot of housing in that area.

The principal person behind the Jana Group is John Castle. John is a strong Liberal and a strong supporter of the Liberal Party. I make no criticisms of him in that regard. It was his company's trucks that in 2006 towed trailers around the Legislative Assembly electoral district of Narracan bearing signs promoting the then Liberal Party candidate for Narracan, Gary Blackwood, who is now the member for Narracan. I do not think the company had the same name at that time, but the company's logos were on the sides of the trucks, so there was no secrecy about this. The land I just referred to, between Drouin and Warragul, which until recently has been farmland and is now the site of the Jana Group development, has been the site of large billboards promoting Gary Blackwood at every election.

As I said, I have no problem with Mr Castle using his company's resources or spending his company's money, or his personal money — or however he is doing this — on helping the Liberal Party and Mr Blackwood; however, I am concerned about the

Minister for Planning coming into this place to spruik and oversell the company's development. That kind of behaviour blurs the lines between the political interests of the minister and what he is saying in this place. When a minister gets up and spruiks a project there ought to be some degree of caution about that.

Mr Guy spruiked this project as providing 400 jobs. It is, if you like, a whitegoods and homemakers retail facility — I think those are the words Mr Guy used in his speech about the project. I understand and have been advised that while the company has estimated and advised Mr Guy that the development will provide 400 jobs, there is actually only one signed-up tenant for this project. No-one can say how many jobs it will provide, because the various retailers employ different numbers of people per square metre. A whitegoods store may well employ 3 to 5 people and a hardware store may well employ 20 to 50 people, so there are different levels of employment in the different elements of such a development. Mr Guy is relying on the company's press releases and advertising in saying that it will provide 400 jobs, but with only one signed-up tenant at this stage that is again too much of a stretch for a minister to make in this place. It is a strong statement for a minister to make in this place when there is no real confidence around those estimates.

The final comment I will make in relation to this is that Mr Guy's suggestion, in his answer to the question, that the conurbation of Warragul and Drouin is a good thing would presumably be agreed with by Mr Castle and the Jana Group, which is undertaking the development that is bringing the conurbation together. This is where the lines need to be more carefully considered when ministers come in and play to their backbench in the way that this minister has.

It would be far better for this place and for this government if there were a focus on job creation through the investments that governments need to make in infrastructure — for example, the failure to purchase more V/Locity trains for the Gippsland line and the lack of investment in the maintenance of those lines, which, as Mr Davis well knows, has again resulted in the closure of that Gippsland line train between Trafalgar and Bairnsdale. We have been through this once before. Government press releases have outlined that there is an indefinite closure of that line, so we have that problem.

We need a whole range of investments in health. We need investment in the next stage of the Latrobe Regional Hospital. We need investment in the Traralgon bypass. We need further investment in the West Gippsland Hospital. We now have a situation

where people in TAFE colleges are losing jobs. Those colleges will not be able to provide the training and skills support that the local community needs to make sure that our young people and people entering the workforce, or people involved in restructuring the workforce, receive the training they need to give them a secure future.

We need further investment in roads. We need further investment in rail. We need further investment in our health services. We need further investment in our education system. We now have a situation where the government has stopped the regeneration and redevelopment of every school in the state, including all those in Gippsland. There are schools in Gippsland and West Gippsland that were in line for those investments under the previous government — —

Mr Ondarchie interjected.

Mr VINEY — Is Mr Ondarchie laughing? Mr Ondarchie should go and have a talk to the people of Morwell about the Morwell Primary School regeneration project, which we had already started — —

Mr Finn — On a point of order, Acting President, during the course of Mr Viney's address to the house this morning he has on a number of occasions directed his comments directly at members on this side of the house, clearly in contravention of the standing orders, which require him to address his comments through the Chair. I ask you to bring him to order on that count.

Mr VINEY — On the point of order, Acting President, I will give members of the government the undertaking that I will not refer to them if they will stop interjecting and just listen to the advice I am trying to give them.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Tarlamis) — Order! There is no point of order.

Mr VINEY — Members opposite might like to laugh. The fact is that when they came to office there were 145 000 jobs in Gippsland. After two and half years that figure has declined to 123 000, so 22 000 jobs have disappeared under their watch. They may well laugh, but I can assure them that the people of Gippsland are not laughing. The people of Gippsland will remember that every time they have had Liberal governments employment has declined in Gippsland. Under Labor employment increased every month for 11 years. Even during the global financial crisis employment increased. Even during that time — one of the toughest times that Victoria has faced since the

depression — jobs grew. The economy grew under our watch.

Under the coalition's watch we are in recession and 22 000 jobs have been lost in Gippsland. Well may those opposite laugh. Well may the Minister for Planning spruik the projects of his mates. Well may he get up in here and accuse the opposition of being soviet apparatchiks and of being boring and of whining. That is fine. He can do that and play to his backbench.

We on this side of the house will focus on the concerns of the people of Victoria and Gippsland, and those concerns principally centre around jobs. It is a job that gives you a future. Just ask the people of the Latrobe Valley, who under the Kennett government could not get a job or sell their house and move to a new area to give themselves a better prospect. Just ask them. They know that it is jobs that secure their future.

This government either does not care or does not know what to do. If that is so, its members should either change their position or get out of the way, because they are holding back this state; they are holding back Gippsland. I thank them for laughing and for demonstrating their lack of concern. I thank them for the responses they have given me in this debate today, when I have been taking them through the facts. Members opposite might not want to invest as Labor does. They might not want to do the hard work such as that which went into Labor's job plan for Victoria, which has 67 different initiatives for Victoria.

The government might not want to do that hard work, but the people of Victoria will ultimately decide that if it is not going to do the hard work and deliver for them, they will push it out of the way. That is when the people of Victoria and the people of Gippsland will start to see an investment in jobs, infrastructure, schools, TAFE colleges, roads and the train system — a train system that we invested in for Gippsland that resulted in a 40 per cent increase in patronage because we made the trains faster, more reliable, more regular and modern. They are the things in which we invested for the people of the Latrobe Valley and Gippsland. We put back the train from Bairnsdale. We put back the train that those opposite got rid of.

If you go through the employment history of Gippsland since the 1990s, you will find that every time the Liberals are in office the people of Gippsland lose jobs and that every time Labor is in office we invest in them. We believe that people having a job secures not only their future but the future of their children. It is Labor that does those things. It is Labor that does the building.

It is Labor that does the investing. It is Labor that secures people's futures.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — After that hullabaloo I think we better just go back and review what it is that we are debating. We are noting the Minister for Planning's answer to a Dorothy Dixer — which the previous Premier promised would be eliminated; but that is another promise that fell by the wayside, possibly the first broken promise of the Baillieu government — from Mr O'Donohue to Mr Guy in relation to Baw Baw planning scheme amendment C96. The purpose of that amendment is to rezone a piece of land about 1.6 kilometres outside Warragul's town centre for a bulky goods retailer, which the Minister for Planning says will support 400 jobs. But for that to come to pass the people of Warragul need to have some money in their pockets in order to purchase the types of bulky goods that are to be sold there. Mr Viney in his contribution went reasonably wide in talking about the various economic, service and infrastructure needs of West Gippsland and in the process opened up a broader debate that is worth having, particularly in relation to Warragul.

You could get yourself a reasonably cheap house and land package in and around Warragul and in that vicinity. That is no doubt the reason why many people move there while continuing in many cases to commute back to the big city — for some it is Dandenong and for others it is all the way through to Melbourne itself. In his answer Mr Guy said:

It is important that this rezoning is put in place to ensure that West Gippsland is not just — like the previous government wanted it to be — a dormitory town for jobs in the eastern part of Melbourne.

I would have thought living in Warragul and having a job in the eastern part of Melbourne is not a bad way to make a living. In fact I would have thought the fastest way to put money into the town of Warragul would be via the pockets of those commuters coming home each night from their employment. Having got your affordable house in Warragul, what is likely to be the single biggest cost item in the family budget? It is transport — no doubt about it. There are things that this government could do or that the previous government could have done to cut the cost of transport and make it more convenient or easier for the citizens of Warragul.

Unfortunately earlier this week we got the performance data from V/Line with regard to punctuality for those short-haul services — the ones that come out of West Gippsland and go right into the city. What we have seen is that throughout 2012 punctuality has hovered at about the 75 per cent mark, and that is with V/Line's

definition of 'punctual' being less than 6 minutes late. V/Line is no longer just, as some people might think of it, a service for people to go on a country holiday or for people to head off and visit the grandchildren.

I use V/Line all the time now, and I can tell you that for those satellite cities around Melbourne — Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and of course those in West Gippsland — this is a serious commuter service. People rely on it to get to work. They cannot simply come in and tell their boss that they are late again because of something V/Line did. If they are relying on this service to make an appointment or to meet a connecting public transport service, then 6 minutes late is too late. 'On time' needs to mean literally on time. So 75 per cent of trains being more than 6 minutes late is not an acceptable state of affairs for someone who wants to rely on the service; and in fact that is not a figure that has improved throughout 2012 with the Minister for Public Transport, Terry Mulder, in charge.

What if you are living out on the edge of Warragul or in some of the new areas around Warragul that Mr Viney referred to? Taking the bus to Warragul station is not really going to be an option. There is a nice map showing the Warragul bus network, but while the network looks good on the map most of those services run barely a few times a day and not at all on Saturdays and Sundays. Because everybody in Warragul just stays home on the weekend, do they not, Mr Davis? Why would they need a bus? What it means, though, is that to get yourself to the station in the morning you have to own a car.

Mr P. Davis — You can ride a bike.

Mr BARBER — You could ride a bike. I would like to see a bit more of that. But your choices are really for your partner to pack themselves and the kids in the car, drive you down to the station early in the morning and drive home again, or for you to drive your car to Warragul station and leave it sitting there all day. It is a very expensive option when you consider that the simple running costs of owning a car are as much as the petrol itself. Do you really want to have your very expensive car sitting in the very expensive Warragul car park — which I notice the government was planning to upgrade in its last budget — for perhaps 10 hours a day doing nothing when another member of your family could use it? Imagine what it would do for the citizens of Warragul if they could sell one of their family cars and the breadwinner of the family was still perfectly capable of getting to work each day without driving their car.

We have to say that overall the government has delivered very little in the way of new public transport services in either the city or the country. If we go back to the most recent budget papers and have a look at the bus services in regional towns' bus services, we see that service kilometres grew from about 20.4 million kilometres last year to only 20.9 million kilometres predicted for this current budget year in terms of town buses across all of those regional centres of Victoria. There has been virtually nothing by way of expansion. There will be no more frequent services, no more timely services and no chance whatsoever for Warragul to have a bus meeting each train under those kinds of settings. In terms of the frequency of the V/Line trains and long-distance coaches there was no growth in the last budget.

Since 2010–11, when those services ran 21 million kilometres, we have seen just 21.8 million kilometres provided, which is a minuscule improvement. My prediction is we will see nothing more allocated for those services in the May budget. My point is the minister can rezone all the land he wants for either housing or employment centres in places like Warragul, but the people who live there have limited family budgets and they are not being assisted by anything the government has done.

Likewise, people make choices about where to live, including going to live in Warragul. The planning scheme amendment C96 documentation projects that there will be considerable population growth in West Gippsland, and obviously it will not all come from people having babies, Mr Davis. There would have to be a considerable number of people moving into the member's electorate by choice in order to —

Mr P. Davis — It is a desirable place to move to and have a family.

Mr BARBER — There is no doubt, Mr Davis, that there are a lot of great things about Warragul. As I said, there is affordable housing, a pretty good public school system, the opportunity to attend a regional university or TAFE as you grow older and of course great access to a nearby natural environment — you can zip up to Baw Baw any weekend as a short trip. But there is one thing missing, and that is the basic level of public transport, which could mean having four members in one family does not require owning four or more cars. If there is one thing the government could do in its forthcoming May budget to make Warragul better and to make the intended benefits of this planning scheme amendment come about, it would be to invest seriously in public transport for Warragul and the West Gippsland area to keep up with the population growth

this amendment document anticipates and which the minister was spruiking.

Mr P. DAVIS (Eastern Victoria) — I would like to congratulate the previous speaker, Mr Barber, on his erudite, rational and constructive contribution to this debate — —

Mr Barber — You didn't think the Greens had it in them, did you?

Mr P. DAVIS — Sometimes I wonder. But like a laser beam, Mr Barber actually dealt with the matter before the house. He actually spoke to the motion, unlike the mover of the motion, who gave us an extensive diatribe about everything but this motion. What I heard from Mr Viney was a general, broad-ranging contribution about matters totally unrelated to the motion, which deals specifically with a ministerial response to a question without notice on 21 March advising the house in regard to amendment C96 to the Baw Baw planning scheme. I did not hear anything of substance from Mr Viney in relation to that matter.

What I heard him talk about was the privatisation of the Latrobe Valley baseload power stations, which of course was initiated by the Cain and Kirner governments under the watch of Mr David White, the then Minister for Minerals and Energy. I heard him talk about the desalination plant at Wonthaggi, a liability on the population of Victoria to the extent of its net present value of \$6.1 billion, which Victorians will be contributing to for the next 27 years and which so far has not provided any water security to the state. He also talked about investment in public transport. Again, these are matters that do not pertain directly to the motion before the house.

Mr Viney talked about matters inconsequential to this motion because this motion goes to a matter which in my view is quite narrow. It relates to an announcement about the approval of a planning scheme amendment at Warragul. Planning scheme amendment C96 — a rezoning which is being facilitated with the Baw Baw Shire Council — will lead to the development of a \$45 million retail centre between Warragul and Nilma and will provide goods to a community which, as Mr Barber alluded to quite correctly, is a growing community. Those goods will include white goods, furniture, camping and outdoor equipment, building material and other homemaker products.

Baw Baw Shire Council has been very constructive; the public position of the council has been to positively support the rezoning. It advised that its view was that

the rezoning did not need to go through a public exhibition period because it was a technical change from an industrial zone to a special use zone, giving more confidence to the council and the developer, which would better facilitate planning and design outcomes. That special use zone gives the council control over what retail uses will be permitted and protects the site from being developed for general purposes. This is particularly relevant because of the wastewater treatment plant near the site.

I acknowledge in my contribution today that this rezoning is important to the Warragul community because it provides a very significant incentive for additional capital investment. There has been no dispute about forecasts which show the potential to generate about 400 jobs as a result of this investment.

I think Mr Viney was trying to take issue with a comment made by the Minister for Planning. During his response to a question without notice on 21 March the minister observed that this would be a very significant boost to the local economy. It is true that *Hansard* shows that Mr Guy said:

This rezoning is going to provide the greatest single level of job injection in Warragul's history ...

Mr Viney tried to conflate the minister's answer to a question without notice with a whole list of his confused — I think that is the only way I could put it — views about what issues he would like to prosecute. Mr Viney wished to prosecute a case more generally about the economic disposition of Gippsland.

We should not be confused about what this planning scheme amendment proposes and what it deals with narrowly, which is the development of a retail hub at Warragul. It is not a panacea to every economic imperative affecting Gippsland. However, I do point out that in terms of referring to the impediment to economic growth, there is absolutely no doubt that one of the major impediments in the central and west Gippsland region is the lack of incentive for major infrastructure investment in baseload power generation, which has been one of the major employers in central Gippsland for many decades. There are a number of reasons for that which I do not intend to go into at this point because it would be inappropriate.

My view is that in moving the motion Mr Viney widened its scope so substantially that we could spend a whole day having a discussion about every aspect of economic policy in Victoria, but given that he did open the matter for further consideration I will touch upon it briefly. The reason there has been no additional baseload power generation investment is that the

privatisation process — which I have to say had a bipartisan view, notwithstanding Mr Viney trying to ignore the fact that it was the Cain and Kirner governments which initiated the first steps to privatisation — has led to a significant increase in the availability of baseload power stations because of improved performance.

As I recall, under the former State Electricity Commission of Victoria the availability of baseload power was something of the order of less than 65 per cent, and with privatisation it moved up to be better than 95 per cent; in fact I think the optimal estimate is about 98 per cent availability. It does not mean those power generators are running at 98 per cent all the time; it just means they are available, and that is because of improved efficiency.

That, overlaid with the federal government's anti-coal policy framework — in other words, its approach to greenhouse policy, which has seen the introduction of new initiatives at a commonwealth level — has caused a drop in interest concerning the utilisation of brown coal as a baseload power generator because of the onerous costs of investing in that industry and penalties therefore associated with the generation of electricity from brown coal now. We have a combination of those two factors — increased availability of baseload stations tied with the commonwealth government's policy framework — which has created great uncertainty about the investment opportunities in the future development of baseload generation from brown coal.

I suggest that if Mr Viney were to look in the mirror, he would find that at a macro level it is easier to explain why the associated coalfields of the Latrobe Valley, which could be one of the significant drivers for economic prosperity for Gippsland, are presently a liability. It is because of commonwealth government policy.

I do not intend to take Mr Viney's default invitation to comment on every aspect of his contribution, because I want to come back to the substance of the motion. The substance is that Mr Viney sought to take note of the minister's answer in relation to a planning scheme amendment in the Baw Baw shire, specifically at Warragul. The minister answered, in my view quite accurately, that this planning scheme amendment will afford the opportunity for some major significant retail investment. Rather than accepting the attempted verballing of the minister by Mr Viney, I draw the house's attention to the fact that the minister was referring to the jobs that would be created at Warragul, not in the wider Gippsland context, and in making that

observation he accurately made the point that it would be potentially one of the major investment decisions available in — —

Mr Viney — 'More than Mr Lenders's government ever did in West Gippsland'.

Mr P. DAVIS — Mr Viney seeks to continue to attempt to misdirect the house in terms of the minister's position. I will quote from *Hansard*, albeit that that might not accord with the rules of the house, and I will refer specifically to what I understand the minister had to say during the course of that question time. He said:

This rezoning is going to provide the greatest single level of job injection in Warragul's history.

In my estimation that is a correct statement.

Mr Viney — What about the one above it? You are ignoring it.

Mr P. DAVIS — In the sentence above that he said — —

Mr Viney — No, in the paragraph above it.

Mr P. DAVIS — Mr Viney has called on me to read the one above it. I am reading the one above it. In the previous sentence the minister said:

We on this side of the house have great pride in seeing the Baw Baw C96 amendment come through to provide that certainty for West Gippsland, to provide certainty for 400 jobs in Warragul.

Does Mr Viney dispute that he said that? That is from *Hansard*. Mr Viney can misrepresent people if he likes, but he should not do it in this house where he cannot get away with it. The record speaks for itself. *Hansard* speaks for itself. The minister came into this house. He was asked a question by Mr O'Donohue. The question that Mr O'Donohue asked was:

Can the minister inform the house what action the government has taken to facilitate jobs and investment in West Gippsland?

The minister made an announcement in the house that he had approved a planning scheme amendment, which, as I have reported to the house, the Baw Baw Shire Council worked with the proponent and the minister to facilitate. It is going to be a delight to see that capital investment made, and it will generate 400 jobs. Mr Viney may rant and rave, talk about every other incidental issue that he can think of and drag into this debate a whole range of spurious unrelated matters, but it is hardly relevant to talk about a desalination plant

at Wonthaggi in the discussion about a particular narrow planning scheme amendment at Warragul.

Mr Viney may disagree, but I come back to my opening remarks where I said that like a laser beam Mr Barber got to the issue, which is that Warragul is a great community in which to live. Access to Melbourne for those who migrate to Warragul is pretty comfortable. There are very good commuter rail services to Melbourne.

I have not been updated recently, but my recollection is that the last time I had a look more than 18 per cent of residents in the workforce in Warragul were commuters who work outside the Baw Baw shire area.

Predominantly they work in Melbourne — I think 13 per cent — and the balance work elsewhere throughout Gippsland. That is very obvious first thing in the morning if you happen to be commuting, as I sometimes do, in terms of both the saturation of cars parked at the railway stations at Warragul and Drouin in the Baw Baw shire and, importantly, the traffic on the road, which I have to say is increasing enormously. The reason people move to Warragul is that, as Mr Barber said, it is a low-cost housing option compared to buying a new home in Melbourne.

Mr Barber — But a high-cost transport option.

Mr P. DAVIS — It is one of those interesting things, is it not? If you live next door to your place of work, you can walk to work. If you live down the road a little bit, perhaps you can ride a bicycle. If you live a little further away from your place of work, you have to look at alternative transport arrangements, which would be a motor car or public transport of some sort, and there will be a cost associated with that.

What I hope to see over the long haul is that we progressively improve access to transport to in effect allow people to have that choice, whether it be road or rail. These are chicken-and-egg things. The larger the population — the more the population of Warragul grows — the more demand on the services and the more service provision there will be. At the present time I think most people would regard the commuter options from Warragul as being very satisfactory, and people vote with their feet. I know a lot of people who commute to Melbourne on those early trains.

I am going to conclude my remarks by simply coming back to saying that while I am very tempted to pursue the Trojan Horse that Mr Viney has put out there today to facilitate a wider debate about the general provision of services and economic stimulus to the whole of the Gippsland region, this motion before the house, which

is that the house take note of the minister's answer to a particular question on 21 March concerning the Baw Baw planning scheme, is so narrow in my view as to be limited to speaking about the fact that planning scheme amendment C96 for rezoning in the Baw Baw shire, which is supported and facilitated by the shire council, will generate \$45 million of investment and 400 jobs.

That is outstanding, and the other initiatives taken by the planning minister in the Gippsland region over the last two and a half years have led to a very positive view about the framework for investment in the region. We expect there to be ongoing investment and job creation as a result of the planning scheme amendments. I congratulate the Minister for Planning on being such a decisive minister. He is prepared to be accountable but also to take action on decisions that are required to enable the community to get on with its business. If Mr Viney has a difficulty with that, he should say so. However, from what I heard of Mr Viney's contribution to the debate today, what he was saying was that he would like to be back in government. I wish him well in that endeavour, but he will have to wait a while.

Mr SCHEFFER (Eastern Victoria) — The simple question asked by Mr O'Donohue on the Thursday of the last sitting week prompted a tirade from the Minister for Planning that left everyone in the house speechless. Quite extraordinarily it was the President who could not bear it any longer and who checked the minister's outburst and brought him back to Mr O'Donohue's question about what action the government was taking to facilitate jobs and investment in West Gippsland.

When you look at the minister's statement and you get past the hyperbole — and there is hyperbole there; Mr Viney pointed it out and Mr Davis cavilled around it — and you look at the basics of it, from my reading of *Hansard* the minister said there are going to be 400 jobs created through a \$45 million investment in a retail centre in West Gippsland. The minister said after that that this is more than Mr Lenders's government ever did in West Gippsland. He was quite clear: this initiative is more than anything that was ever done in West Gippsland by the Labor government over 11 years. It seems absolutely clear to me and absolutely incontrovertible.

Returning to the minister's general comments, when you get past the personal attacks and the slinging off and attempts at sarcasm to diminish opinions and policies that are not to the minister's liking, the Dorothy Dix question from Mr O'Donohue was simply giving the minister an opportunity to talk about

amendment C96 to the Baw Baw planning scheme. Short of all the nonsense in the minister's answer, the simple point he wanted to make was that amendment C96 will bring 400 jobs and a \$45 million retail centre to West Gippsland. On this side we applaud the development, and if what the minister says is true — that is, that there are 400 jobs and a \$45 million investment — we are delighted, but I reiterate and note Mr Viney's observation that the 400 jobs are a projection and that we will have to wait and see. One signed-up tenant for the development is the lowest possible starting point you could have.

Moving to broader matters, as we know, jobs are the single biggest priority of the Labor opposition, and they were the single biggest priority of the Labor government. That is why our record was second to none over our 11-year period in government. During that time Victoria consistently led the nation in job creation, even through the global financial crisis, so the minister's attack on Labor — his temperamental outburst — was entirely misplaced. The government is so starved of positive news on the jobs front that it needs to make a meal out of every morsel that it finds, but while 400 jobs is a very good thing, one swallow does not make a summer.

In Gippsland the single most important fact that is staring the government in the face is that there are 22 000 fewer jobs in Gippsland than there were before the election, and there is no way around that fact. Victorian government investment in Warragul is not the invention of the current government, and the minister will know that a great deal of work was done in the Warragul and West Gippsland area by the previous government.

The explanatory note to the planning scheme amendment points to the projected significant population growth for the shire of West Gippsland, which is amongst the highest in the state, and indicates that this requires significant additional urban land supply. The explanatory note points out that extensive strategic planning has been carried out in Warragul and Drouin over the last 10 years, and of course 8 of those years were during the time of the Labor government. The explanatory note adds that the shire is currently preparing a settlement plan to manage the growth and the development of the whole shire over the next 30 years, into the time of the next Labor government and perhaps a coalition government after that and perhaps another Labor government after that.

For the minister to claim, as he did in his answer to Mr O'Donohue's question, that the current step in this long development stands for the whole exercise and for

him to think that he can claim it for the coalition and try to use it as a stick with which to hit the previous government is quite frankly ridiculous. It is clear that this is an ongoing project. It started during the term of the Labor government and it is being continued by the coalition government.

This project is the same as just about all the other projects that this government associates with; it is a project advanced and developed by Labor and inherited by the coalition. It brings the coalition, and the planning minister in this instance, no credit not to recognise in a mature and straightforward way worthwhile projects that are being collaboratively developed, by the Baw Baw shire in this instance, and that have been inherited from the previous government and from work that has been done by many people.

If a government was confident with its own vision and program, if it was made up of a party that knew why it was in government, and not one such as the present government, which is really an opposition with a series of departments, it would own good projects and it would continue to develop them in the interests of Victoria. To Mr Davis's credit, in his contribution he acknowledged the changes made during the Cain and Kirner governments in relation to energy policy. He acknowledged that those changes were broadly bipartisan, and that is the kind of approach that I would endorse. We need to see more of that and not the hysterical remarks that are typical of the planning minister. By contrast, the posturing of the planning minister is puerile and pathetic. The unnecessary jibes at the former government are unworthy of a Victorian government minister.

To return to the explanatory note for amendment C96 to the Baw Baw planning scheme, we see that back in 2009, well over a year before the 2010 election, the background economic analysis and the Warragul town centre plan predicted that a further 4.4 hectares of land would be needed to accommodate the projected demand for retail space. While the 3-hectare site contained within the Warragul town centre has been zoned for business since 1998, the current initiative is to step this up, and that is of course welcome. The government is to be commended for those things it has done to support good development and job creation in Baw Baw.

The development and growth in Warragul, Drouin and indeed Pakenham is a consequence of the infrastructure investment of the previous Labor government. This has already been referred to in Mr Viney's contribution, but it is important to mention it again. Look at the restoration of the Gippsland rail and the improvements

to the Monash and Princes freeways, in particular the Pakenham bypass. Leaving aside the work we did on education, health services, fire and emergency services, police stations, water management and tourism, as well as the work we did in forging countless business and community partnerships, we also — again I refer to the contribution Mr Viney made on the water factory — created 4000 jobs at the desalination plant and committed to the Warragul railway precinct project. These were major investments that were made over 11 years of the former Labor government. They should not be forgotten, because they underpinned the employment drive that was remarkably successful in Gippsland. The retail centre the minister speaks of for West Gippsland would quite frankly not have been possible without the enhancements to the Monash and Princes freeways and the Pakenham bypass, which was a major achievement.

If I could just digress slightly, another example of this is the 800 additional jobs that will come out of the proposed expansion of G. & K. O'Connor Pty Ltd's abattoir in Pakenham. The planning minister trumpets it, but the expansion is feasible only because of the abattoir's proximity to the Pakenham bypass and hence the easy, fast access it has to the port. This has to be understood in a broad way both historically and also logistically at this point in time. There is absolutely no need for the grandstanding, for the hyperbole, for the personal attacks and for the belittling of previous efforts, which the Minister for Planning seems to think will improve the standing of the coalition in job creation and investment in West Gippsland or anywhere in Victoria.

The Minister for Planning, who is now in the chamber, said in his answer to Mr O'Donohue's question today that the difference between the coalition and Labor is that the coalition believes in growing regional Victoria and in putting actions in place to make things happen, whereas Labor does not share these beliefs and is incapable of acting. This is of course nonsense. Labor's track record speaks volumes for the efforts put in by the previous Labor governments over their 11 years of administration, which coincided with, as I said earlier, the global financial crisis, the worst economic disaster since the Great Depression. The point is that Labor took responsibility for dealing with the circumstances that Victoria faced. We developed a plan to manage the situation, and we delivered results. We invested in Victorian industry and business, we invested in training and skill formation, we invested in services and we invested in infrastructure that would promote the future economy of the state, and through all of this we helped industry and business create jobs, which gave working

families income that sustained them during the crisis and beyond.

Labor kept expenditure under control. We delivered surpluses, and we did not embark on a slash-and-burn austerity program that drove down investment and undermined jobs growth, as this government is doing. There is no better example of how this coalition government's obsession is impacting on Gippsland than the disastrous decision to cut \$290 million per year from the TAFE system on top of the \$100 million that was pulled out in the government's first budget. As a result of this decision GippsTAFE lost around \$10 million — about a third of its budget — and 32 staff were made redundant, around 60 courses were cut, fees were increased and campuses were closed. Advance TAFE faced staff cuts of 45, with 36 courses cut and eight campuses, outreach centres and offices closed.

The fallout from the TAFE cuts ripples through all the businesses, industries and livelihoods right across the community, which is why there has been such a profound reaction to the actions of the government. The government also cut \$30 million from the Chisholm Institute of TAFE, which resulted in the axing of 220 jobs across the Berwick, Cranbourne, Dandenong, Frankston, Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast campuses. At the end of last month we learnt that the government has purged at least half of Victoria's TAFE board chairpersons, amongst them David Willersdorf, the highly respected chair of Chisholm TAFE. In Mr Willersdorf, Chisholm had a successful business leader as its chair, and he was dumped ostensibly because, as Mr Hall, Minister for Higher Education and Skills, who is now in the chamber, said, the board needed to strengthen its economic credentials to be more commercially focused. It really beggars belief.

As we know, Victoria is contracting. Some say it has slumped into recession, and this is attributed to the collapse in government investment and the slide that has been reported as the worst since 1990–91. We know that this is in part due to the high Australian dollar, but it is also true that households have lowered spending and are paying down debt in reaction to their profound sense of economic insecurity and their concern and mistrust about what the future holds for them.

The other major factor is cuts to government spending — and to be fair I refer to both Victorian and commonwealth government cuts — which has reduced spending on schools, hospitals and transport by 1.5 per cent. Our criticism of the Victorian government is not that it is seeking to rein in spending but that it is doing it

so recklessly. It has failed to keep an eye on the economic and social impacts of its austerity. The funds ripped out of TAFE is a disinvestment that, as I said, not only demoralises citizens who want to get ahead but damages the economy and production. When the Minister for Planning trumpets the success of a land-rezoning package in Warragul he loses sight of the larger picture of what his government is doing through its disastrous cost cutting of public services and its failure to invest in infrastructure.

While the government's attack on TAFE is the starkest example of what is wrong with this government's approach, the shedding of 4200 public service jobs is another example. In West Gippsland where Minister Guy is ecstatic that a possible 400 jobs will be created as a result of the new \$45 million retail sector — and I reiterate the important points Mr Viney made — his government has at the same time slashed funding to the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority resulting in the sacking of 17 staff members. The loss of 17 people may not be very many, but they are highly skilled people, and that slashing of funding at the last budget negatively impacts on the work they do which is about the health of rivers and the environment. Those 17 jobs equates to 17 families. Not only do those 17 people now have to find some other place for their skills to be exercised but there is also a loss to the economy and the environment. The loss of those 17 jobs has an important multiplier effect.

The slow leaching away of jobs in Gippsland has included the loss of 126 jobs at the Drypac meat packaging firm in Warragul, an organisation which Mr Viney spoke eloquently of, and, going back a little, the 114 jobs lost in Moe when the Telstra call centre moved to the Philippines. The 114 people who lost their jobs are still there in Moe. Hopefully they have found some other employment, but those families suffered from the hit that they received two years ago shortly after this government came to office. It is fair enough to say that governments cannot prevent private organisations from making job cuts, but it was this government's failure to respond in a constructive way that is the issue. There is also of course the loss of 60 jobs at McCormack Demby Timber, one of the largest hardwood producers in Victoria, and, as has been mentioned, the announcement by Murray Goulburn last year that around 300 jobs would disappear — a number of them in Gippsland.

Gippsland of course is but one part of Victoria. Every day we see news of companies right across the state closing their operations as they try to consolidate in the face of a government that is prosecuting a crude austerity program at a time when it should be

implementing careful and targeted investment initiatives. After nearly two and a half years in office and at a time when economic pressures require governments to actively engage in economic development and strategic investment that will lead to job creation, this government still has no jobs plan and relies on the borrowed glory of land rezoning and retail projects such as that trumpeted by Minister Guy for West Gippsland, projects that were years in the making and where much of the heavy lifting was done by the Baw Baw Shire in conjunction with the previous Labor government. I commend Mr Viney for calling the house's attention to Mr Guy's remarks in response to Mr O'Donohue's question because we need to expose the superficiality of this minister's response.

Mr VINEY (Eastern Victoria) — As Mr Scheffer was talking about the Minister for Planning's manner of overselling things and of his personal attacks and vilification of members of the opposition, the minister walked through the house. Not having spent any time in the house during this debate, and without even taking his seat, he started personally attacking Mr Scheffer.

Mr Drum interjected.

Mr VINEY — Mr Drum should just listen. He constantly interjects with nonsense. He has not even heard the point I am making, and he is interjecting. As Mr Scheffer was making his comments about the Minister for Planning's behaviour in this chamber, the minister walked through the chamber and, without even taking his seat, started having a go at Mr Scheffer on a personal level. When I called him on that he started having a go at me.

Mrs Coote — On a point of order, Acting President, Mr Scheffer, as Mr Viney has said, was on his feet when the Minister for Planning came into the chamber. Mr Scheffer is an adult. In this chamber he knows how to defend himself. I ask you to rule against Mr Viney's point of order. Mr Scheffer could have defended himself.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr O'Brien) — Order! There is no point of order. I call Mr Viney to continue.

Mr VINEY — I am not taking a point of order; I am not defending Mr Scheffer's honour. He can do that perfectly well himself. I am pointing out the dishonour shown by the Minister for Planning. The fact that he would do that proves the very point that the opposition is making, that the Minister for Planning, Mr Guy, uses his contributions in this place for the purpose of one job, and that is promoting his own career advancement.

He did not use it to answer the question from Mr O'Donohue. He did not use it to express concerns about the 24 000 people who have lost their jobs in Gippsland since this government came to office — going from some 145 000 people to some 120 000 people employed in Gippsland. I quoted the precise figures earlier.

That is the issue. The issue is that Mr Guy uses the chamber to spruik projects and to spruik his own political smarts by using terms for the opposition such as Soviet apparatchiks and so on. He displayed that kind of behaviour in answer to a question about a serious matter — that is, the loss of jobs in Gippsland, in this case in Warragul and West Gippsland. It is fantastic that 400 jobs are proposed to be created on this project in Warragul, if everything goes to plan. The point we have been making is that it flies in the face of the hundreds of jobs that have been lost in Warragul and West Gippsland in the last few months.

The issue we raised here is that the creation of jobs is something that requires careful nurturing. In modern times the creation of jobs in our economy requires careful nurturing across a range of activities, whether it be investment in skills through TAFE colleges or whether it be investment in infrastructure, making our towns more livable or improving public transport like our massive investment into the Gippsland rail line when we were in office. What we are saying is that the lack of attention to that careful nurturing from this government in the two and a half years it has been in office has resulted in Gippsland losing 24 000 jobs. Mr Guy's answer to Mr O'Donohue's question did not touch on the broad issue that employment in this state needs careful nurturing.

He should not be coming in here and spruiking the projects of mates. He should not use the office of minister to spruik projects of supporters of the Liberal Party. That is not the job of a minister. The minister ought to be carefully considering his words and investing in Victoria's future, not attacking the opposition.

Motion agreed to.

**RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT
(ROOMING HOUSE STANDARDS)
BILL 2013**

Introduction and first reading

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) introduced a bill for an act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 to ensure that rooming house owners cannot

opt out of the rooming house standards established under the provisions of the act and for other purposes.

Read first time; by leave, ordered to be read second time forthwith.

Statement of compatibility

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 ('charter act'), I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rooming House Standards) Bill 2013.

In my opinion, the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rooming House Standards) Bill 2013, as introduced to the Legislative Council, is compatible with the human rights protected by the charter act.

I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview of bill

This bill is a simple amendment to close a loophole in regulations around rooming houses in Victoria. The regulations enacted by the minister and due to come into effect on 31 March may not be able to be effectively enforced due to rooming house owners exploiting the provision of s 91A of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 ('the act'). The amendment seeks to make clear that rooming house owners and residents who enter into tenancy agreements are still bound by any regulations made pursuant to s 142C of the act.

Human rights issues

I do not believe that there are any human rights issues raised by this bill.

Conclusion

I consider that the bill is compatible with the charter act because it does not limit any human right protected by the charter act.

Brian Tee, MLC
Member for Eastern Metropolitan Region

Second reading

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill closes a loophole created by the government when it introduced minimum standards for rooming houses in 2012.

Specifically, the bill seeks to amend the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 to amend section 94(1A) to ensure that rooming house owners cannot opt out of the

rooming house standards. Currently, section 94(1A) of the act allows for rooming house provisions to not apply where a tenancy agreement has been entered into by a resident and a rooming house owner in respect of a room in a rooming house.

The bill seeks to correct this glaring oversight on the part of the government which provides an 'escape hatch' for dodgy or rogue rooming house owners to avoid complying with the minimum standards as set out in regulations due to take effect on 21 March this year. This situation could effectively deny vulnerable residents basic standards of safety and amenity the rest of us take for granted.

Despite the government's loud pronouncements when in opposition that it would do everything necessary to drive rogue rooming house owners out of the industry, it has fallen well short in government by enacting only some of the recommendations of the Foley report of 2010. Not only have they gone back on their word, the government has botched changes to the law by allowing this gaping loophole to exist.

Labor's bill will provide that if a tenancy agreement is entered into by a resident and a rooming house owner in respect of a room in a rooming house, the rooming house provisions do not apply to the occupation of that room by that resident while the tenancy agreement continues save for any standards established by any regulations made pursuant to section 142C, and the obligation of the rooming house owner to comply with those standards including under section 142B.

The Public Interest Law Clearing House homeless persons' legal clinic and the Tenants Union of Victoria identified this legislative deficiency in a joint submission made on 24 December 2012 to the Coroners Court of Victoria regarding a coronial inquest.

The bill is time sensitive with regulations due to take effect on 31 March this year.

The opposition will not stand by and allow the law to continue to exist in its current deficient state and calls on the government to support the bill.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan).

Debate adjourned until Wednesday, 1 May.

GOVERNMENT: ELECTION COMMITMENTS

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I move:

That this house calls on the Napthine government to fund its outstanding election commitments when it delivers its 2013–14 state budget.

This is an important motion because it is the last opportunity this chamber has to call on the government to honour its election commitments. It is worth noting that we are starting from what is a very low base. We have a government that was elected to, in its own words, 'fix the problems'. Instead we have seen a continual decline in and a continual strangulation of the Victorian economy. We have seen Victorian families suffering — and they will continue to suffer — at the hands of this government. We have seen unemployment rise slowly but steadily; Victoria's unemployment rate is now the second highest in the country. We have seen industries like the manufacturing industry being decimated. We have seen the construction industry on its knees. We know that the construction industry is a major employer; in fact it is the second largest employer in the state.

The coalition has not only failed to fix the problems as per its election commitment, but in a bizarre twist it has seen things get worse, due principally to inaction and to a failure to deliver infrastructure projects. The failure of the government to act has resulted in more congestion and has seen companies, including those in the construction industry, slowly but surely leave the state. We do not have a pipeline of infrastructure investments that we saw under previous governments of both political persuasions. We have a gap in infrastructure investment by this government, which means that the skills and the jobs are moving interstate or, indeed, are completely disappearing. In the first nine months of 2012 alone 33 000 construction jobs were lost.

In the past year 31 jobs were lost each day. Each day 31 families have been left to struggle to pay their bills and 31 families have lost an income earner to help pay the bills. The government's promise to fix the problems is now sounding very hollow to those families. The government's failure to provide an infrastructure plan and an infrastructure pipeline, and the jobs and the security that come with that, is a cruel blow to many of those families. The government's failure to take the jobs issue seriously and its failure to provide any sort of job plan are a terrible blow to those families. Instead of an infrastructure plan and a jobs plan, all that Victorian families are seeing is more and more road congestion, fewer and fewer transport services and its members struggling to pay the bills.

We have seen a government that promised to fix the problems in the health sector overseeing a system that is in crisis. We have seen hospitals closing wards, we have seen emergency departments sending patients away and we have seen a cut of some \$600 million from the health system. Instead of fixing the problems, there has been a gutting of the health budget and \$600 million being ripped out of the system. The price that has been paid for that neglect has been paid by Victorian families. Elective surgery waiting lists are at an all-time high: 55 000 Victorians are waiting to get the services that they need to live comfortably and to address their ongoing health issues.

Box Hill Hospital, in my electorate, is struggling to survive with these budget cuts. It has the second longest waiting list, with 2865 people on that list. We have about 7.6 patients per 100 who have had their elective surgery cancelled or postponed. We have 8 per cent of ambulance transfer times that are below the 90 per cent state target. Nearly 40 per cent of category 3 emergency patients are not being seen in the required time, which is 14 per cent below the state target. So instead of fixing the problems, we have seen a massive cut to the health budget that has delivered for Box Hill Hospital and hospitals right across the state slower response times, more people on elective surgery waiting lists and greater suffering out in the community.

The government promised that it would cut elective surgery waiting lists. It promised that it would reduce waiting times in emergency departments. It promised 800 new beds in the hospital system. After two and a half years and this government's first two budgets, we have yet to see any evidence of those 800 new beds. There is not one extra bed added to the system as far as we can tell and as far as the community can tell. This budget will be an important measure of the government's commitment to the health system, its commitment to restoring some dignity to the lives of people who are unwell and to restoring some hope to those who are in need of our health system.

Since this government was elected we have seen an increase in unemployment. As I said earlier, we now have the second highest unemployment rate in the country and the highest of any mainland state. But the impact of this has really been felt by young people; in Victoria we now have a youth unemployment rate of 18 per cent. The government's response has been to slash funding to the TAFE system. This impacts across the board but in particular in regional Victoria.

Mr Barber interjected.

Mr TEE — Mr Barber, it has come at a time when more than ever we need to match skills with jobs and to give our young people the opportunity to have careers and jobs. At a time when we need to give young people the skills they need so they can fit into the employment market, at a time when youth unemployment is at 18 per cent, what this government has done is cut, cut, cut. We have seen the closure of Swinburne University of Technology's Lilydale campus and cuts to its Croydon campus, and Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE is selling its Greensborough campus, so these cuts are having a real impact in terms of where young people can go to get the skills they need to fit into the jobs they need.

Hon. P. R. Hall interjected.

Mr TEE — Mr Hall, this is in stark contrast to the growth we saw under the previous government. What people out there are witnessing is these campuses closing down and courses no longer being offered, and it makes it harder and harder for young people to fit into a system which is shrinking.

Hon. P. R. Hall interjected.

Mr TEE — The other impact of your cuts, Mr Hall, is an increase in fees, making it harder for disadvantaged people to get into these courses and to get these opportunities. Then of course at the management level we are seeing the structure unravel. We have seen the chairs of over half the TAFE boards sacked. We have a tsunami of high youth unemployment — 18 per cent — and an economy in recession, and the government's response is to make cuts that have seen campuses close, fees increase and fewer courses being offered. In a sense the government is creating a perfect storm. We know what is at risk here: the lives of those young kids who might not have an opportunity without TAFE. We on this side are worried about those young people who might fall through the cracks because they no longer have the TAFE system to pick them up and give them the skills they need to find employment.

Hon. P. R. Hall interjected.

Mr TEE — Mr Hall might protest, but the truth is campuses are closing, courses are being cut and fees are going up. There are few opportunities, and even fewer opportunities for those who do not have the funds to get into the courses that are being provided.

Another example is the School Focused Youth Service, which makes sure that 10 to 18-year-olds — vulnerable children — are connected to the services they need. It is about making sure that kids who are struggling are

connected to the services they need so they do not drop out of school. It is about making sure that young kids with a disability can stay in school because they have the support and the services they need. In my electorate alone the program helped some 9000 students last year. The service's funding runs out at the end of June and it may well then disappear. This debate is an opportunity to draw a line in the sand and make sure that the most vulnerable kids — those who are likely to drop out of school and those who are living with a disability — do not fall through the cracks because they are not connected to the support and the services they need. This is not an expensive program — it costs about \$119 per student — but it is just another example of the glaring gap between the promise to fix the problems and the actions being taken which are making the problems worse.

Mr Drum interjected.

Mr TEE — You can talk the talk, Mr Drum, but when are you going to walk the walk? When are you going to put in place the services — —

Mr Drum interjected.

Mr TEE — These services were funded by the former government without any — —

Mr DRUM — You had 11 years.

Mr TEE — Yes, and these services were in place. We saw a massive growth in TAFEs and a massive expansion in services to look after the most vulnerable, and you are saying, 'Oh no, that's okay — we'll cut those services, we'll leave the most vulnerable people to fall through the cracks?'

Mr Drum interjected.

Mr TEE — Particularly in regional Victoria, Mr Drum. I hope that at least in your caucus you are pointing out the impact that these cuts are having on regional Victorians, Mr Drum.

I turn now to aged care. Even the most vulnerable in the community are at risk when it comes to this government. We have seen the closure of 179 public sector aged-care beds. We have been told that there might be cuts of some \$75 million to public sector residential aged care. Home and community care (HACC) services across the state have seen a 2 per cent cut. Despite the fact that we have an ageing population, we have seen bed closures, and cuts to residential aged care and HACC funding.

Instead of fixing the problem and supporting those people who have contributed all their lives, those opposite are cutting the funding put in place by the previous government. Those opposite ask, 'What did the previous government do?'. We put services in place. We funded them appropriately. We looked after young people. We looked after those in aged-care facilities. Government members are now going through each of these supports, one by one, and cutting them, affecting some of the most vulnerable people in our community. Kids are going to fall through the cracks. People who are getting older, those who are vulnerable and those who need our health services have been targeted by this government. Members opposite sit there and say, 'What did you do in government?'. In government we provided those services and we funded them. What are members opposite doing in government? They are cutting those services. Who has been affected? It is the most vulnerable in our community.

Nadrasca community farm, in my electorate, provides a great support service for some of our most vulnerable people, such as people living with a disability. This government was elected on a promise to keep this farm as open space; it was keeping this reserve as open space. VicRoads is now undertaking consultation to try to turn this open space into a housing development. The government is trying to convince the Nadrasca community farm that it ought to move; discussions are under way to try to get it to move. People at the Nadrasca farm do not want to move and nor should they have to. All they want is for this government to honour its election promise, which was made very loudly and clearly in the lead-up to the election, that this farm and the Healesville freeway reserve will be kept as open space.

Members opposite are not only wriggling away from that commitment but they have turned their backs on it. They are out there trying to convince the community that building housing on this open space is a good idea. They are trying to convince the farm and those very vulnerable people on it that they need to move when they do not want to. This government was elected on a promise that Nadrasca would not have to move. All of a sudden that commitment has disappeared.

Funding for education and schools in my electorate has not been delivered. Templestowe College was promised \$5 million, which has not been delivered. Blackburn Primary School was promised \$3.8 million, which has not been delivered. Boronia Heights Primary School was promised \$15 million for new classrooms, which has not been delivered. The government has been in

office for two years and my electorate is still waiting to see Rowville police station operating 24/7 as promised.

This is a timely motion as it is the last sitting week before the budget; it is an important motion. We are seeking that the government do no more than honour its election commitments. We think those opposite should have no problem supporting a motion that does no more than ask the government to do what it promised the electorate hand on heart it would do. While Victoria is in recession and the youth unemployment rate is at 18 per cent, when young people cannot get a job and the Victorian unemployment rate has crept up to be the second highest in the country, it is not the time to cut the support and services needed by the most vulnerable in our community, whether they are struggling students, older Victorians or those in need of our health services.

When the economy is in recession we need to make sure for the sake of business and those wanting a job that we educate our young people so that they have the skills they need to connect to the jobs that are out there. That has never been more important now that we have a shrinking job market. It has never been more important to make sure that we have the infrastructure and projects in place and to instil confidence in the development and business community that there are a stream of projects in the pipeline so that they hold onto their staff.

At the moment the business community tells us it needs to let go of employees because there is nothing in the pipeline. There are no infrastructure projects, so a lot of those jobs are disappearing. We have seen businesses move from working full time to nine-day fortnights. Increasingly they feel they have no alternative but to let go of their staff. This is a critical budget. I hope the government can deliver on its promises. I hope it can deliver some confidence to the business community and to Victorian families who very much feel that they were neglected in the last two budgets.

Mr DRUM (Northern Victoria) — It is always a pleasure to rise in this place and follow on from Mr Tee because he tends to be very strong on motherhood statements and very short on detail. Yet again Mr Tee gave us motherhood statements about the fact that the government does not have a jobs plan. I would like to know what *Securing Victoria's Economy* is. If that is not a jobs plan, what is it? It sets out exactly where the Victorian economy is at the moment. It sets out a range of initiatives that this government is putting in place in order to secure our future. We have seen the biggest trade missions ever. Ministers have been to India and China twice, as well as to the Middle East and Japan. The Minister for Employment and Trade is continually

working with overseas markets. If that is not a jobs plan, I do not know what is.

This is a cheap and pathetic attempt by the opposition to try to pick up on unemployment rates when it knows very well what the impact of the high Australian dollar has been. The opposition has latched onto every piece of bad news that has hit Australia during a time when we face extremely high competition from our competitors. We are an exporting nation. I am sure Mr Tee and others in the Labor Party do not need me to give them a 101 lesson on these issues. It is just nonsense to suggest that somehow or other this is our fault. Labor had 11 years to put a framework in place, during which time debt and spending spiralled through the roof to unacceptable levels and the projection of debt in the forward estimates put this state in a difficult position.

Mr Tee spent a large part of his contribution talking about the TAFE sector and training. Yet at the time Labor lost office it had allocated \$850 million in its budget that it claimed it would spend on training in this state in the out years. The Labor Party told Victorians that it was going to spend \$850 million on training in the out years. Labor got that wrong by about \$400 million, but it wants Victorians to forget about that; it wants Victorians to gloss over that. I think financial management and Labor should never be mentioned in the same sentence.

Business interrupted pursuant to standing orders.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Housing: public official access

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — My question is to the Minister for Housing. Is the recent decision to restrict access by public officials to public housing towers a decision she made as minister or a decision of her department?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing) — I thank the member for her question. What I can confirm for her is that early last year I did ask the department to review its policies relating to access to common areas of the housing estates and also to the secure areas of the housing estates. This followed an increase in complaints from tenants regarding their concerns about people who were doorknocking in secure areas. This included stuffing pamphlets into doors, which alerted people to the fact that no-one was at home. Tenants also raised concerns about not being able to access community rooms for social, recreational and cultural activities due to bookings from people from outside the

estate. Early this year a flyer was distributed advertising meetings in rooms that the department required for its Cooler Places program.

Policies were developed back in 2007 under the then Minister for Housing, Richard Wynne, the member for Richmond in the Assembly. These policies existed and they controlled access to mailrooms and also the type of activities that could take place in the common areas. However, the department had not been terribly vigilant about enforcing the guidelines established by Minister Wynne. But if we look back to 2007, we see that media reports on three occasions — in November 2007, August 2007 and again in October 2008 — highlighted that the Greens were denied access to the mailrooms under Richard Wynne. This article states:

Housing minister Richard Wynne wrote to Mr Barber last month announcing a new system in which the delivery of political information to high-rise estate residents would need to be 'negotiated'.

That was Labor's position: that the Greens needed to negotiate with it in order to have access to the housing estates. The Socialists also had concerns and difficulties in accessing the housing estate. What was Mr Wynne's answer to them? It was to put it in the post. He said that all political representatives had access to the electoral roll and could personally address material to residents. In August 2007 the now federal member for Melbourne, Mr Bandt, was refused access to the mailrooms on an estate. An article from that time refers to the department's new guidelines, and it says:

Political parties wanting to communicate outside of election periods can do so through Australia Post.

The guidelines that have been implemented recently by the department are not even that tough. Mr Barber asked the department last week for access to the mailrooms, and he was given access to those mailrooms despite the department having concerns about some of the material contained in his pamphlet.

The department recently published its new guidelines, which clarify access to secure mailrooms — which is less strict than it was under Labor — as well as activities in common areas and community facilities, and the department made it clear that access to secure areas is only available to tenants who have swipe card access or to visitors who tenants invite to their apartments. This is consistent with access to all private apartment buildings that have swipe card access.

I am aware that the opposition and the Greens have raised some concerns about the new guidelines, in particular access to the community rooms. I stand by the department's guidelines for access to secure areas

and the mailrooms and activities in the common areas. However, I have asked the department to conduct a further review of access to community rooms that will allow these facilities to be used by groups from outside the housing estate, providing that it does not interfere with the tenants' use of these rooms or the department's needs.

Supplementary question

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — If it was the minister's decision, a decision she has now informed the house that she took advice on from her department, why did she say in a radio interview on Thursday, 4 April, that she was not responsible and that the decision was a department policy?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing) — I did not say I was not responsible. I said these were department policies, and they are department policies. As I said, I asked the department to review its policies based on complaints from tenants. The department reviewed its policies and has published new guidelines. Concerns have been raised about access to community rooms. Those community rooms are provided for the use of tenants for their cultural, recreational and social activities and also for very important programs like Cooler Places. I have asked the department to review the guidelines to make the community rooms available for people from outside the estate providing they do not interfere with the tenants' use of those rooms or the department's need for those rooms to provide important programs like Cooler Places.

TAFE sector: governance

Ms CROZIER (Southern Metropolitan) — My question is to the Minister for Higher Education and Skills, Mr Hall. Can the minister update the house on any important developments with respect to the governance of TAFE institutes?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I thank Ms Crozier for her question and her interest in vocational training in Victoria. If members were observant yesterday, they would have seen amongst the list of papers tabled in the Parliament was a list of the 14 stand-alone TAFE institutes' new constitutions. These are very important documents which establish exactly what the role of each of those 14 TAFE institutes is. Members of the opposition should be familiar with that legislative process given that it started in 2010 under the previous government. It put in place a process that would see the reconstituting and therefore the reappointment of all TAFE governing

boards. Legislation passed by this Parliament last year finalised that process.

Yesterday there were a couple of significant milestones in terms of governing TAFE institutes. There was the tabling of constitutions, and I also had the pleasure yesterday afternoon, after Governor in Council approval, of announcing the chairs of the 14 stand-alone TAFE institutes in Victoria, who are all very capable people.

I want to put on record the new chairs: for Advance TAFE, Scott Rossetti, for Bendigo TAFE, Margaret O'Rourke, for Box Hill Institute of TAFE, Suzanne Ewart, for Chisholm Institute of TAFE, Steven Marks, for GippsTAFE, John Mitchell, for GOTAFE, Michael Tehan, for Holmesglen Institute of TAFE, Peter Lewinsky, for Kangan Institute of TAFE, Michael Brown, for Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT), John Gibbins, for South West TAFE, Mike Weise, for SuniTAFE, Leonie Barrows, for Gordon TAFE, Brian Williamson, for William Angliss Institute, Michele Allan, and for Wodonga TAFE, Tony Brandt. Each of these people is very capable, but it seems to me that the opposition has been having a bit of a crack in the last week or so since they were announced, suggesting that some of them were not the best people to occupy those particular positions. If that is still the case, opposition members should say so now if they do not think they are appropriate people; they should name them.

In its crack at this process last week it is interesting that the opposition suggested I was walking around the state sacking co-chairs of TAFE councils. Nothing could be further from the truth. The legislation requires the reappointment of every single TAFE council, and each of those positions was awarded on merit. I do not think the opposition was very sincere when its members did this, because at one particular stage the shadow minister, Steve Herbert, the member for Eltham in the Assembly, had a press release running all around the state for each of those chairs being occupied by somebody different. Their names were published on the ALP website, but now only two remain on the ALP website. It seems Labor has retracted many of those names; and perhaps there should be an explanation as to why that would be. The two that sit there at the moment are Chisholm TAFE and Box Hill TAFE. Holmesglen TAFE and NMIT were quickly withdrawn, as were others.

I say to the opposition that if it has a problem with those who the Governor in Council has appointed to those positions, it should let me know now. I also want to say that as part of this process the legislation requires

me to appoint the first half of those TAFE councils and then consult with those councils on the balance of those boards. I inform members that the interim appointments that I have made without exception are existing members of boards prior to the changes that occurred yesterday. It is not that I am throwing all those people out; it is that I am recognising they have made a great contribution and, apart from two cases, previous chairs have accepted my invitation to continue. I thank them for it. I thank them for their new endeavours to ensure that TAFE institutes will be well led by new boards that are being appointed.

Schools: special religious instruction

Ms PENNICUIK (Southern Metropolitan) — My question is for the Minister for Higher Education and Skills in his capacity as the representative in this chamber of the Minister for Education under standing order 8.01. On 12 October last year I asked him a question about a memo sent to schools by the department regarding supervision of students who do not attend special religious instruction (SRI). This followed a change in approach from parents having to opt out of special religious instruction to requiring principals to obtain advice from parents as to whether or not they wish their children to attend SRI, including the use of the consent form GC566. My question is: is the department monitoring compliance with the original memo and the requirement of principals to obtain parental permission, and how?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I note Ms Pennicuik has asked me this question in my capacity as the representative of the Minister for Education. Because it is Ms Pennicuik's birthday, but also because she gave me notice 1 hour ago that this question was to be asked, I will attempt to answer it in this way. I did check up on this question, and the *Hansard* record shows the matter was raised on 12 October 2011, so this particular matter was raised 18 months ago. In the last hour I have tried to seek an exact answer to her question. I do not think what has just arrived for me is an exact answer, so it is a question I will need to take on notice, given it is for the Minister for Education. I give a commitment to the birthday girl that I will get back to her from the minister in due course.

Supplementary question

Ms PENNICUIK (Southern Metropolitan) — Sorry, Minister, I had the year wrong but the date right. Therefore the department has had 18 months to monitor how this is going. When the minister is following this matter up with the Minister for Education could he also

ask the minister if the department is also monitoring how parents are made aware that they actually have to opt in rather than opt out?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I will certainly include the requested information in the answer that I will seek from the Minister for Education.

Planning: Geelong regional growth plan

Mr O'BRIEN (Western Victoria) — My question is to the Minister for Planning, and I ask: can the minister inform the house what action the government has taken to plan for sustainable growth of the Geelong-Barwon region?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I thank Mr O'Brien for his very important question. The greater Geelong region, and of course the area around that G21 area, the Barwon region, is no longer simply viewed as Victoria's second-largest city but as Australia's twelfth-largest city. What we are seeing is the growth of a major Australia powerhouse, both in sustainability terms and economic terms, and of course in population terms.

It was my pleasure to be with Andrew Katos, the member for South Barwon in the Assembly, at the launch of the G21 regional growth plan. This is the first regional growth plan that the government has launched and it is very significant indeed. Importantly it identifies residential land supply across the region for the next 30 to 40 years to accommodate population growth from around 300 000 to around 500 000 people. It identifies employment land to accommodate around 80 000 new jobs over the 40-year life of the regional growth plan. It strengthens and protects existing major employment zones, including at central Geelong, Corio, Lara, Avalon Airport, the port of Geelong, Armstrong Creek, Torquay, Jan Juc, Ocean Grove and of course Colac. Importantly the growth plan has a great focus in identifying areas which will be future and indeed current agricultural areas which are going to be so important for the future development of the Geelong-Barwon region.

This document will also significantly enhance our natural and landscape assets, including the Otway Ranges, the You Yangs Regional Park, the Bellarine Peninsula, the Great Ocean Road, the Otway coast and the Barrabool Hills.

This document has gone through a range of consultations since it was released in August 2011. As I said, there has been consultation, discussion, the

drafting of the document and discussion with all the councils — Queenscliffe, Greater Geelong, Surf Coast, Colac Otway and Golden Plains — all of which had their mayors representing them at the launch of this document to set the scene strategically for the future of the Greater Geelong region over the next 40 years.

Represented in this chamber by Mr O'Brien, Mr Koch and Mr Ramsay, this area of Victoria is seeing its best years well and truly coming ahead of it. As I said, what we are seeing in the Greater Geelong region is the growth of a major city of Australia in the future now beginning its journey as that city of the future. Greater Geelong has a huge amount to offer, and not just from the beautiful township lifestyles of places like Winchelsea or places along the Bellarine Peninsula. It has a great future ahead of it as an economically sustainable city and as a city with outlying towns and regions coming together to work in an area that has world-class beaches, magnificent schools and growth areas in Geelong that can accommodate nearly 150 000 people.

This government is putting more and more money into the regional rail link project to ensure that we can get people commuting between Melbourne and Geelong more quickly. That project is going to be delivered not only on time but in a framework where we will see a greater level of efficiency between Victoria's two largest cities.

Mr Ondarchie — And the football team.

Hon. M. J. GUY — I will make no comment on the football team. The Premier has made plenty of comments about the football team, as has Mr Ondarchie.

I would simply say that Geelong is a city that has its greatest years ahead of it. On this side of the house this government wants to see Geelong fully realise its potential as a great city. That is why we have done the work in this regional growth plan, work that was denied and was never delivered by the previous government; it was ignored by 11 years of Labor. As a government we set out to get these regional growth plans to happen, and unlike any other government we have delivered them.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I thought we were going to get through that answer without a reference to Geelong's football team. I am looking at whether there is snow available yet for my football team.

TAFE sector: board appointments

Mr LENDERS (Southern Metropolitan) — My question is addressed to the Minister for Higher Education and Skills, Mr Hall. I listened to his answer to the Dorothy Dixer asked earlier with some interest. Can the minister confirm that he had contacted each of the TAFE board chairs to advise them that they had been sacked prior to the information being made available to the media?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — First of all, I want to absolutely reject the terminology used by Mr Lenders, where he suggested that I had gone around sacking them. The legislation meant that boards had to be reappointed for each of the TAFE institutes, and that is a process I undertook. Did I consult with all of the TAFE chairs prior to the information being made publicly available? I had met 13 of the 14 existing TAFE chairs at that time, prior to any media commentary on this particular matter. I assure the member that it was not of my doing that the content of conversations that I may have had with the previous 13 chairs seemed to become the subject of media attention; it was not of my doing.

Mr Lenders would know that I am at least a respectful person, and I thought it my duty to meet with those 14 people individually prior to anything being made public or any recommendations the government might make, so I endeavoured to do that. As I said, there was some media attention prior to me meeting with the 14 stand-alone chairs at that particular time. Beyond that, there were two TAFE chairs who due to certain circumstances — one of them was overseas — I was not able to meet face to face, but I personally contacted all of those people and spoke to them.

Supplementary question

Mr LENDERS (Southern Metropolitan) — We may be debating semantics on whether someone losing their job is sacked or not reappointed, but I will let that pass.

I thank the minister for his answer, but how does he account for the fact that at least one TAFE board chair found out that he had been sacked by hearing a radio news report of it while driving to the minister's office on the afternoon of Thursday, 28 March?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I thought I made it very clear. By the way, I drove to the TAFE institute to meet with the chair of that particular institute. That was a scheduled appointment, and its time suited both that TAFE chair

and me. Those appointments were all locked in sometime prior to that, and as I said in my answer to Mr Lenders's question, it was not of my doing that information was conveyed to the media by some person. I do not know who that person was — it certainly was not me or anyone from my office — and it was entirely inappropriate when I had not personally met each of the TAFE chairs, which, as I said before, I endeavoured to do.

I apologise sincerely to that person. It was not something of my making, but it was something that I felt was most improper, and I will be angry if I ever find out who the person was who conveyed that information to the media.

Aviation industry: pilot training

Mr P. DAVIS (Eastern Victoria) — I direct a question without notice to the Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry. Can the minister update the house on Victoria's pilot training sector?

Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry) — I thank Mr Davis for his question and for his interest in what is an important part of the Victorian aviation and aerospace industry and an important export market for the Victorian economy.

Both Boeing and Airbus forecast that by 2030 there will be demand for around 30 000 new commercial airlines, and within the Asia-Pacific region around 12 000 will be required over that same time frame. Of course this creates enormous demand for cabin crew and for pilots over the next two decades, and Victoria is particularly well located to meet some of that demand in the Asia-Pacific region.

At the same time we are also seeing major reform take place in aviation in China, with the Chinese government announcing that it is deregulating a lot of its currently military airspace and making that available for civilian aviation operations. That too is creating enormous demand for pilot training. We are well located in our region, where there is substantial demand coming out of China and substantial demand coming out of India, and Victoria is very well placed to meet this demand. We are a market which is regarded as having particularly good infrastructure — the best infrastructure in Australia — and the Victorian government, through the Regional Aviation Fund, is committed to further upgrading that airport infrastructure which is used by our flying training sector. We have good weather, we have benign terrain and we have low congestion in our airspace around

Melbourne and Victoria, which is also particularly suitable for pilot training.

In addition to that, Australia is regarded at an international level as having a very solid regulatory environment which is respected around the world, and that means that a pilots licence gained in Australia is well regarded by markets in China and India. In Victoria we have a very strong Chinese community and a very strong Indian community, both of which are welcoming to students from those respective markets. We have all the building blocks in place for very strong growth in our flying training market.

I am pleased to report to the house that Victoria is already kicking goals in this marketplace. We have companies such as CAE Oxford based at Moorabbin Airport. I was delighted in 2011 to open its new headquarters at Moorabbin, which is now providing flying training to Vietnam Airlines and providing flying training to Jetstar Asia. We have companies like Tristar Aviation, also at Moorabbin, providing pilot training in the Indian market. There are companies like Singapore Technologies located in Ballarat, which is providing pilot training in the Chinese market.

Last week I was delighted to be in Mangalore with Moorabbin Flight Training Academy, which is based in Mangalore but named for Moorabbin. Moorabbin Flight Training Academy is providing flight training to students from China Southern Airlines. That school has now trained more than 200 students from China Southern Airlines over the last seven years, and it has been operating from Mangalore. I was delighted on the super trade mission to China in September to meet some of those pilots who are now flying between Australia and China and who were trained in Victoria, so it is a great success story for Victoria.

Many of these companies that are now operating in the export market have participated on Victorian government super trade missions, be they missions to China or missions to India. They have seen the benefits of participating in those missions, and indeed we expect further announcements of the international training opportunities which arise from those missions. The Victorian government is committed to working with those companies and committed to growing what is a very important export opportunity for the Victorian economy and for the aviation industry.

Housing: public official access

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — My question is to the Minister for Housing. Will the Department of Human Services guidelines restricting access to public

housing by members of Parliament impair the minister's ability to do her job, or does not she believe that it is necessary to meet with people living in public housing on public housing estates?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing) — As I said in my earlier answer, I have asked the department to review those guidelines. They are the department's guidelines, but I have asked it to review them given the concerns that have been raised. They will be reviewed, and we will see the final guidelines when that happens.

Supplementary question

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — In light of the minister's answer, can she guarantee that the Leader of the Opposition and member for Mulgrave in the Assembly, Daniel Andrews, will not be prevented from accepting an invitation to attend a tenant meeting on the Atherton Gardens estate on 24 April because of her ban?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing) — I await the department's review of these guidelines. They are its guidelines. I await its review, and we will see the outcome.

Aboriginal affairs: health initiatives

Mr KOCH (Western Victoria) — My question is to my colleague Mr David Davis in his capacity as Minister for Health, and I ask: can the minister inform the house of recent government initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal Victorians?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I thank the member for his question and for his longstanding interest in Aboriginal communities in Victoria. Many of our country members have strong links with the various Aboriginal communities around our state. I know Mr Koch has had a long association with the western side of the state and knows many of the Aboriginal communities in that area.

I was very proud to join the Premier in Geelong at the Geelong Football Club — and we were talking about football clubs just before — for the announcement by the government of \$61.7 million in Closing the Gap money. Let me be quite clear about how this operates. This is a national partnership agreement: commonwealth money and state money. The money finishes on 30 June. This is a pre-budget announcement because it is an announcement we regard as being of some significance. The \$61.7 million is an increase in funding for Aboriginal health in Victoria. It is important that the commonwealth now matches that

money and puts significant resources on the table to match that significant increase in funding. We know the Closing the Gap objectives are very important because they directly reflect a lower standard of health of many Aboriginal Victorians and indeed Aboriginal Australians. It is critical that there are significant resources to achieve health outcomes that will address many of the key challenges.

I was proud to be joined at that launch by Aboriginal members of the Geelong Football Club. I welcome the strong initiative of Geelong through its support of the Deadly Choices program for stronger Aboriginal health outcomes. The focus is on what can be done in a preventive way to ensure that Aboriginal health is improved statewide. I think the example of key footballers from Geelong is something that is important. With the Aboriginal community, as with the broader Australian community, role models are also very important. Geelong should be commended on its preparedness to sign up to a reconciliation action plan and its preparedness to look at how it can work with Aboriginal communities in the Barwon south-west region. However, this is a broader statewide story, and I know Mr Jennings would support very much what I am saying here.

I was also pleased to be joined by Jill Gallagher, the chair of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO). Its ongoing role is very important. I welcome the commentary by VACCHO in its news release where it welcomed the government's investment. The news release lays out some key priorities for the state and commonwealth governments.

I know VACCHO very strongly supports the Victorian government's request to the commonwealth that it come forward and match that money. We are concerned that the Closing the Gap money at a commonwealth level will not be renewed in its entirety. We want to be sure that the Victorian Aboriginal health money remains and that it increases. We want to be sure that that our Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations are able to go on with the very good work they are doing around the state. I indicate to the chamber that I have written to the federal ministers — to Warren Snowdon, the Minister for Indigenous Health, as well as Tanya Plibersek, the Minister for Health — to seek their support in this matter.

What is also important here is the support of other organisations, not just VACCHO. I welcome the support of the Victorian Council of Social Service in its news release welcoming the government's commitment

to the Closing the Gap Aboriginal health outcomes. I will quote from it. It states:

We now need the federal government and COAG to commit to the national partnership agreement on closing the gap in indigenous health, as the current funding agreement is set to expire on 30 June 2013.

I also welcome the support of the Australian Medical Association and other key groups across the state. This is something that I think is beyond party politics. It is something that has broad support in Victoria.

Housing: public official access

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — My question is to the Minister for Housing. Has the minister received legal advice about the new guidelines that restrict access by public officials to public housing towers, as updated on 18 March 2013?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing) — Ms Broad keeps asking questions about the same thing, and I am going to keep giving her the same answer. This was a review by the department of access to areas that it controls. The department has reviewed those guidelines. The department has actually lessened the guidelines when it comes to access to the secure mailrooms. The access to secure areas for doorknocking is no different to what it is in private apartment buildings. If you live in the Eureka Tower, you have secure access to the building, and I believe Ms Broad actually lives in an apartment where there is secure access. You need a swipe card to get in and people cannot access those buildings for doorknocking.

Tenants raised concerns. They raised concerns not only about people knocking on their doors but about pamphlets being shoved in their doors, which alerted people to the fact that they were not home. One tenant rang into the ABC last week and said some of the materials and people who were doorknocking were aggressive, and they were upset about it. This was a review by the department. The department is looking at these areas. It will review the access to the community facilities, which are private facilities owned by the director of housing. We will see the outcome of that review when it is finished.

Supplementary question

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — Sections 16 and 18(1) of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 protect the right of citizens to participate in the conduct of public affairs and the right to freedom of expression. Has the minister been advised or not as to whether the guidelines breach the Victorian

charter of human rights, or does she not think the charter is relevant?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing) — The charter also includes privacy rights. I support the department's right to protect tenants and their right to be safe and secure in their apartment buildings. Secure access was introduced for a reason; it was to give these tenants the same safety and security that residents enjoy in private apartment buildings, and it should be upheld.

Ballarat: work and learning centre

Mr RAMSAY (Western Victoria) — My question without notice is to the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development, the Honourable Wendy Lovell. Can the minister update the house on the work and learning centre initiative and the recent opening of the new work and learning centre in Ballarat?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development) — I thank the member for his question and for his ongoing interest in the people of Ballarat, particularly those who are disadvantaged and who need assistance to participate in work and in learning. Last week I was delighted to join the member, together with Tony Nicholson from the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Janet Ward, the manager of the Ballarat work and learning centre, and Wendy Draayers, who is the executive officer of the Highlands Local Learning and Employment Network, to officially open the Ballarat work and learning centre, which is located at the Phoenix P-12 Community College. This work and learning centre is delivered through a partnership with the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre, the Highlands Local Learning and Employment Network, the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the Victorian state government.

So far the Ballarat work and learning centre has had 30 participants register for its services, and 2 have already gained employment, which is a fantastic result for those 2 participants. We met Duop Reath, a Sudanese refugee, who is boosting his skills at the work and learning centre. We also met participants in pre-accredited hospitality training who on the day we were there were busy undertaking their course. The centre has links with key employment agencies and is expected to help 200 people gain employment. This will be a fantastic result for the Ballarat community.

The Ballarat work and learning centre is part of a \$4.6 million election commitment that has delivered five work and learning centres across the state at Geelong, Carlton, Moe, Ballarat and Shepparton. The work and learning centres target public housing tenants

and the disadvantaged in our communities to assist them to participate in education and training and ultimately to enter the workforce. More than 600 clients have registered at the five centres so far, and 200 have already gained employment. This is an outstanding achievement for those 200 individuals who are gaining the confidence to participate in the workforce and also the ability to build a better life for themselves and for their families.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Answers

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I have answers to the following questions on notice: 2268, 8164, 8587, 8602-81, 8734-6, 8752, 8769, 8770, 8772-97, 8800-968, 8970, 8992, 8994-9003, 9013, 9015, 9016, 9018-198, 9200-4, 9206-11, 9213, 9215-19, 9221, 9222, 9225, 9227-33, 9237, 9238, 9240-51, 9254, 9376-90, 9397, 9400, 9404.

Ms PULFORD (Western Victoria) — I seek an explanation for a non-answered question that was asked some time ago, in February 2012. If possible, I would like to direct the question to our almost-new Department of Justice minister, Mr O'Donohue.

The PRESIDENT — Order! Mr O'Donohue has not yet been commissioned by the Governor, and it is my view that he is therefore not in a position to take questions in that capacity. I suggest Ms Pulford direct her query to the Leader of the Government.

Ms PULFORD — Thank you for your assistance, President. My difficulty in knowing where to direct this question can perhaps be explained by the fact the question was asked of the former Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations for the former Minister for Police and Emergency Services. It is a little hard to get an answer when everybody keeps shifting jobs. It is question 8215, and it relates to the very important matter of an election promise made by the government, and the promise to —

Hon. D. M. Davis — What is the question number?

Ms PULFORD — It is question 8215 from 7 February 2012, so I have been reasonably patient. I seek an indication from the Leader of the Government, in the absence of any other clear line of responsibility on this, as to when I might expect an answer.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I will certainly follow this up diligently for the member. I am not sure whether it is in the long list of questions

answered today, but if it is not, I will ensure that it is answered.

Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I am not sure if my questions are in the long list of questions answered today, but I have a number of outstanding questions on notice which refer particularly to budget items. Three date back to June 2011 and were directed to the Minister for Roads through the Minister for Planning. I would like to get a response on why these have not been responded to in this period.

Question 1026 refers to an issue my constituents would like to know about concerning a Montrose roundabout where there was an election commitment of \$800 000 for this project. There are a number of questions linked to that particular question on notice which are important to the people who live out there.

Question 1027 was also directed to the Minister for Roads through the Minister for Planning and relates to level crossing grade separations on Rooks Road and Mitcham Road, which was a major election commitment from the government. There are concerns especially around public land and what needs to be used for these two projects.

Question 1029 was directed to the Minister for Roads through the Minister for Public Transport and is around an intersection in Montrose where \$400 000 was committed for traffic lights. We are awaiting a response because there was a commitment for those lights to be built, and I am sure people are keen to see where that is at.

Question 8248 was directed through the former Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations to the former Minister for Police and Emergency Services and concerns an election commitment to have a 24-hour police station at Rowville, which at this stage has not happened. I know people in that area are very keen to see this election commitment fulfilled. They would like to know before the next budget whether that is going to happen.

Question 8712 was directed to the Minister for Education via the Minister for Higher Education and Skills and has been outstanding since late last year. It concerns an empty primary school site at South Croydon. There was an election commitment that the local community would be able to utilise the site and that money would be put towards it through a budgetary process. That is the list I have at the moment.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — Mr Leane has raised a couple of points about unanswered questions on notice. Firstly he asked about

a question for the Minister for Roads through the Minister for Public Transport, and I put it to him that they are the same minister. If he has an issue with questions that are unanswered, I will follow that up.

I would also like to point out to opposition members while I am on my feet that had they bothered to look at the list of Council ministers representing portfolio ministers in the Assembly, they would have seen that as of 19 March I am the minister representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services until there is any noted change. If they had problems with unanswered questions, those questions should have been addressed to me. Indeed in the last sitting week I represented one of the justice ministers in the committee stage of a justice bill. If the members opposite have short memories, they should read the list of ministers representing portfolio ministers in the Assembly before they raise these points.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I will follow up each of those questions that relate to other ministers and ministers in the other chamber. These appear to fall into what I would call pre-budget enthusiasm. Of course not every item will be delivered in the budget; some items are delivered separate from the budget and allocations have already been made, as Mr Leane probably well knows.

Ms PENNICUIK (Southern Metropolitan) — I seek some follow-up from the Leader of the Government on five outstanding questions, two of which are just over two months old and date from February this year. These are questions 9255 to the Minister for Corrections and 9252 to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. The one that goes back to February 2012 is question 8233 to the Minister for Ports — notwithstanding that even though it is my birthday I thought I was getting a year younger rather than a year older when I was questioning the Minister for Higher Education and Skills. There are questions which date from May 2011, almost two years ago, and they are to the Minister for Education: question 714 — that is how old it is — regarding the school rebuilding budget; and question 711 in relation to special religious instruction, which is the very subject I was questioning the minister on before.

Ms TIERNEY (Western Victoria) — I received a number of responses a moment ago, and from a very quick perusal they are to questions I directed to the then Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations with respect to employment, redundancy and support mechanisms. Twelve of the responses were signed off by the then minister in January and February this year, so some of them have been signed for some three

months and yet I have just received them. I seek an explanation.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — There have been a number of matters raised by Ms Pennicuik, and I will follow those through. Ms Tierney raised a number of matters for the attention of the then Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. There obviously has been a change there, but I will follow through and find out why the delay has occurred. I do note that responses are generally given much quicker than they were under the previous government.

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — I also have received a number of answers today but most of them were signed off between four and eight weeks ago, so I am not sure why they took so long to get to the chamber. I have two questions outstanding for a year — 8256 and 8510 — plus 8969, which is overdue by five months, and questions 9287 and 9288 have not been responded to.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I will follow those through. I note that in the last three weeks Parliament has not been sitting so those responses may have come through a little slowly, but we will endeavour to ensure that all of those questions are answered.

GOVERNMENT: ELECTION COMMITMENTS

Debate resumed.

Mr DRUM (Northern Victoria) — Before question time we were talking about Labor's financial management whilst it was in government and the fact that under Labor growth in spending reached around 7.3 per cent over an 11-year period while growth in revenue pulled up a fair bit shorter at around 6.9 per cent. Anybody could understand that that was totally unsustainable over an 11-year period and that changes had to be made.

In relation to Labor members and their financial mismanagement of major projects, they went to an election and said that we would not have a desalination plant and then they put one in place that was supposed to cost, at first blush, \$3 billion. It quickly went up to \$4 billion, then to \$5 billion and it might have ended up being closer to \$6 billion. We had major projects without feasibility plans and projects like the north-south pipeline without business plans. What sort of government treats major projects in this manner? It is incredible that the water minister was unable to answer basic questions like,

'How much will a unit of water cost when it reaches Sugarloaf Reservoir?', even though the excavation had taken place and the pipes were going in the ground.

But that is the modus operandi of the Labor Party. It put in place reforms and changes to the training sector which Mr Tee is quite proud of, and yet there was no monitoring of the cost blow-outs within that system.

The system was changed to give an unlimited government guarantee and there was no monitoring of the expenses and the cost blow-outs. As I said, in the election year, as part of the forward estimates in the budget, \$850 million was to be spent by Labor on training. The coalition government is now spending over \$1.2 billion on training. Labor members seem to think that we might not be investing in our youth or in training. We are investing in training in this state like we have never invested in training before. We are investing in the courses that are going to drive this state forward. We are investing in the courses that are going to give this state the productivity it needs so that it can go forward.

In relation to major projects like myki, how can a government put in place a project like myki without having the oversight and the technical capacity that is needed to drive that project? For years we simply heard — —

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DRUM — Very soon we will be able to buy myki cards in Bendigo. I am not sure, but I suppose we would get them at the train station.

Victorians had to sit by while an inept government with no understanding about the major projects going on under its watch was at the wheel.

There is the fact that we dropped \$3 billion as a result of the previous government's lack of understanding of the gaming sector. It did not understand how it was going to transition to the new system and how the allocations for 10-year licences were going to be handled. According to the Auditor-General, this project was very poorly handled. Due to the total mismanagement of the project, Victorians lost an estimated \$3 billion on the day the auction took place, and that is \$3 billion Victorians will never get back. It is \$3 billion that this government, or the former government, now opposition, could have used for a whole raft of services, certainly in the major areas of education, law and order and health. We will never see that money again, thanks again to the inept dealings of

the previous government when it came to financial management.

The fact we can never walk away from is that whilst Labor was in government, the total overspend, when compared to the budgets set down each and every year, was over \$11 billion, so it is a bit rich to have Labor now in opposition trying to tell us that we have some sort of shortfall in our election commitments.

When it comes to regional Victoria the Regional Growth Fund is the vehicle we are using as our flagship vehicle to get the projects that need to be done in regional Victoria on the books, under construction and delivered. The Regional Growth Fund is set at \$1 billion over eight years or \$500 million for this term and the next term of Parliament. We have had to legislate the quantum of money that is to be spent in the regions. When we came to government Labor had pledged it would invest a fraction over \$250 million in the regions. The coalition government's allocation of \$500 million is in effect a fraction under double what Labor had pledged.

There is a stark contrast between the two sides of politics when it comes to which side truly believes in investing in the regions. The coalition government's Regional Growth Fund is delivering on many of its election commitments across the state. Labor is on record as saying that if it wins government, it will scrap the fund and return to the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund. If Labor happens to win government, it can do whatever it wants; however, let us put it out there that our fund is already delivering.

We are now able to partner with councils across the state, allowing them to in effect plan for better development of services and delivery of infrastructure. Members should not worry, because councils across Victoria cannot be any clearer about the fact that they love the Regional Growth Fund. They love the fact that it delivers them some certainty and gives them an opportunity to plan. Not only do they love the Regional Growth Fund and various aspects of it but they also love the \$1 million they get every year. The 40 smallest councils love the \$1 million they get every year for their roads and bridges programs. That money has been allocated to those councils over a four-year period. They know that they are going to get \$4 million from the coalition government in every parliamentary term. This enables councils to plan their maintenance and road upkeep programs over a longer period. It enables them to put in place bridge maintenance and the contractors and construction crews they need to maintain their road networks.

Not only do those councils love the roads and bridges program but they also love the Local Government Infrastructure Fund, which is part of the Regional Growth Fund. This fund has shelled out \$100 million to the 48 regional councils in Victoria. The Local Government Infrastructure Fund has allocated according to a formula, around \$2 million to each local government area. This funding ensures that councils do not have to keep applying for small grants, as they did under Labor, which ties people up writing grant applications; nor do they have to justify what they did with their respective grants. In only one go, councils are able to let the government know what they are going to do with their money — that is, how it will be spent and the projects that councils have lined up.

Councils love the fact that we trust them to make the decisions on how best they should spend the money rather than them having to come back to government all the time, cap in hand, begging for a \$38.50 grant. We are prepared to give them the money they need to go away and get the work done. Councils also love the fact that they have an opportunity to partner up with the coalition in the Putting Locals First component of the Regional Growth Fund. There are all those other grants out there. Most councils around the state are doing very well out of this arrangement and are providing a fantastic array of projects.

For the first time ever we have given Regional Development Australia committees and the local champions on those committees genuine power, genuine funding and a secretariat, so they can actually make good decisions and prioritise the projects that need to be pushed forward. They had no powers under the previous government; they were simply an advisory group. However, under this government Regional Development Australia committees are able to champion the projects that they see as being important and can push the priority projects that they know their communities need. Again this is something that occurs under the system we have put in place in relation to the Putting Locals First program.

Councils around the state love the autonomy they have and they love the ability to plan in the knowledge that the funding allocations are set for the prescribed period. They also know that under Labor they would go back to a drip-feed arrangement. They would have to go back cap in hand, and they would end up broke like they were over the previous 11 years. There are whole subsets of councils coming together and saying that under the Labor Party they were starved and effectively held to ransom to ensure that they kept quiet and did not cause Labor any problems or else they would not be funded for their next essential project.

As I said, this motion effectively calls on the Napthine government to fund its outstanding election commitments. I am sure there will be many members of the coalition who will take up the wording of this motion. It is very true that the Napthine government does have a whole range of outstanding election commitments — outstanding, brilliant, fantastic. They are worthwhile projects that are totally credible and necessary. I do not know if I quite have the time to keep going — —

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Finn) — Order! I assure Mr Drum that he does not have the time at the moment. He will have the call when the house resumes at 2 o'clock.

Sitting suspended 1.00 p.m. until 2.03 p.m.

Mr DRUM — I have had a couple of goes at contributing to the debate on this motion — I was interrupted by question time and by the lunch break. What I would like to do in the remaining part of my contribution is start talking about some of what Mr Tee described as a range of outstanding election commitments that need to be delivered. It might be the case that the government has some election commitments that are yet to be delivered, but it is methodically working its way through the list, and it is its absolute intention to stare every one of its election commitments down and tick them off in a way that will make us all proud to be part of the government.

As I said earlier, the main vehicle the coalition is using for delivering its regional commitments is the Regional Growth Fund and its more than \$1 billion over eight years, or nearly double what Labor was prepared to invest in regional Victoria. It is important that we go through some of those projects. We have had hospital builds in Kilmore and Echuca, and Charlton and Castlemaine have been announced and the money has been put forward. Schools have been built. In my town of Bendigo the previous government told Golden Square Primary School, 'If you were to merge, we would build you a new school'. After it merged all of a sudden there was no money in the 2010 budget. A wink and a nod from the previous government was not always as good as a contract from this government.

We have had an amazing number of projects come up around the state given the adversity we have faced. We have had a \$6.1 billion write-down, or shrinkage, in our projected GST revenues — an unbelievable challenge for us in doing the work we would like to do — and continued pressure on many of our industries due to the high Australian dollar. This has forced many people to be very conservative with their discretionary spending,

and it is causing a lot of angst. However, there have been a lot of major projects which are operating very well. All the signs regarding the work we are doing with the regional rail link are extremely positive. When you come to work every day you know there are about 2000 people working on that project at six separate sites in Victoria. It will enable the west of Melbourne to continue its high level of growth while maintaining the punctuality and reliability of our rail services not only in western Melbourne but also along the Geelong line, the Ballarat line and also the Bendigo-Swan Hill line. Those lines will be able to maintain their efficiencies and the rates under which they need to operate.

We have had regional art spending in both Bendigo and Ballarat. Through the Bendigo Art Gallery we have seen the benefits of investing in art when it comes to creating livability, improving amenity and always putting regional cities out there as great places to call home. We also have serious investment in the Geelong Performing Arts Centre. We are going to invest heavily in the arts.

We have been able to invest in sport in relation to Kardinia Park in Geelong, the Queen Elizabeth Oval upgrade in Bendigo and other regional developments. In partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria a raft of promised projects have been delivered. In my home town of Bendigo we have delivered on a commitment to invest \$400 000 in Canterbury Park. Again, all these commitments were made without any attempt by Labor to match them. It was quite staggering how quiet Labor was during the election campaign in 2010 when it came to offering community groups the chance, with the election in the offing, to partake in this opportunity. Again, schools and sporting reserves have been ticked off.

The commitment to provide 1700 more police was the biggest commitment we made leading up to the last election, and we are on track to deliver that — talk about election promises being honoured! A number of the 930 protective services officers (PSOs) are being rolled out nearly every week. PSOs are now stationed at additional stations right up until the last train at night, making public transport safer than it has ever been before in this state. This is an amazing initiative by this government. We keep rolling out our election commitments.

We have carried out our commitment to give Geelong a properly elected mayor; that has happened. We have also secured Cotton On's head office in North Geelong, ensuring 500 additional jobs within five years. Members opposite are very quick in this chamber to jump up any time there is bad news around Alcoa, Shell

or Ford and to say, 'Woe is me!'. This side of the chamber gets a little tired of members opposite jumping up and pushing potential bad news in Geelong. Cotton On, in partnership with the government, has secured its head office in North Geelong. It has projected that the number of additional employees will rise to 500 over five years. Within 12 months that figure is already approaching 250. But we do not hear this from those opposite. They like to leave all the good news aside.

I first met the operators and owners of Cotton On within two months of the coalition coming into government. They approached me for assistance in trying to get a planning matter resolved that had been in front of the Labor government for three years. The resolution of that matter would enable Cotton On to do what it had to do in order to maintain its operation in North Geelong. For three years the matter had been at a standstill. Cotton On was led to believe it was a problem between local government and the state government planning department. It took the Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy, about two weeks to completely fix that issue, in conjunction with the City of Greater Geelong. It just shows how this government is prepared to meet with and listen to industry and then act to enable businesses to flourish in Victoria.

There is a new secondary college for Torquay. This is an area of the state that we are very serious about investing in. We have been able to get the Ararat prison project back on track. Members of the Labor Party who were involved in putting that consortium together during the previous Parliament should hang their heads in shame. How could they put such a ridiculous program together? One contractor fell over and the whole project stopped and became unviable for over 12 months. It was not until the then Minister for Corrections, Andrew McIntosh, came in that that problem was fixed. Work on Ararat prison is restarting as we speak. It has been a very big investment.

Bendigo Hospital is one of our flagship projects in regional Victoria. This is a \$630 million investment and is \$102 million over and above the sum put forward by Labor. It is not just the money though; it sums up the way in which the two sides of politics operate. The then Premier, John Brumby, and the then Minister for Regional and Rural Development, Jacinta Allan, who is the member for Bendigo East in the Assembly, called Bendigo Health and asked its staff to come to Melbourne the day before the budget so that they could say to them, 'This is how much you're going to get. You're going to get this amount, \$528 million, and you had better like it'. There was no debate entered into; there was no discussion about what health outcomes would be achieved for that amount of money. There

was no discussion or consultation. It was simply, 'This is how much you're going to get. You'd better like it or you won't get anything at all'. That is the way the Labor Party operates.

I compare that with what took place under the coalition. Meeting after meeting was held in order to come up with an amount of money that would integrate the cancer centre back into the main building, give the mother and baby unit an opportunity to prosper and introduce youth mental health programs into Bendigo Health. The coalition government then went through the process of establishing the leading tender. If you listen to the contractors, the government has effectively turned \$630 million of investment into over \$750 million worth of outcomes. That is simply because the private sector has the ability to squeeze, sharpen its pencils and develop a whole range of other benefits that will be enjoyed by the Bendigo community into the future.

It has certainly been an amazing process. All the opposition has been able to say is, 'You're not going to get it started on time' and 'You're not going to get it finished on time'. Yet all the time it has been crying out for the Labor Party hospital. It says, 'We want the hospital that we came up with built'. The opposition has taken an incredibly bizarre course of action in relation to the Bendigo Hospital. As the Minister for Health, David Davis, said yesterday, this is the only time that we have ever heard of local members calling for \$102 million to be ripped out of their community and a second-class hospital built instead of the world-class hospital put in place by the coalition government.

Another great project going ahead in Bendigo is the theatre in the jail. This is another project that was put up by the former Labor government in its death throes leading up to the last election. It was kept secret from everybody so that the coalition was not able to put the \$3 million commitment into its costings. We were simply surprised, as was everybody else in Bendigo, when about a week before the election the then Premier and the then Minister for Regional and Rural Development rolled out the concept, saying they were going to build a theatre in the jail and they were going to contribute to it provided the federal government came on board. It was a very risky proposal, based as it was on Labor winning government and thus having the money to contribute to this project. Members opposite did not once think about what was better for the people of Bendigo.

In the end they lost the election. It was only due to the good grace of the Deputy Premier, who was able to find

the money that was not budgeted for, that that project was able to continue. This is totally irresponsible government. It is totally selfish and self-centred. The Labor Party kept projects secret from the community for political gain. It is no wonder that the people of Victoria punished the Labor Party at the last election.

We have put \$7 million on the table for a secondary college in Castlemaine, which is not matched by Labor. There is \$10 million for the Castlemaine hospital, which is not matched by Labor. There is a \$2 million upgrade to the ambulance centre, which is not matched by Labor. There is \$3 million for the exhibition centre in Bendigo, which is not matched by Labor. There is an additional \$300 000 for Queen Elizabeth Oval, which is not matched by Labor. What was Labor doing in the regions?

The government has provided promised additional train services and a train station at Epsom and additional upgrades to the Eaglehawk railway station, promises which were not matched by Labor. When you think about what the coalition has been promising and delivering, we should have a remodelled motion asking, 'What on earth was Labor promising when it went to the last election?' It would be a pretty short debate.

As I said, a whole raft of our commitments have gone through. We are fixing up the Bull Street justice precinct in Bendigo, which is the old police station that is currently being remodelled. The Attorney-General was there last week. We will also build a multidisciplinary centre predominantly for women who have been sexually abused, which will be amazing. We are building one in the Latrobe Valley and another in Bendigo following on from some that have been built in other parts of the state.

We have committed \$45 million to work with the coal industry in the Latrobe Valley to try to work out how we can dewater coal. The second we can do that we will have a commodity we can export around the world, a commodity that will be far cleaner than what is currently being burnt in India, China and Japan. This would create great wealth for this state, and it is something that needs to be viewed positively. This government has shown courage in putting it front and centre. Mr Ryan, in his new role as Minister for State Development, will play a key role in continuing to develop and improve relationships with industries that have the capacity to dewater coal and produce an environmentally improved product to help us assist the Latrobe Valley.

Apart from that, \$30 million will be invested in supporting job creation and industry in the Latrobe

Valley, and an additional \$10 million will be invested in Skilling the Valley, which is an education and training agenda. The road map for the Latrobe Valley has been put in place to drive industry and make sure there is a clear plan for job creation and industry support.

Everywhere you look around the state it is clear that Minister Ryan has his hand firmly on the rudder. He understands how to drive productivity and efficiencies. He understands how to talk to businesses and councils and support both of them in a manner that will drive greater productivity for this state. It is a growth fund because Mr Ryan has had the courage with our budget to lead the pack and say, 'This is how much of the budget that we have to invest in regional Victoria. We will leverage it with federal government, local government and the private sector investment, whether that be not-for-profit community groups or industry'.

The federal government could learn something from this. It does not understand how to truly get behind and support communities, which was illustrated when it was trying to compensate the Latrobe Valley for what it was doing there. It refused to get involved with businesses and try to create jobs through the private sector. It also refused to get involved with business to try to create jobs together when it was trying to compensate communities in the north of the state for sucking all of that water out of the Murray-Darling Basin system. The federal government should enter the real world and try to understand what it is like on the ground. The federal government seems to be miles away, and it has jumped even further away now that Simon Crean is no longer listened to by the Prime Minister. I have not even mentioned what the federal government tried to do and is still doing with the payments to the health system.

I will have to sit down shortly because many of my colleagues are keen to get up and spruik about how many promises and commitments we made prior to the election have been ticked off, funded, built and completed. We are racking up these achievements on a daily basis. All we are saying is, 'Give us the chance to do our work, without fanfare, in the way that Victorians want us to and we will get on with the job of governing for the state'. We should not have to be talking about this motion as if we have something to answer for when we have had to deal with the backdrop of disasters such as floods and fires, a horrendous trade environment and diminishing GST funds. Most unbiased analytical economic advisers and experts would give the Baillieu government, which is now the Napthine government, a huge tick for the work it has been able to do.

Ms TIERNEY (Western Victoria) — I am pleased to rise in support of Mr Tee's motion before the house this afternoon. I thank him for putting this on the notice paper today because it provides members of the chamber with the opportunity to do a checklist of the election promises made by the current government in 2010 and where those promises sit today. It is particularly pleasing to talk about this motion today, because it is a timely reminder of what needs to occur when we walk back into this house in the next parliamentary sitting week, which is budget week. I would like to go through some of the election promises made to constituents in my electorate that have not been achieved. As a result I hope these promises will be met and money will be allocated for them in next month's state budget.

I will go through a number of other items — general commitments this government gave to the people of Victoria in 2010 — that impact not only on my electorate but across the entire state of Victoria. I will give some reasons for the failure with respect to the election promises that go to the heart of the way the public service is now organised in this state, this government's attitude towards regional development and its lack of an infrastructure plan or jobs plan.

I will start with some of the election promises that have been broken so far in the electorate of Western Victoria Region. I will go alphabetically and start with Apollo Bay. Apollo Bay P-12 College was promised an initial commitment of \$7 million, and then the local member, the now Minister for Public Transport, upped that to \$10 million to match Labor's commitment to build a new Apollo Bay P-12 school. The time line outlined by Minister Mulder at the time was that the school would be completed in the government's first term in office. Not one sod has been turned at that site. A little bit of money has been allocated for planning, but if any school has had planning, that community has planned itself almost to death in respect of that school. It needs that shovel, not all the red tape that seems to be going on in relation to what is a straightforward need for those children and the Apollo Bay community.

With respect to Avalon Airport, there was a \$250 million commitment for a rail link from Lara to Avalon Airport, and again no sod has been turned whatsoever. Whilst there might be talk, that seems to be the only thing that is going on.

The same can be said about the natural gas project, a \$100 million promise that was to be rolled out over the four years from 2010 to 2014. The townships of Avoca, Bannockburn, Terang and Winchelsea have not seen those connections happen. Those communities are

getting quite tired of waiting because they have been waiting for a considerable time. The natural gas project was a specific promise made to those communities leading into the last state election. They honestly believed what they were told by the coalition and that it would be delivered. It has not happened, and with less than 18 months to go before all those towns connected to natural gas, I daresay that is something that is not going to happen.

We also had the promise that the community of Cressy would receive a police station and a full-time police officer. That simply has not happened. The *Geelong Advertiser* front page pushed for and supported then Premier Ted Baillieu's promise for the staging of a Red Bull Air Race at Geelong, and that fell through as well. There has been absolutely no push in relation to that matter, and I understand it will not be going ahead.

In relation to public transport, a new \$25 million train station at Grovedale was promised. That was also supposed to be completed in the first term of this government, but the government has failed to initiate any community consultation in relation to that station. The project was supposed to start in March 2012, but documents obtained under FOI reveal uncertainty around the timing and the commitment to deliver that project at all. With respect to a commitment of \$14.5 million for the duplication of Pioneer Road in Grovedale, anyone who traverses that road will see that it basically finishes at the shopping centre. All that has happened is that the bottleneck that existed in that vicinity has been moved further up into the housing area. The government's commitment that the duplication would be fully delivered within its first term has not occurred.

A promise for the Maryborough ambulance station to be upgraded and to operate with full-time staff has not happened either. We are also concerned that many of the recommendations from the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission have in many respects not been fulfilled. As I mentioned in my members statement yesterday, we have seen significant cuts in funding to the Country Fire Authority and the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, which has made our communities feel incredibly unsettled. They thought they had some ironclad recommendations, many of which have bipartisan support, and yet in respect of firefighting this government has gone out of its way to cut what are considered to be basic safety measures in our rural and regional communities.

Commitments were also made for 800 new hospital beds, and I understand that the Minister for Health, Mr Davis, claimed that 100 beds had already been

opened in the 2011–12 period. However, the new Premier, Dr Napthine, has refused to endorse these figures. So far he has not committed that even one bed has been opened.

I will also mention the promised \$85 million second hospital for Geelong, which certainly has not been implemented. In fact I have had to undertake an exercise through freedom of information on that issue. Although there have been three compulsory conferences rescheduled, hopefully we will get some answers sometime this month. It is clear that the government will not be going ahead with what it promised — that is, a 32-bed second public hospital for Geelong. It was proposed that the hospital would be well situated near the major growth developments that the Minister for Planning promoted during question time today.

This government also promised \$344 million for 1600 front-line police officers, but it has not fulfilled that election commitment. In terms of my electorate, the government has floundered somewhat. From an answer to a question on notice about police numbers that I received today, it is clear that although the government is close to two-thirds of the way through its term, it has not even met 50 per cent of the election commitment it made to increase the number of police officers in the South Barwon region, and there is a shortage in the Geelong, Bellarine and Surf Coast areas as well.

This government also committed to a radiotherapy service in Warrnambool. It promised \$10 million verbally, but as yet no money has appeared in any budget. It is disappointing that the government has tried to play politics with the federal government on this issue when government members themselves were the ones who made the explicit commitment to the community of western Victoria that they would do the right thing. Clearly government members have decided that playing politics with this important issue is more important than delivering to families who require immediate help with the dilemmas they face.

I turn to the famous election commitment this government made that teachers in this state would be the highest paid in the country under a Liberal-Nationals coalition. As we know, that has not happened. Whilst it seems to be the case that a conclusion to the teachers' enterprise bargaining agreement negotiations is imminent, the fact remains that those negotiations have been going on for some two and a half years. I believe any negotiation that takes that long is just up-front mismanagement of a set of

negotiations that should not have been complicated as this government has made them out to be.

There have been similar problems with other negotiations, including the nurses dispute and a number of other public sector negotiations. It is hardly surprising that people in the public service are seriously concerned about the way in which basic government programs are being managed. They know that due to massive cuts to the public sector many people in our community are not receiving the basic services they need.

Also under this government offices of the former Department of Primary Industries have closed in many regional centres of Victoria, and some \$300 million has been cut from the TAFE sector. Whilst the new Premier has said that another \$200 million will be made available to the TAFE sector, the fact that that funding is spread over a four-year period and is for project funding does not appear in newspaper reports. Applicants for that funding will have to go through a whole lot of the red tape and rigmarole to put a project together which will then go to a panel for approval. That funding has nothing to do with capital funding or recurrent funding; it is about projects that government members consider to be within the realm of what their interests are in that sector.

Honourable members interjecting.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! I am sorry to interrupt Ms Tierney, but with the combination of interjections and three conversations occurring in the chamber, it is becoming increasingly difficult to hear her contribution. I ask members, particularly those having conversations, to at least lower the volume. Of course interjections are disorderly, but I ask members to give Ms Tierney a hearing, which I note the previous speaker was given without interruption.

Ms TIERNEY — When Victorian voters went to the polls in November 2010 they were not told that this government was going to take \$50 million from the Victorian certificate of advanced learning program. They were not told that mothers were going to find it tougher in rural and regional Victoria and that there would be less training for midwives. They were not told that \$450 million was to be scrapped from the education budget, and particularly that the School Start program was to be abolished. The government has also abandoned industry training bodies and, as I understand it, some 80 jobs were abolished as a result of that exercise.

Then there was the issue of the abolition of whooping cough vaccinations, which I know has caused a lot of concern in the electorate. The Take A Break occasional child-care funding also was abolished, and the meanness of the Foodbank Victoria reductions was unbelievable. Under this government the Home Wise hardship grant program has also been axed, and whilst the incidence of family and domestic violence has absolutely gone through the roof, there have been cuts in funding to family violence programs.

There has been a reduction in home and community care programs while waiting lists have continued to grow. A whole range of transport connection bus routes throughout regional Victoria have been absolutely slashed and burnt, which has meant that lots of people who do not have access to cars, such as the elderly and students, do not have the ability to connect with other transport and conduct their affairs.

Then there are the cuts to legal aid and the stripping of powers from the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission. Funding for assistance plans to Neighbourhood Watch groups in our community has also been cut. Members of the coalition government even tried to scrap the eligibility for school bus subsidies. They had to do a backflip on that due to community outrage in the same way they had to perform a backflip on the massive cuts they announced they were going to make in terms of libraries. The Minister for Local Government, Jeanette Powell, had to get on the phone to every single mayor in this state to try to explain why the initial decision had been made and why she needed to perform that backflip.

Under changes introduced by this government, workers have not received penalty rates for working on Easter Sunday, which I think is absolutely appalling, and I said so at the time those changes were made. This government has also failed to support the renewable energy sector, which is of particular importance for south-west Victoria. Indeed I think this failure is part and parcel of the way that government members do not talk to each other in terms of regional development. One would have thought a whole-of-government approach to the issue of community development and regional development would have gone hand in hand if this state was governed properly.

We have also seen this government shut down the 24-hour mental health advice line that was heavily utilised by rural and regional Victorians. It was one of the very few things that people had access to at the end of a telephone line. As we know, there have been increases not only in mental health statistics but also in

relation to farmer health and the number of suicides occurring on farms.

We have also seen an increase in motor vehicle registration fees by more than \$35 and an increase in speeding fines. I do not think this government promised to make those changes at the time of the election. I am sure that Victorian voters had no idea that the government was going to make them. The government has also ripped \$471.5 million in dividends from the Victorian WorkCover Authority, meaning higher premiums for businesses and reduced benefits for workers. The government has done things like abolish support for FReeZA, which has been really important, particularly in regional communities, where kids connect with and are engaged by music projects and workshops, and it has abolished support for a whole range of other youth programs we have in our regions to try to get our youth engaged.

I urge those on the other side, particularly those who represent Western Victoria Region, to lobby their respective ministers to ensure that all the election commitments that were made are fulfilled and allowances are made in the May budget for funding them. I also urge those members to have a very serious talk to those who are involved in regional development in particular, because this government has taken its eye off the ball. The fact that we do not have dedicated people looking at and searching for investors and business opportunities that can be brought to regional Victoria has been an absolute disaster, and that is demonstrated time and again.

It has got to a point where there is a political and community campaign in Portland, which the Glenelg Shire Council has got on board with and endorsed. The council will also be holding a round table of political parties and government agencies to try to work through this to get a strategy, or a series of strategies, to elevate the position of Portland and to have a plan that provides for a sustainable, long-term local economy that is not reliant on one or two industries and that is certainly not reliant on an industry that is seasonal and not necessarily systemic in the community.

In finishing my contribution I urge those opposite to do their very best to ensure that every single commitment that they made to the Victorian community is addressed in the budget next month. I look forward to members opposite proving that they can do so. I really am holding out hope. I do not think that hope will be fulfilled, because in terms of the time lines that they set themselves for delivering certain projects to the community, time has quite frankly already run out.

What concerns me even more is that whilst there is a list of election commitments that have not been fulfilled or have been broken, we still have a public service in disarray because of the decisions taken by this government, we still have no plan for any serious infrastructure projects throughout the entire state and we still have a government that is yet to spell out its plan for jobs and growth or a vision for the state that has a practical application that involves and includes all Victorians.

Mrs PEULICH (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I am delighted to be able to join my colleagues in contributing to debate on this particular motion. I believe there is quite a list, and regrettably I also understand that the debate will be adjourned following my contribution. That does not impress my colleagues, who are perplexed as to why the opposition would continue to move Dorothy Dix motions on opposition business day. That is the reason this topic excited my colleagues. A very long list of speakers has been queuing up. To better appreciate the particular topic of the motion, it says:

That this house calls on the Napthine government to fund its outstanding election commitments when it delivers its 2013–14 state budget.

As a former English teacher, I turned to the dictionary to look up the definition of the word ‘outstanding’. For the edification of the house I have a few synonyms here. Some of them are as follows: superior, ace, celebrated, cool, crack, distinguished, dominant, eminent, exceptional, great, greatest, important, impressive, magnificent, main, major, meritorious, momentous — it is a very long list — brilliant, champion, distinguished, excellent, expert, first-rate, great, master, superb and virtuoso.

I am very pleased to speak about the outstanding election commitments made by the coalition parties, now the coalition government. They were made in the context of a four-year term and the government is progressing steadily to deliver them. The first and foremost commitment was to fix the problems.

I am always a little frustrated when I follow Ms Tierney in debate, because clearly she did not really listen to voters at the last election. Voters expect straight shooting and some honesty rather than spinning lines and plucking examples out of context to misrepresent them in an argument, which typifies Ms Tierney’s contributions. The example I will draw on is her argument on education. She talked about the cuts to TAFE funding and then queried the fact that we have allocated \$1.3 billion to the skills sector, which is greater than the \$850 million proposed by her party. It

is funding for registered training organisations (RTOs) and TAFEs. It was her government which in 2009 under Jacinta Allan, the member for Bendigo East in the Assembly who was then the Minister for Skills and Workforce Participation, opened the doors to RTOs — one suspects because many RTOs have an affiliation with the union movement and perhaps it is a workable arrangement — so that money would ultimately move from the TAFE sector that then provided 80 per cent of the training to RTO providers.

It goes without saying that this has been the trend since 2009. If Ms Tierney believed it was a bad reform, I did not hear her criticise it at the time. I did not hear any members of the then government criticise it at the time, yet every sitting day members in this chamber dribble out little petitions calling for the reversal of TAFE cuts. Back in 2009 the Labor government had a great opportunity to not adopt the policy.

There is silence when, for example, the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, and the federal Labor government announce billions of dollars of cuts, many of them to the education sector, in order to fund a fraction of the Gonski reforms. We do not all know what the reforms are or what they mean; they certainly have not been spelt out. There has not been adequate consultation with the state education ministers who have primary responsibility for delivering education. This is a way of somehow wedging them into signing up to unknown education reforms in the context of a very difficult federal election campaign. Of course it is forecast that the federal Labor government will be resoundingly defeated at the election. At the moment it is prepared to make all sorts of pledges and commitments in order to save the furniture, because it fully understands that it has already lost the house.

Ms Tierney and members of the Labor Party were silent when Kate Ellis, the federal Minister for Early Childhood and Childcare, and the Gillard federal government withdrew funding for the Take a Break program, of which it was a 70 per cent funder. It is that sort of incompleteness in truth and fact that really grates on voters. It is in stark contrast to someone like a former Labor Premier of Queensland, Peter Beattie, who admitted it when he stuffed up. He said his mea culpa, learnt a lesson, and as a result I suppose he secured a longer time in office than otherwise would have been the case, so there are certainly lessons to be learnt.

What outstanding commitments are there that we made in order to be elected to office? They were a number of big picture commitments under the election slogan of ‘Fix the problems and build the future’. They stemmed

from a concern amongst the public that a vast amount of taxpayers funds was being wasted and mismanaged, in particular on very significant projects such as the desalination plant, for which there is a \$590 million payment to the consortia each year irrespective of whether Victorians draw out a single drop of water. The wasting of \$3 billion on the botched pokies auction is of enormous concern, because it was money lost to Victorians that could have paid for the expansion of services and more infrastructure that is needed not only for replacing what we have but also growing it because the population of our state is growing.

Our commitments were simple. We committed to fixing the problems, which included an infrastructure deficit that continues to be at the forefront of this government's agenda and which formed the basis for its submission to Infrastructure Australia. Obviously infrastructure projects of the magnitude referred to can be funded only by the three levels of government making contributions towards them, and the federal government has certainly not been prepared to play its part. In relation to the infrastructure deficit, we saw crumbling roads and train lines, decrepit trains, schools that were basically falling over, the mismanagement of waterways, tips and landfill, and inferior services.

Community safety was at the top of the community's priority list, along with quality education services, access to good health services, and sport and recreation services to meet the needs of a growing population. These service needs were not being adequately met because so much money was being wasted by Labor, which does not manage money well. We promised to bring a higher level of transparency and accountability to the financial management of the state including its assets, and this continues to be a key objective of this government.

The other priority commitment was to make the government's operations more transparent and accountable and to elevate the levels of integrity. That coincided with the introduction of an independent, broadbased anticorruption commission, which was the first of its kind in this state and something the former government was not prepared to look at. We are certainly getting on with delivering outstanding commitments.

I would like to take a little bit of time to talk about the outstanding commitments that have been delivered to South Eastern Metropolitan Region, where we won four lower house seats. Bentleigh is just outside the region — it is in Southern Metropolitan Region — so that makes it five seats in the area. Part of the reason for that was the level of neglect of the region. The level of

neglect by Labor governments seems to be at its most profound in seats in Labor heartland — —

Mr Finn — The western suburbs.

Mrs PEULICH — In seats like Lyndhurst and in the western suburbs, and I will come back to talk about that. The area that I represent, which covers Frankston, Carrum, Mordialloc, Clayton, Mount Waverley, Dandenong, Mulgrave, Narre Warren North, Narre Warren South, Cranbourne and Lyndhurst, did not benefit from outstanding commitments, nor did it receive the infrastructure the community deserved or the services it needed, let alone many of the other projects that have been on hold for a long time.

At the time of the last budget I took out a wrap for the local newspaper across the city of Casey to point out what outstanding achievements we were delivering already in terms of our election commitments. It is a long list, and I did have to prune it. It could have gone for a few pages but I could not afford it; I was using taxpayers money frugally. I would like to start from the top of the section which is headed 'Big wins for Casey and the south-east'. It is followed by a list that includes:

\$49 million for the duplication of Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road between Pound Road and Thompson Road;

\$24 million to Casey for Stevensons Road landfill ...

That related to a debate I led in this chamber following the methane gas crisis in Cranbourne. It was an undertaking we had given, and we placed pressure on the former government, which forked over \$17 million to assist with the remediation works. We followed through. We have delivered \$24 million already, well before the full term. The list goes on:

\$2 million planning for new Officer secondary college;

\$8.5 for Chisholm TAFE Berwick trade careers centre;

\$38 million Hallam Road duplication — Pound Road to Ormond Road;

Pound Road-South Gippsland Highway-South Gippsland Freeway intersection upgrade;

Clyde Road duplication — High Street to Kangan Drive;

\$765 000 for building Lynbrook Integrated Community Centre;

more car parking at Merinda Park and Narre Warren stations;

\$17 000 makeover for Eumemmerring scout hall;

extra \$10.5 million to support the L2P program;

lights for night racing at Cranbourne Racecourse;

land purchased at Lysterfield Lake Park;

\$235 000 for the Marriot Waters children's centre community room and meeting space;

\$155.7 million for Dingley bypass, linking Moorabbin to the South Gippsland Highway in Dandenong South ...

I am excited about this because this particular reservation has been in the *Melway* for about 45 years. The entire south-east area was badly congested and continues to be because of the lack of investment in roads, although there has been an improvement. The list continues:

43 new inpatient and care beds for mental health patients servicing Greater Dandenong and Casey;

\$120 000 for the Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre;

\$130 600 for Hampton Park community hall daytime activation project and other local projects;

land for Derinya and Cranbourne south west primary schools;

more than \$20 million for local schools including Dandenong High School (\$10 million) and Noble Park Special School ...

This is against the backdrop that we have recently found that a statewide audit showed that the backlog in maintenance is up to \$430 million. When the Labor government was defeated the backlog had been pretty much erased, and we are now back up at \$430 million. The list goes on:

upgrades to 39 housing sites in the southern metro region;

\$15.8 million for Monash Children's hospital;

funding for improvements to the eastern treatment plant;

funding for upgrade works as part of the revitalising central Dandenong transit cities program;

removal of the rail crossing at Springvale Road, Springvale ...

I had the privilege of announcing the signing of contracts by the Minister for Public Transport a little while ago with the mayor of Dandenong, Angela Long, which will see that important grade separation progress. That will be a very significant boon in dealing with the problem of traffic congestion across the south-east. The list continues:

share of the \$883 million for public hospitals;

\$38 million expansion of the Frankston Hospital;

funding for the Australian Synchrotron.

I took the opportunity of putting out a similar newsletter with localised outstanding election achievements, funded and delivered, to the lower house electorate of Lyndhurst, outlining the benefits of just

two years of a Liberal government. Progressively we have been trying to keep a log of the special funding for each seat. My tally for the Lyndhurst electorate since coming to office, with the problem of not being able to fully estimate the costs of providing, say, the protective services officer rollouts and statewide programs, shows that there has been nearly \$130 million in funding for specific programs for the Lyndhurst electorate in just two years of a coalition government. There are millions of reasons the government has been outstanding, certainly in the Lyndhurst electorate as well as for all of the communities across the south-east.

Mention was made earlier — I think it was today or yesterday — by Mr Tarlamis, my upper house colleague and a fellow member for South Eastern Metropolitan Region, of the Greens candidate for Lyndhurst, Nina Springle. Mr Tarlamis castigated her for being absent without leave during the campaign; apparently she went overseas. The problem with the Lyndhurst electorate is that it has had a member who has been AWOL for a very long time. That member — now former member — was of course Tim Holding. He is an affable fellow and no doubt has talents, but one of those talents was not making his presence felt in the electorate, with the exception of maybe a couple of events per year. Otherwise he was very much the absentee landlord, and what people in the Lyndhurst electorate have appreciated, certainly since we have been in office, is that I have been prepared, along with my colleague for South Eastern Metropolitan Region, the Honourable Gordon Rich-Phillips, to actually be on the ground, be present and listen to, deliver for and meet with groups that require problems to be fixed. This is what we have been doing.

Of course the benefits of a Liberal government at the state level are shared across all of the south-east area, including federal seats such as Hotham, where the Liberal Party has Fazal Cader as its candidate. In the federal seat of Latrobe we have Jason Wood contesting. In the federal seat of Holt we have an outstanding, fine family man, Ricardo Balancy, who is out working very hard and who comes from a multicultural background in the Mauritian community. Voters in the federal seat of Bruce can be represented by a very competent, young family man, Emanuele Cicchiello, an educator himself. In the federal seat of Isaacs the Liberal candidate is Garry Spencer. Of course in the federal seat of Dunkley the sitting member is Bruce Bilson, who is very highly regarded by his electorate. He was a very good minister and is now a shadow minister; I have no doubt he will be a minister again in the next federal Abbott government. In the federal seat of Chisholm we have John Nguyen, a fine young man from a Vietnamese background who is working very

hard to make sure the voters of Chisholm have the very best opportunity to elect a government that can deliver on those big priorities, particularly the infrastructure needs of the community, and to deliver better, high-quality services, including services addressing issues of law and order, education, health, transportation and other issues across the whole gamut.

The community expects the government to manage its money wisely, not waste it, as has occurred with the federal Gillard government. Every conceivable plan she can come up with she will use as a way of luring people at the ballot box, but I think the Victorian public — I am not sure about other states, although I suspect they feel even more strongly — will not be fooled any longer.

In closing I would like to commend the former Premier, Ted Baillieu, the member for Hawthorn in the Assembly, and the new Premier, Denis Naphine, as well as all of my coalition colleagues for their hard work in staying true to and making sure that we honour the commitments we made as part of the 2010 state election campaign. They are four-year-term commitments, and certainly in the south-east we are delivering in spades. There are millions of reasons a coalition government is looking after the electorate of Lyndhurst well and will continue to do so.

There certainly are many outstanding commitments that the coalition has delivered and will continue to deliver because it manages money better, it manages major projects better and it wastes less money. The government is prepared to listen to the community, to understand their needs and to deliver — whether it be for infrastructure or services — in the most cost efficient and effective way possible. That is what good governance is all about. With those few words, I would like to commend the opposition for bringing another Dorothy Dix motion to the chamber and giving us the opportunity to highlight some of the government's achievements in the south-east region which I have been privileged to be associated with and look forward to continuing to be associated with well into the future.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan).

Debate adjourned until later this day.

ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

Reference

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — I move:

That the Accident Compensation Legislation (Fair Protection for Firefighters) Bill 2011, as introduced into this house by myself and ruled out of order by the President on 20 February 2013 for infringing section 62 of the Constitution Act 1975, be referred to the Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee for consideration and report by 12 June 2013 on measures aimed at addressing any constitutional impediment to the bill's introduction into the Legislative Council.

The Accident Compensation Legislation (Fair Protection for Firefighters) Bill 2011, which I introduced into Parliament, would see artificial barriers removed to enable firefighters to access WorkCover compensation when they contract cancer from work-related smoke and toxic exposure. This is a bill with utmost merit. It is the right thing to do. It is the decent thing to do. Unfortunately it is not the merit of the bill that is in question here; it is whether it is constitutionally valid to introduce this bill into the Legislative Council that is in question.

On 20 February 2013 the President ruled this bill out of order. His ruling stated that an amendment of this kind would have the effect of increasing the benefits payable under the scheme with the consequential result of increasing the costs of premiums payable by employers under compulsory WorkCover insurance policies. I would argue that this bill will not increase the premiums payable by employers under compulsory WorkCover insurance policies.

In 2011 a Senate inquiry was held regarding a similar bill to remove artificial barriers to federally employed firefighters accessing compensation if they contracted prescribed cancers. The federal Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Legislation Committee inquired into the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Amendment (Fair Protection for Firefighters) Bill 2011, introduced in September 2011, and explored the possibility that the bill would bring about significant increases in premiums by improving the ease with which firefighters could access compensation. Looking at overseas experiences as well as at the fact that the legislation would not provide for any new grounds to claim, the committee was of the view that there would be negligible impact on the commonwealth or Australian Capital Territory budget.

The Senate inquiry found that the committee was confident that the cost impact of the proposed

legislation would be as insignificant in Australia as it had been elsewhere. It found no evidence of a flood of new claims where similar legislation was introduced overseas. With respect to the overseas experience, the committee considered the evidence provided by fire chief Ken Block of the Edmonton Fire Rescue Services in Canada. Fire chief Block informed the committee that the cost impact of presumptive legislation in Canada had been minimal if not negligible. He reported that in the province of Alberta, Canada, presumptive legislation was introduced in 2003 and now covers 14 cancers. There are approximately 13 500 firefighters in Alberta —

Mr P. Davis — On a point of order, Acting President, I am very conscious of the motion before the house, which is extremely narrow, and while I do not want to appear unsympathetic to the case that Ms Hartland is prosecuting in relation to the substantive issue, she is in fact referring to the substantive issue and arguments which have, in any event, been heard in this place previously. She is recapping, if you like, some of those issues. However, as I understand it, the motion before the house is simply to refer the bill to the Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee for its consideration and report on measures aimed at addressing any constitutional impediment to the bill's introduction into the Council. Given that the motion is specifically narrow and deals with the constitutional impediments to the bill, this is essentially a procedural debate of reference of the bill to the committee for the consideration of constitutional matters.

Therefore it does not behove us as a house to contemplate a debate about the matters of substance, which has already occurred in a sense. In that context it would be a matter for the committee to consider the narrow parameters given to it by the reference to deal with a review of any constitutional flaws and make a recommendation to the house on that issue. It is then a matter for the house to determine whether to adopt a report from the committee. In doing so it may have some discussion about the more substantive matters around that, but this is not the moment at which that discussion should occur. The motion is quite narrow. It is to refer the bill to the committee for a particular purpose, and the particular purpose is to address constitutional considerations, so I posit that while Ms Hartland's sentiment is understood, she is digressing from the purpose of what is a procedural motion.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Ms Pennicuik) — Order! Mr Davis's point of order is well made, although Ms Hartland is referring to the constitutional issues as examined by the Senate, and I think it is in

order for her to refer to that. Ms Hartland had only been speaking for — the clock was not stopped — about 4 minutes at the time Mr Davis raised his point of order. I draw Ms Hartland's attention to the narrowness of the debate on the motion to refer the bill to the committee and ask her to proceed from there.

Ms HARTLAND — I thank the Acting President for her direction. I advise Mr Davis that I have made sure my presentation to the chamber will be brief, because I recognise that it will be the committee that will examine all these issues. I am, I suppose, just trying to put forward the kinds of things I think will need to be examined. Possibly the committee will have a different view.

Mr P. Davis — On a point of order, Acting President, Ms Hartland in responding made it clear that she is raising issues she thinks the committee should consider. It is entirely inappropriate in this debate to speak to issues that the committee may consider when the purpose of the motion is to refer the bill to the committee for examination of constitutional issues. Ms Hartland is raising for the purposes of debate matters relating to the substantive nature of what the bill seeks to achieve. She is referring to other jurisdictions, including international jurisdictions, and it is clear to me that that is outside the remit of the motion to give effect to a reference to the committee on constitutional issues. I am quite happy for Ms Hartland to talk about constitutional issues; I just think she is broadening the debate beyond the terms of the motion. I do not want to be difficult about it but it is quite an important principle. If you are going to propose a motion dealing with a constitutional matter, that is what you have to talk to, not the debate in general.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Ms Pennicuik) — Order! On the point of order, as I mentioned in relation to the previous point of order, I understood Ms Hartland to be talking about the constitutional issue that was raised in the Senate when it looked at a similar bill not that long ago, and I think that is pertinent to the motion she is moving here. I would also say that in moving a motion a member does not just get up and say, 'I move to refer this matter to the committee', and sit down; there is some scope to give reasons that you might do that and to explain them in some detail. Ms Hartland has also said that she is going to give a brief summary of her reasons for moving the motion. I draw Ms Hartland's attention to what has been raised in the points of order and ask her to continue.

Ms HARTLAND — The Senate inquiry found that the committee was confident that the cost impact of the proposed legislation would be as insignificant in

Australia as it had been elsewhere. It found no evidence overseas of a flood of new claims where similar legislation was introduced. For example, in respect of the overseas experience the committee considered evidence provided by fire chief Ken Block of Edmonton Fire Rescue Services in Canada. Fire chief Block informed the committee that the cost of the impact of presumptive legislation had been minimal, if not negligible. He reported that in the Province of Alberta, Canada, presumptive legislation was introduced in 2003 and now covers 14 cancers.

There are approximately 13 500 firefighters in Alberta, of which 3500 are full time and 10 000 are volunteers or part time. The committee heard that the total cost to the workers compensation board of all workplace injury and illness claims, including back injuries, sprains et cetera, for the Edmonton Fire Rescue Services budget was less than 2 per cent of the Canadian \$158 million recurrent operating budget. Figures shown to the committee indicate that over the five-year period between 2006 and 2010 there were 19 occupational cancer claims at the Alberta workers compensation board. That is less than four claims per year on average from a current workforce of 13 500, and presumably there would be an even bigger number of retired and ex-firefighters who would also be eligible.

Ken Block estimated that within the 2 per cent of the recurrent operating budget there would be a very small percentage of work-related illnesses falling within presumptive legislation coverage. He went on to say that any cost associated with the presumptive legislation had been offset —

Mr P. Davis — On a point of order, Acting President — and I repeat — the substantive contribution in this debate by the member moving the motion is inconsistent with the motion itself, which is referring specifically to the constitutional impediments, not to the issue of substance around the purpose of the bill. Ms Hartland is speaking to the purpose of the bill; she is not speaking to the constitutional impediments, which frame the motion before the house. I ask you to draw her back to discussing the constitutional impediments involved in the introduction of the bill in the Legislative Council.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Ms Pennicuik) — Order! On the point of order, Mr Davis makes a valid point about the subject of the motion being about constitutional issues, but I also draw the attention of the house to the fact that the constitutional issue is about costs. Having said that, I also ask Ms Hartland to keep her remarks to the reason she wants the bill to be referred to the committee.

Ms HARTLAND — It is very difficult to do this, I have to say, in that I am referring this bill on constitutional grounds, part of which is around cost, and I would have thought that it was appropriate to speak about that. But I will take direction from the Chair and move on. It is unfortunate that the chamber is not going to be able to hear my reasons for this bill being referred to the committee.

I will finish by talking a little bit more about the Senate committee and the evidence that was given there. For the reasons that I have already outlined, the Senate committee found that the legislation would not provide any new grounds for claims and so there was no evidence that the cost increase would occur. There is no evidence that this has occurred overseas. Nobody in the South Australian Parliament has raised this problem, even though the Greens legislation there met with robust debate.

It is quite clear that firefighters get certain cancers at a rate above that of other Victorians, but they still get cancer at very low rates. The evidence from overseas is that the increase in successful claims falls within the ordinary variation built into a compensation scheme. Based on all this information I believe I have a strong case to say that the Accident Compensation Legislation (Fair Protection for Firefighters) Bill 2011 will not increase costs, or the premiums payable by employers under compulsory WorkCover insurance policies and is constitutional.

In the event that the Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee comes to a different conclusion, I would like it to make recommendations about other means to process this bill through the Parliament. As I have said previously, I believe this bill goes beyond party politics. This bill is about getting adequate WorkCover compensation for firefighters who contract cancer and follows precedents successfully set in other jurisdictions, including the commonwealth. It is about protecting those who protect us, and I would be more than happy for the government to introduce such a bill; and I would say the sooner the better. I encourage the house to support this referral.

Mr P. DAVIS (Eastern Victoria) — I acknowledge that Ms Hartland may have been a little frustrated by my intervention. I indicate to her that it was entirely in relation to the substantive wording of the motion. There are two relevant apposite points. One is that this motion clearly sets out that it is seeking to refer the Accident Compensation Legislation (Fair Protection for Firefighters) Bill 2011 to the Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee for the purpose of examining it for the second relevant part of the motion,

which relates to measures aimed at addressing any constitutional impediment.

It is clear that there has been substantive discussion on this issue previously. I do not intend to prosecute that discussion further today, because I believe this motion is so narrow that it would be inappropriate, which was the point I was seeking to make by my interventions.

I have indicated in previous debates that the government would not be opposing this reference. That therefore brings me to the substantive issue, which is that the committee, when receiving this bill, will be informed by the resolution of the house that its sole purpose is to examine any constitutional impediment to the bill being introduced to the Council, as referred to by the mover's speech. The President has ruled that this was not an appropriate bill to be introduced to the Council.

It is a fairly narrow remit for the committee to look at the constitutional impediments. It is a matter for the committee to find what it will find, and I am not going to pre-empt the committee's findings. It could find that there is a way that the bill could be amended or that there is no way the bill could be amended, and it will make a report to the house. It may recommend a number of courses of action depending on its findings.

As I said, it is inappropriate for me in this debate to pre-empt the findings of a committee. I simply make the point that my view is that this motion is so narrow that the only task the committee will have is to address the constitutional consideration and report thereon, rather than deal with the merit of the bill, because the merit of the bill ought to be dealt with by the house as a whole. I think that is the aim of the mover. That being the aim, I can assure the mover that government members do not oppose the reference to the committee.

Ms PULFORD (Western Victoria) — The opposition is happy to support Ms Hartland's motion, which seeks to refer to the Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee the questions that previous speakers have discussed around the constitutional impediments to Ms Hartland's private members bill, the Accident Compensation Legislation (Fair Protection for Firefighters) Bill 2011. In saying that, I will make a couple of brief remarks. I note that the government has indicated it is not opposing this motion, so I welcome the support of the government for the committee, of which I am a member, to consider legislation. That is how members of this place in a previous Parliament envisaged that upper house committees would work.

This committee has not met for quite a while. In fact the committee last met to consider legislation around cycling accidents with Mr Barber's Road Safety Amendment (Car Doors) Bill 2012. I think we can all agree that appropriate compensation for firefighters is meritorious and that the matter Ms Hartland seeks to address through her bill is an important one that needs our considered attention. However, this bill fell at the first hurdle, and we were not even permitted to participate in a second-reading debate to have that policy discussion about the merits of the question.

We are happy for the upper house committees to work as was envisaged and for this reference to be made. I note that Ms Hartland's motion refers to the committee considering and reporting on the issue by 12 June; this is a fairly tight time line in which committee members will be able to consider a fairly tight set of questions. Perhaps then the Parliament — in this place or the other — might be able to have a more substantive discussion about the policy issues around meeting the health and safety and workers compensation needs of Victorian firefighters. We all depend on the courage and commitment to the community of this group of citizens — both professional and volunteer firefighters. They need to be safe in their work and they need to be supported if they are injured or get sick through the extraordinary work they do.

We support the motion and commend Ms Hartland for bringing this issue to the Parliament and finding a new way to keep the issue alive.

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — I thank the other speakers. Even though Mr Philip Davis and I might disagree about what I presented, I believe all the matters I raised will be dealt with very well by the committee. I hope this goes beyond party politics, because protection for firefighters — both volunteer and career — is an incredibly important issue.

Motion agreed to.

PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS

Debate resumed from 20 March; motion of Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan):

That this house requires the Leader of the Government to table in the Legislative Council on Tuesday, 16 April 2013, a copy of:

- (1) all documents relating to the 'Route alignments peer reviewed and short-listed' and 'Communications and engagement strategy finalised' referred to on page 3 of 'East-west link reform and investment framework — stages 1 to 6', August 2012', which formed part of the east-west link submission to Infrastructure Australia;

- (2) the agenda, minutes, any attachments to the minutes and any presentations or materials tabled in relation to each meeting of the Department of Transport's east–west steering committee to date;
- (3) all documents (including invitees list, agenda, minutes where they exist and the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation used) relating to a briefing, held on 17 July 2012 at the Treasury building, on the development of a business case for the east–west link; and
- (4) all minutes and other documentation of meetings held with over 40 entities by the Minister for Roads and/or Department of Transport representatives relating to the proposed east–west tunnel infrastructure project, which are referenced in the media release 'East–west link is declared under major transport projects act'.

Mr FINN (Western Metropolitan) — It gives me pleasure to rise to speak on this motion once again because, as I pointed out to the house the last time I spoke on this matter, the east–west link is an issue that goes to the heart of how people in government regard the western suburbs of Melbourne. Over an extended period of time we in the west have been neglected. Governments — particularly Labor governments, I hasten to add — have regarded the people of the western suburbs as second-class citizens. There are many and varied opportunities to spend vast amounts of money in government. The Labor Party is particularly good at spending money. It is not particularly good at getting results for that money but it knows how to spend it; there are no two ways about that. But this project, once completed, would bring immediate relief to the people of the western suburbs.

As I said the last time I spoke on this matter, the people of the west are suffering as a result of traffic congestion due to the growth in the western suburbs. For example, the cities of Wyndham and Melton are the fastest and second fastest growing municipalities in Australia. I urge members who have not been out that way of late to take a drive — not during peak hour, certainly, but on a weekend — and see what has been happening in the west over the past few years. They will be staggered.

I have often mentioned Point Cook in this house. When I came into this chamber not all that long ago — a bit over six years ago — Point Cook was not much more than a few paddocks with the odd sheep in them. It is now a thriving metropolis. I was at Point Cook just last week — I am sorry, I tell a lie, which does not happen often; it was on Monday — announcing a new transport program which will be of great benefit to elderly and disabled people in Point Cook. Even though the area has grown like Topsy over the last five years or so, it continues to grow. We now have it linked up with Sanctuary Lakes, and we will soon have it linked up

with Wyndham Harbour and Werribee South. These areas are growing at an extraordinary rate. On the other side of Werribee we have places like Tarneit.

The rate at which the growth is occurring is amazing. It is impossible to keep up with the growth. If a new edition of *Melway* were to be published every month, we might have some hope of keeping up, but short of that I will have to learn how to use my TomTom, which I have at home and will one day figure out how to use. The east–west link is an important issue for the western suburbs.

Let me say to Mr Barber, to the other Greens and to Labor members: anybody who opposes the east–west link slaps everybody in the western suburbs in the face. To be opposed to the east–west link is to attack the people of the western suburbs.

Mr Barber interjected.

Mr FINN — Mr Barber finds all this very amusing. We do not have trams in most parts of the western suburbs, not that Mr Barber would be aware of this as he does not get beyond the tram tracks. As far as the Greens are concerned there is nothing beyond the tram tracks because beyond the tram tracks nobody votes for them, and you can understand why. If that is the way the Greens treat people in outer Melbourne, it is little wonder that they get precious few votes from them.

Mr Barber — On a point of order, Acting President, I heard Mr Davis's point of order a few minutes ago in relation to the narrowness of Ms Hartland's motion. This motion seeks the tabling of some documents that would better inform the house about what the east–west tunnel will or will not do. Mr Finn has managed to filibuster on this for three weeks so that we have waited even longer to get the same piece of information. He should not be allowed to do that indefinitely in this place. He should be required to be relevant to the subject matter — that is, whether these documents should or should not be tabled in the house.

Mr FINN — On the point of order, Acting President, my understanding is — as was the case three weeks ago when we first started debating this matter — that it is a matter on which there has been a bit of leverage. I think I have stayed within the parameters that were set three weeks ago when we began debating this motion. I was referring to the Greens attitude towards the building of this particular project. I do not see how that is out of order at all.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ramsay) — Order! I do not uphold the point of order. However, I

do ask that Mr Finn address his contribution to the motion at hand.

Mr FINN — I have no intention of continuing for too much longer because I believe that this matter, from my point of view anyway, has been covered quite comprehensively. But it is important that this house is aware that this matter is of vital importance to the western suburbs of Melbourne. As such I will stand up and support it. I will support it loudly and strongly, and I will oppose those such as Mr Barber and his Greens friends who wish to oppose it. I do not know why they want the documents; I do not know what they are going to do with the documents. It seems to me that they want documents on everything known to man. I do not particularly care what they do with the documents. I just want to see the project finished. I just want to see it built. I just want to see a situation where people in the western suburbs of Melbourne are not stuck in traffic forever while trying to get to work. In the course of this debate we have heard that up to 60 per cent of people who are currently stuck on the Tullamarine or West Gate freeways do not want to go to the city at all; they want to go to the other side of Melbourne — —

Mr Barber interjected.

Mr FINN — No, I am not pulling numbers out of the air at all. That was a number that was delivered to this house three weeks ago. That means there are a lot of people who would use the east–west link. There are a lot of people who will continue to be very angry if Mr Barber and his friends try to hold this project up. If gaining the documents of which Mr Barber speaks today is part of that campaign to hold this project up, then I have some very grave concerns indeed.

In concluding my contribution, I would suggest to Mr Barber, and indeed to the Labor Party — and it is a pity that Mr Barber is actually leaving the chamber as I am just about to make a very strong suggestion to him — —

Mr Barber — On a point of order, Acting President, are the toilet habits of members to be brought into debate in this place?

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ramsay) — Order! I am sorry, but I did not hear the reference. The advice to me is that the comment made by Mr Finn was that Mr Barber was about to leave the chamber. I did not hear any reference to toilet breaks. I am happy to stand corrected, but the Clerk has advised me that that is the case.

Mr FINN — On the point of order, Acting President, I have heard a number of members during

this debate, in both this chamber and in the other one for that matter, refer to members leaving the chamber. I made no reference as to why Mr Barber was leaving the chamber — —

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ramsay) — Order! I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr FINN — It should also be pointed out that we are still entirely unsure as to where the Labor Party stands on this. This is something that not only affects the west of Melbourne; it affects the west of Victoria. There are a good number of people in Ballarat and Geelong who are very keen to use this link once it is completed. I am sure they would like the opposition to tell them what would happen to this project if Labor was to come into government at the next election.

I see members opposite furiously trying to ignore me at this point in time. But I think it is only fair, right and reasonable that the people on the western side of the state know what the opposition would do regarding the east–west link. We just do not know. Apparently Labor Party members supported the east–west link for a period of time. Then they opposed it. Then they supported it again. Then they opposed it. Where they are at the moment, I do not know.

I see Ms Tierney on the other side of the house. She might like to tell us. She might like to tell her constituents in Geelong, Ballarat and Colac what her position on this matter is. Where exactly does the Labor Party stand on this issue? I say to you, Acting President, that you do not need documents to know that this is one of the biggest projects upon which we have ever embarked in Victoria's history — —

Mr Barber interjected.

Mr FINN — Yes, it will be good, I am sure. We are talking about billions of dollars being spent on this project. Yet we have a major party, a party which claims to be the alternative government of this state, refuse to tell us where it stands on the biggest project this state has ever had.

Ms Tierney — who is usually pretty vocal I have to say, when the mood takes her — is not saying a word at this point in time. She is not committing herself. She is toeing the party line beautifully. She is not saying a word. She is not committing herself one way or the other. But let me tell Ms Tierney and the members of the Labor Party that there are millions of Victorians who want to know where the opposition stands. There are millions of Victorians who have a very keen interest in this project and who want to know what will happen if Labor is voted into government.

As I said before, that is a reasonable question. If we are talking about a multimillion-dollar project which is going to transform the face of transportation in Melbourne and which will go down in the history books as something the likes of which we have never seen before, it is only reasonable that the Labor Party tell us where it stands. Would it continue the project or would it scrap it? Would it flick it? Would it give in to its friends from the Greens and scrap the thing altogether?

The Greens are at least consistent — they want to stop everything. If it is good for society and the community, the Greens want to stop it. We accept and know that. But the Labor Party will not tell us where it stands. From my point of view, that is an insult to the people of the west of Melbourne, whom I represent. On the subject of the documents that we are discussing today, I am sure the Labor Party would have had similar documents when it was in government. It would be aware of what this matter involves, and it would be in a position to make a commitment one way or the other on this matter.

We have a government in Canberra which we know has contempt for the west of Melbourne. We know that because it shows it every day, not just in terms of this project but in so many other situations. How much has the Gillard government promised for this project if it is re-elected at the next election? Not a cent! Not a cracker! That is what it thinks of the people of the west of Melbourne. These are people like the federal Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Bill Shorten, the federal Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Brendan O'Connor, and of course Prime Minister Julia Gillard, who are alleged to represent the west of Melbourne. Despite the fact that they have had their names on ballot papers for a number of years, and I have seen the odd how-to-vote card with their photo on it, I have not seen any evidence that they have gone in to bat for the best interests of the west. They are certainly not doing it on this occasion. They are not going in to bat for the west of Melbourne, they are not going in to bat for Ballarat and they are certainly not going in to bat for Geelong.

This is an issue that goes right down the south-western corridor of Victoria — and for that matter probably north-west too. It is shameful that, firstly, we have a situation where at a state level the Labor Party will not tell us what it would do if it ever came to government. God help us! Secondly, we have a federal government which is snubbing its nose at millions of Victorians. This is not the first time it has done so, but on this occasion I find that absolutely intolerable.

It is not as if members opposite do not know what is going on. They have the documents, and they have seen the documents we are talking about here today. They know what this involves, so they have no excuse for hiding behind a tree, as they appear to be doing at the moment. That is deeply regrettable and shows a deep flaw in the Labor Party in Victoria. It shows that it does not have the capacity to make a firm decision and to show the sort of leadership that Premier Denis Napthine is producing now for Victoria. As such, in my view, this disqualifies the members opposite from government. Until such time as they can stand up in this house or elsewhere and tell us exactly what they think, they should be disqualified from ever holding office in this state.

It is important to put on record the gratitude felt by many people whom I represent in the west of Melbourne to Tony Abbott, the federal Leader of the Opposition and the man who has said he will put up \$1 billion of taxpayers money. You have to remember that we are talking about taxpayers money. Tony Abbott has said he will put up \$1 billion to get this thing under way. That is \$1 billion more than we have heard about from the Labor Party.

I would like to put on record my appreciation and my gratitude to Tony Abbott. I have no doubt he will be a Prime Minister who will fight for everybody. He will govern for everybody in Australia. He has already started to show that. He has already started to show that he will represent the people in the western suburbs of Melbourne in a way that the Labor Party never has. He will not neglect the west, he will not take the west for granted and he will not use and abuse the west. Instead he will provide for the people of the western suburbs of Melbourne in a way that Labor never has.

That is something I am very grateful for and something I am very much looking forward to. I look forward to 15 September, when we can actually get on with the job, get this country moving again and get this project, the east-west link, up and running. That will be a great day for hundreds of thousands of my constituents in the west, as indeed it will be for those in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and right through that western half of the state. I will now conclude my comments. I had not intended to speak quite this long, but it is a very important matter. I hope I have managed in some small way —

Mr Leane — No, you haven't.

Mr FINN — Mr Leane tells me that I have not been up to effectively conveying the importance of this project to the people of the western suburbs. I invite Mr Leane to come with me.

Mr Leane interjected.

Mr FINN — No, I invite Mr Leane to come with me out to the west. I do not know how long it is since he has been to the western suburbs.

Mr Leane — Have a stubby with me.

Mr FINN — I will have a stubby with him; I will have two. If he would like to join me in the western suburbs, I will show him new estate after new estate absolutely chock-a-block full of families who want to use the east–west link — the one the Labor Party is denying us, the one it will not say whether it will build and the one the Liberal-Nationals Napthine government is committed to building. If Mr Leane would like to come out to the western suburbs, I personally will show him around. He will come away as convinced as I am that this project is most important for the future of not just the western suburbs and the western part of the state but the whole of Melbourne and the whole of Victoria.

As I said before, I very much look forward to this project getting under way and being part of our life. There was a fair bit of controversy about CityLink, but now we could not imagine what life would be like without it, although we got a taste of that one day last year when it was blocked and havoc ensued from one end of Melbourne to the other. I have no doubt that once the east–west link is constructed and completed it will be one of the greatest things that has ever happened to this wonderful city we live in.

Ms PENNICUIK (Southern Metropolitan) — I would like to move an amendment to Mr Barber’s motion. I move:

That ‘16 April 2013’ be omitted and ‘7 May 2013’ inserted.

The reason for that change is that this is an amendment to a motion originally moved by Mr Barber in March, and due to the number of speakers on the government side, we ran out of time to debate it. Notwithstanding that situation, we had a negotiated arrangement, as we do with general business every Wednesday, as to how it would proceed through the house — that we would bring this particular motion to a vote, with an understanding that all parties supported the motion to table the documents. However, we did not actually get to that point. The motion remained a live motion until today, when we resumed debate just 20 minutes ago with Mr Finn continuing with the contribution he began in March.

It is worth raising the issue that, when document motions were put forward in 2011, which was early in

this parliamentary session, usually a speaker moved the motion, most commonly a member of the Greens, and then a speaker from the government spoke to the motion. At the time it was usually Mr O’Donohue. There were one or two occasions when the government did not support the tabling of documents in this place, but those occasions are few. Usually the government did not oppose the motion. Then a member of the ALP spoke, usually Mr Leane, who usually was in favour of the tabling of the documents. Then there was a short reply from the member who moved the motion, thanking the speakers, and that would have been the end of the matter.

This motion should be successful because it is not being opposed — —

Mrs Peulich — You can’t count the chickens.

Ms PENNICUIK — It has been indicated that there will be no opposition to the passing of the motion requiring or requesting the Leader of the Government to table the various documents about the east–west link project as moved by Mr Barber almost one month ago. That may lead to another standing motion being put by the Greens or another party about the merits of the east–west link project, but that is not the subject of the motion before us now, which is simply about the tabling of documents.

I therefore have to move this amendment because the original motion had the date 16 April, which of course was yesterday, so we now have to move an amendment to amend that date to 7 May, which is the next sitting Tuesday. The usual practice is to ask for the documents to be tabled on the first day of the sitting week, which in this case is 7 May. It is worth making those comments, and it will be good to see the house return to the practice where motions that call for the tabling of documents are just that.

Mrs PEULICH (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I say to Ms Pennicuik that motions brought forward either by members of the opposition or the Greens provide us with an opportunity to talk about things that are important and put — —

Mr Leane — Transparency is important.

Mrs PEULICH — It is very important, and the east–west link is a very important infrastructure project. Just a few moments ago I was speaking about our outstanding election commitments and the platform on which the now coalition was elected. One of those commitments was rectifying the infrastructure deficit. In South Eastern Metropolitan Region, there are particular problems with traffic congestion. Only today

the Victorian Auditor-General tabled a report entitled *Managing Traffic Congestion*. I would like to quote from the 'Background' section of the audit summary, which discusses the problem of congestion. It says:

Traffic is a sign of mobility and of a dynamic economy. However, excessive congestion causes a range of undesirable consequences. It imposes costs on the community and businesses through:

- longer, less predictable travel times;
- lost productivity and additional running costs of vehicles;
- increased pollution, noise, loss of amenity, driver stress;
- reduced time people spend with their families.

We all know that, because we have all suffered from undue levels of traffic congestion due to the former Labor government's lack of investment in roads infrastructure in particular, but also in public transport.

The report goes on to say:

In 2006, the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) estimated the economic costs of Melbourne's congestion ranged from \$1.3 billion to \$2.6 billion per year —

and that was in 2006 —

and that this was likely to double by 2020.

The costs of traffic congestion to the economy are inordinate. Page 27 of the report states:

This project involves the construction of a new 18 kilometre cross-city road corridor. It will provide direct connections to the port of Melbourne and an east-west central business district bypass for essential traffic. It is expected to free space on —

and this is the important bit —

existing roads for buses and trams and reduce heavy truck traffic on residential roads in the inner west.

Why would anyone oppose or raise concerns about the important construction of roads infrastructure such as the east-west link? Recently on a trip to Geelong members of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee listened to a range of matters pertaining to economic development, and all the key stakeholders, including the port of Geelong, Avalon Airport, the City of Greater Geelong as well as the various chambers of commerce, came out in very strong support of the east-west link. In fact they were enthusiastic about it, and for good reason.

What is the coalition government doing about it? Some \$15 million was allocated in the 2012-13 Victorian

budget to plan and develop the east-west link. The geotechnical drilling has occurred in the areas of Fitzroy, Carlton, Parkville and within Royal Park. More than 100 financiers and constructors attended an industry briefing in July 2012, with companies from Australia, Japan, Spain, France, Korea, the United Kingdom and Italy. Clearly it is an important project.

Victoria needs an alternative to the M1 arterial — that is, it needs another east-west crossing. The government had to inject an extra \$14 million for maintenance work on West Gate Bridge in the 2012-13 budget. Anyone who travels that route on a regular basis, as does Mr Finn — we have heard Mr Finn talk about congestion on the West Gate — would know how desperately we need another east-west crossing. More than 160 000 vehicles travel across the West Gate Bridge per day and, according to the Eddington report published in 2008, this volume is projected to rise to 235 000 by 2031.

The Eastern Freeway carries more than 140 000 vehicles each day, and around 40 per cent of the traffic from the Eastern Freeway travels beyond the central city area. Clearly there is a significant need for an east-west link, which would help to avoid gridlock from even minor incidents on the M1, and it would remove traffic from inner arterial roads and link industry out north, east and west. Obviously that is crucial to the future of this city.

Who supports the east-west link? Anyone with common sense and who understands the importance of economic development, the creation of jobs and a future for this city and this state supports it. They include some notable supporters, including the RACV for one.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mrs PEULICH — To be honest, I look upon the RACV's identification of road priorities almost as a bible. I know that the Greens, who hate roads, have a different view, and that is why, for example, the people of Lyndhurst will see through some of the argy-bargy of Labor policies that will not resolve the issues confronted by those particular voters on a daily basis.

The Committee of Melbourne also supports the east-west link, as does the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The Australian Workers Union (AWU) supports the east-west link. Former Premiers John Brumby and Steve Bracks support the east-west link. Some current opposition MPs, including the members for Footscray and Williamstown in the Assembly,

support the east–west link. Tony Abbott and the federal Liberal-Nationals coalition support the east–west link.

Who does not support it? There are the usual suspects: the Victorian Leader of the Opposition and the shadow ministry, and other opposition MPs, including the Assembly members for Richmond and Melbourne, do not support it. But of course this is very different from those who have some common sense. I place on record some of the quotes in respect of the east–west link from the RACV:

The east–west link is a major project that will alleviate the massive congestion at the end of the Eastern Freeway and on both east–west and north–south roads.

The Committee of Melbourne said:

The government’s green light in planning for east–west link will help build confidence in our freight and logistics industry and will also ensure it remains productive and efficient.

Former Premier John Brumby said:

I think what is undeniable, in Rod Eddington’s report, is that the city does need a second east–west crossing ...

... one way or another we’ve got to address this issue of a second east–west crossing ...

The 2006 Bracks government document *Meeting Our Transport Challenges* states:

The government will also take steps to fully explore and access options for the development of another east–west link.

Cesar Melhem, the state secretary of the Australian Workers Union, accepts the need for the east–west link. The AWU submission to the east–west link needs assessment study in 2008 asserts:

The EastLink project could not be considered fully completed until the east–west tunnel had been built. Without the east–west tunnel, the Eastern Freeway will turn into a congested car park and will defeat the purpose of EastLink.

In the *Age* of 30 July 2012 Mr Melhem is quoted as having said:

It is just crazy not to go ahead with the [east–west] project...

The article also states:

Mr Melhem said one electorate could not determine the best interests of the whole state.

In 2013 Mr Melhem said that the east–west link should be a priority for Dr Napthine, and of course it is a priority for this government.

The Assembly members for Williamstown, Melton, Altona, Kororoit, Keilor and Footscray rank a second

river crossing as their no. 1 infrastructure priority and state:

... Melbourne’s west must be better connected with the rest of Melbourne, thus reducing overreliance on the West Gate Bridge.

The members for Footscray and Williamstown supported Sir Rod Eddington’s recommendations in the east–west link needs assessment report:

The road tunnel has the opportunity of linking the growth in the west to the growth in the east. That will have an important multiplier effect in terms of options and choices for residents on both sides of the city. With greater access and connectivity will come more local jobs and investment.

I ask: who would actually be against more local jobs and more investment? Regrettably, it is the Greens.

I would like to finish on a final quotation, from a former member for Western Metropolitan Region, Mr Pakula, a current ALP candidate for the Assembly seat of Lyndhurst. In his statement on the 2008 east–west link needs assessment study he says:

... the Greens have told motorists in the middle and outer west to ‘stick it’ — no new river crossings and no new roads for them. Car drivers in the west are to be punished, sacrificed on the altar of green ideology.

The east–west link is a critical piece of infrastructure for our capital city as well as our state and for anyone who values jobs and investment in the future of this state. I am not surprised that the Greens, who are so strongly against roads infrastructure, are trying to find documents that somehow will undermine this important piece of infrastructure, the east–west link. Clearly this motion will go through. I hope that sooner or later common sense will also prevail amongst the Greens.

Ms CROZIER (Southern Metropolitan) — I am pleased to rise to speak briefly in the debate on the east–west link documents motion that has been brought before the house this afternoon. In doing so I pick up Mrs Peulich’s point about the infrastructure deficit left by the former government when the coalition government came to power in 2010. It was evident that during the time the previous government was in power Melbourne had increased significantly in size in terms of population numbers and the expansion of various growth corridors and that there was a real lack of planning that went into servicing those communities. Consequently we were left with an enormous backlog of road projects and traffic congestion on a daily basis.

Anyone who travels within those major corridors on a regular basis will understand that they are highly utilised and that there is a real need for this project to

get up and running. It is an important project. I note that Mr Albanese, the federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, made his announcement in the last few weeks about the fast rail project from Melbourne to Brisbane via a number of places. That is an enormous project, which will cost well in excess of \$100 billion in today's terms. It is going to be delivered somewhere in the vicinity of 2050. We are talking about infrastructure projects here and now that can make a real difference to Victoria's economy, will improve productivity and will assist with improving livability in this state.

I go back to the coalition government's announcement in 2011 of its priority infrastructure projects for Victoria. The then Premier, Ted Baillieu, flagged this project as a priority for the government. It was going to be a once-in-a-generation project that would make an enormous difference to the way that people were able to get around Melbourne and improve their livability standards. If you go back in history, you see it was Liberal governments that undertook CityLink and the city rail loop and finished those very large projects. We saw very few of those major infrastructure projects under the former government. It is up to a coalition government to get things moving again.

No doubt members like Mr Finn and Mr Elsbury, who represent the western suburbs, see this on a daily basis. Anyone who travels across the West Gate Bridge on a daily basis would see the need for this project. The members for Western Victoria Region, Mr Ramsay, Mr O'Brien, Mr Koch — —

Mr Barber — Thought of taking the train?

Ms CROZIER — They take a train as well, Mr Barber. People do not always have to drive. I know Mr O'Brien catches the train to Melbourne on a regular basis. He regularly travels by train to hearings of the committees of which he is a member. I am not saying that he does not travel by car, but there are many people and many industries in our city and in our state that rely on good reliable transport corridors.

The east–west link project will be a very important project for the city of Melbourne and for our state, and for the Greens to be talking about pedal power and every other jolly power that they seem to talk about shows a lack of understanding of what the majority of people want and need. I do not know how Mr Barber gets to work on a daily basis. I suppose by bicycle, train, car or tram — maybe it is all of those modes of transport. Nevertheless, many people rely on driving to get from where they live to central Melbourne.

Just recently we heard Mr Guy talking about real projects in local areas like Frankston — he mentioned this yesterday — so that people do not have to travel to and fro and can work in their local areas. There are very significant projects in other areas of our city. The east–west project will link our regional areas and our suburbs to various parts of Melbourne. It is a worthy project that needs support.

I am pleased that the federal opposition leader, Tony Abbott, has come out in support of the project, with a realistic figure and a realistic project that can be delivered, unlike Mr Albanese who flings around great big figures and great big fanciful ideas. This project is a priority under the coalition government, and I am pleased that Infrastructure Australia has also backed the east–west link.

Preliminary work has already been undertaken to look at this project. It is not something that is a thought bubble or a notion. Mr Andrews has called it a 'grand hoax', which is just a silly statement. We are uncertain if Mr Andrews knows what direction east or west is or what the project is called, and there is serious division between his party and the Greens about the idea. I am sure members of his own party who represent people in the western suburbs will be very grateful for the project when it is realised.

As I said at the outset, Mrs Peulich highlighted the infrastructure deficit left by the previous government. This government has put aside significant amounts of money — record levels of money — to fund infrastructure projects, and this is just one of them. The Minister for Roads, Mr Mulder, and others who have been working on the different aspects of the project should be congratulated. With those words, I note that we will not be opposing the documents motion, but again I say that this is an important infrastructure project that we should all be supporting.

Mr RAMSAY (Western Victoria) — I am pleased to speak in the debate on this motion of Mr Barber's. I do so on the basis that I am a regular user of both the train network and the road network from deep western Victoria to both the CBD and beyond to the eastern side of the state. As Ms Crozier said, we are coming to crunch time in relation to getting road traffic from the western side of the state through the CBD to the eastern side with only one access point, that being the West Gate Bridge. Mr Barber has indicated a number of times through interjections and by other means that we can all take the train. As Mr Barber well knows, that it is not possible. Logistically we cannot float the entire road population of the Princes Highway onto the trains.

In fact technically it is somewhat difficult, particularly for road freight.

If we are to be serious about this, we need to look at a short-term solution for carrying road traffic whether it is from the east to the west or, as is my preference, from the west to the east, because it is imperative for people from the western side of the state to gain access to the CBD and over to the eastern side of the state. It is curious that the Labor opposition does not seem to have a position about how in the future we are to carry road traffic from the east to the west. It seems to be more than happy to facilitate \$22 million to provide fairy lights on the West Gate Bridge rather than putting in an extra lane or somehow trying to strengthen the road to accommodate more traffic by providing more lanes.

I congratulate the Minister for Roads, Terry Mulder, for his persistence in making sure that we do not waste money like the suggested \$22 million for fairy lights but in fact put that money into strengthening the bridge and providing additional incoming and outgoing lanes. I also congratulate — and I was going to say the federal Abbott government, but that would be a bit presumptuous — the federal coalition for announcing not \$1 billion as Mr Finn said but \$1.5 billion towards the project costs for the east–west link.

I also congratulate the G21 group on being proactive in having the link as one of its top priorities. It is a natural link to the already significant investment in the upgrade of Princes Highway west, the Waurn Ponds-Winchelsea leg, which has been committed to now by both state and federal governments, and also the commitment of \$500-odd million for the duplication of the Winchelsea-Colac leg of the highway. We will see a significant increase in traffic, and we will see an upgraded and duplicated road that will convey traffic a lot quicker and more safely. But once again there will be a problem when that traffic hits the Werribee to West Gate Bridge precincts where it will have to be funnelled onto the bridge.

My reason for supporting the significant investment in the Princes Highway west is we are going to have some significant problems in managing the increased road traffic because of the upgrades to these highways onto the West Gate Bridge and off on to the eastern freeways without a second crossing. There is some urgency about this, and I look forward to parties taking a bipartisan approach in dealing with the critical investment that is required not in 20 years but in the next 5 years to accommodate the increase in road traffic flow through the east–west or west–east link.

The Napthine government is investing in new trains and new carriages and in the upgrading of the railway network, including the regional rail link, and in providing more access, flexibility and safety in relation to public conveyance on trains. I commend the government on that, and I look forward to the ongoing investment.

The government committed \$15 million in the 2012–13 budget to plan and develop the east–west link. Drilling work is being done in Fitzroy, Carlton and Parkville, so we are committed to the planning process. A prospective federal coalition government has already committed \$1.5 billion, and obviously considerably more funds will need to be raised over time to complete this urgent project. Mrs Peulich suggested that there has been significant stakeholder support for the project from the RACV, the Committee for Melbourne, the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Australian Workers Union and even former Premier John Brumby and some opposition MPs, including those for Footscray and Williamstown in the Assembly, and, as I said, the proposed federal coalition government.

In closing, I am always a little cynical of the Greens requesting the tabling of documents in relation to large projects. I hope this does not suggest that they do not believe this project has merit. I am disappointed that the opposition cannot seem to find a policy position in relation to the east–west or west–east link, and I hope that with the federal coalition’s significant commitment, which is the only commitment because the Gillard federal government has not committed 1 cent, and with Western Victoria Region being strongly supportive of both the planning process and the ongoing construction of an east–west link to create a growing economy and deal with a growing population in the west, we will be able to create an access for road transport to move from the west to the east and also from the east to the west, which is imperative for regional areas. While we do not oppose the motion, I hope Mr Barber’s request for documents is being made on the basis that he keeps an open mind on this project.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I thank those members who came in to make contributions on the motion. In early versions of the notice paper there were a large number of notices of motion from government MPs all lauding the benefits of the east–west road tunnel, but not one of those motions was ever brought on for debate in government business time. The government waited until my motion came up and then rolled out an extraordinarily large number of speakers with

extraordinarily little information about the project they all want to champion.

Basically what they know is that it is a road, it goes from east to west and that Melbourne's roads are congested. They do not know what it is going to cost, they do not know the route, they do not know where the off-ramps are, they do not know what the toll will be, they do not know how many people will drive on it, and they do not know what the revenue will be. They know that the federal Leader of the Opposition, Tony Abbott, has committed \$1.5 billion to it, and that is it. They are attempting to convince the Victorian public of what is good for them, and so far all they have recruited to their cause is the RACV, the posh end of town and the union that covers the guys who will get to build it. That is it.

The vast majority of the public are crying out for public transport and, for that matter, investment in schools and hospitals. What we can be sure of is that if the government ever builds this project, there will be a massive taxpayer subsidy underwriting it, a subsidy so massive that the budget will be drained dry and the government will not be able to afford any of the other infrastructure gaps in any other electorate, the result of which will be that the government will lose government. Alternatively, we will start to get a drip-feed of information, the government will get to read the business case, private investors will get to find out a little bit more about it, Infrastructure Australia will have a close look at it and the government will realise that this is a project that is not economically viable. In other words, the cost of the project will vastly exceed the economic benefits delivered by the project.

In my office upstairs I have got a dirty great folder containing some FOI information about the traffic modelling that was done for this project. Almost every useful piece of information and every assumption that went into the modelling for this project has been blacked out. This government is terrified of any information about this project being exposed. It is terrified of a debate on the merits of this project. There were many government speakers in here during the last sitting week to talk about this motion in order to delay for another three weeks the inevitable genuine debate about the merits of this project compared with other transport projects and, for that matter, its merits compared with other infrastructure and capital projects. However, you can run but you cannot hide, as they say in the classics. Soon enough we will see some information on this project and then members will have to come in here and we will have a genuine debate about the pros and cons of this project.

Amendment agreed to; amended motion agreed to.

GOVERNMENT: ELECTION COMMITMENTS

Debate resumed from earlier this day; motion of Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan):

That this house calls on the Napthine government to fund its outstanding election commitments when it delivers its 2013–14 state budget.

Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I thank the Acting President for giving me the call to contribute to this particular motion which was moved by Mr Tee. I would have thought it was quite a simple motion and quite a simple premise that the house calls on the Napthine government to fund its outstanding election commitments in its 2013–14 state budget. It is a simple premise because this would be the second last budget that the Baillieu and Napthine governments will deliver before the end of this political term, and if these election commitments are not funded in this period of the term they will never come to fruition due to the time it takes to deliver projects from the point when they are funded to the time that they are built.

I was perplexed as to why government members found Mr Tee's motion quite so provocative. They gave some strange and aggressive contributions towards a motion which basically calls on the government to fund the promises it made as part of its 2010 election platform. The reality is that people voted for the election promises that the coalition presented. Therefore you would think it would not be an unreasonable premise for the government to build the projects and pay for the services that it promised the electorate and took to the election in 2010.

I would like to cover some of the outstanding election commitments that the new Treasurer, Michael O'Brien, needs to ink in when he delivers the budget next sitting week. Some of them might be a bit hard to put a quantum on, but those commitments were displayed in election campaign materials and were stated by a number of members of the coalition at the time and therefore should be rightfully fulfilled. Broadbased commitments were made to the electorate, including one that a coalition government would ease congestion on our roads. The congestion on the roads has not eased, but there has been a lot of talk by government members about big projects that they believe will deliver that. There were commitments to do grade separations at a number of railway level crossings. My understanding is that to date not one of those particular projects has started, and they would be one way to ease congestion. The reality is that there has been no funding towards easing congestion. Coalition members have not fulfilled any form of commitment to the electorate that

they would ease congestion. Treasurer O'Brien needs to take this into account when he delivers his budget in the next sitting week.

Another election commitment that was found in coalition members' literature and stated by coalition leaders at the time was that they would make the streets safe. That is probably an unrealistic promise to make to any particular electorate, but that was the promise that coalition MPs and candidates made in their literature. They said that if they were elected to government they would make the streets safe. It would be hard for anyone to say that the streets are safe when crime rates have actually risen. Whether that is because we have more police is a matter of semantics, but the reality is that there needs to be more money put into this area if the coalition is to fulfil its commitment to the electorate that if it was elected to government, it would make the streets safe.

In the literature released and election commitments made by coalition candidates and MPs at the time there was also a promise that if a coalition government was elected it would ease the cost of living, but as we have found so far that has not been the case. The cost of living has not eased at all; it has actually risen. We are in a situation where the government needs to look at how it delivers on that commitment as far as it can. I understand that a number of fines have been raised, licence and registration fees have been raised and there has been no facility to ease the cost of gas and electricity bills and other types of bills that people have been receiving. This was part of a campaign the coalition conducted. It said that if it was elected and there was a change of government, this would happen. However, it has not happened, so there is an onus on the new Treasurer, Mr O'Brien, to deliver a budget that will find a way to help ease the cost of living for the constituents across the state to whom that promise was made.

There was a definite commitment by this government to implement every one of the recommendations of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, and that was unequivocal. At the time there was a question about whether that could be done. It is a good thing to commit to if it is possible; there is no point in having a royal commission if there is no endeavour to try to fulfil most of its recommendations. The coalition went to the election saying that if it was elected, it would fulfil the bushfires royal commission's recommendations 'lock, stock and barrel'. I think they were the Deputy Premier's words regarding the recommendations of the bushfires royal commission.

One of the recommendations the previous government did not commit to related to the undergrounding of all the single-wire earth return (SWER) powerlines in regional areas, and that was because of the cost. But at the time the coalition said that because it had committed to implementing all the bushfires royal commission's recommendations lock, stock and barrel that was one of the things it would do. The new Treasurer, who was previously the Minister for Energy and Resources and should understand this issue completely, should know that not 1 kilometre of SWER lines has been laid underground since the coalition came to government and made that commitment. There is a real imperative about this because now is the only time the government will be able to do this in this budget period, considering that there is only so long left in this parliamentary term. If the government is serious about fulfilling its commitment to underground the SWER powerlines, it is very important that we see that funding when the budget is delivered in the next sitting week.

I would like to touch on a few local Eastern Metropolitan Region commitments, rather than generic, across-the-board commitments, that the coalition made to the electorate and said it would fulfil if it was successful at the election. One of the local commitments was to fund the construction of a bike track — a rail trail — along the Belgrave train line between Box Hill and Ringwood stations, which is known as the eastern rail trail. There was a commitment to \$5 million in funding to build that rail trail. I think that is a very worthwhile project, and I congratulate the coalition on taking that position to the electorate because it is a project that I was also lobbying for at the time.

It is a great project, and it makes a lot of sense to have a bike track next to the rail line. As well as linking the Ringwood and Box Hill stations, it would also link up with the existing EastLink bike track, which runs the whole length of EastLink. This would mean that someone could probably ride their bike along a controlled bike track from Box Hill and then get onto the EastLink bike track and ride all the way to Frankston if they were fit enough and wanted to do that. The point is that that particular stretch of track could accommodate people who want to use bikes as a means of transport to get to work. There are also a lot of schoolchildren at a number of high schools along that track who could use that bike track.

Unfortunately that project has not been started; it is awaiting more funding. If the coalition is going to deliver that bike track — and it promised in 2010 that it would do so by 2014 — that funding needs to be in the

budget when Mr O'Brien delivers it in the next sitting week.

As I said, these were commitments made by the coalition. Coalition members should not be offended by this particular motion, and they should not be offended at being reminded about the commitments they made to the electorate in the event that they were elected to government, which they obviously were.

A commitment was made by the coalition — and it was one of my favourites because of the way it came about — that if it was elected to government it would build a heavy rail line to Doncaster. I clearly remember the former Premier going out to Doncaster when he was in opposition, late in the election campaign period, and saying that it was a great day for Doncaster. I remember the words pretty clearly. He said, 'If we are elected to government, we will build a rail line to Doncaster. We will do a study on where it should go. We will get the funds and we will build it'.

I have kept all that election material, which was issued by Mary Wooldridge, who is now the Minister for Mental Health and member for Doncaster in the Assembly; she was a party to the commitment. I am keeping it to hand because the government has now come out and said that it is not in a position to do that. If the government were fair dinkum and wanted to show that it was not saying things just for the sake of it, and if the new Treasurer had a substantial amount of money in the budget that he will deliver in the next sitting week, some of those funds would go towards fulfilling the commitment to build a rail line to Doncaster.

Another commitment made to Eastern Metropolitan Region was \$12 million to go towards the construction and staffing of a 24-hour police station in Forest Hill. Since the election a site had been identified and a sign has been put up. The sign has been there for quite a while. The sign sits on the land where the old Wobbies World used to be. I am glad I have parliamentary privilege because Wobbies World was probably the worst amusement park you could ever imagine in your lifetime. Sorry, Mr Wobbie, but it was pretty ordinary. However, the bottom line is that on part of the Wobbies World site at the moment is an invisible police station that the coalition committed to build if it were elected to government. If the funding for that police station is not in the next budget, then it will not be built in this term as promised by coalition MPs.

No doubt the new Treasurer will be announcing that \$12 million has been allocated and construction will start straight away so that this project can be delivered.

Sometimes these sorts of projects take between a year and 18 months to get to a finished state with police actually in attendance. Unless the coalition was just saying it was going to do something but had no intention of delivering it, I am sure that money will be there.

A commitment was made to four primary schools in the Ferntree Gully electorate by the member for Ferntree Gully in the Assembly, Mr Wakeling, when he was both an elected member and a candidate for that electorate in the last election campaign, for funding to get capital works done. The first school was Ferntree Gully North Primary School. In their election literature Mr Wakeling and the leadership of the coalition at the time committed \$4 million to rebuild, extend or upgrade the school buildings. That money has not been forthcoming and there has been no pre-budget announcement around that, so let us not hold our breath. But if the coalition were serious about that commitment to that particular school, \$4 million will be allocated to go towards the building work and those building works will start soon after the budget is delivered.

Wattleview Primary School was also promised \$4 million to rebuild, extend or upgrade the school buildings. We expect the same announcement with the same amount of urgency of action to upgrade or rebuild the school buildings as with the Ferntree Gully North Primary School.

The same commitment was made to Fairhills Primary School with exactly the same amount of money. It is a bit strange that it is exactly the same amount of money, when you think about it, considering that, as we know, all schools are different. But this \$4 million is to upgrade and rebuild the school buildings. That money has not been forthcoming so far and once again I expect that the new Treasurer will be announcing that funding in the next sitting week and there will be workers out there as soon as possible to fulfil the commitment that the works will be completed in this term of the government's tenure.

Mountain Gate Primary School was promised \$4 million to rebuild, extend or upgrade its school buildings. Again, I do not know how that figure actually came about, but the expectation of the school community of Mountain Gate Primary School is the same, that the \$4 million the coalition promised in its election material and that its members and candidates promised in the election campaign will be delivered by the new Treasurer and construction will commence as soon as possible so that that election commitment will be fulfilled in this term.

There was also an election commitment to make the Rowville police station a 24-hour police station. This was a very well-known commitment at the time and people around Rowville were calling for this. The coalition candidate said that would happen and that the operation of this particular police station would increase to 24 hours. Obviously more funding probably needs to go to the Department of Justice for this to occur. It has not happened as yet. When you think about it you know that we are not talking about the amount of money that the coalition is promising for projects like the east-west tunnel and whatnot. I am a bit surprised that commitment has not been fulfilled, but any money that needs to go to the Department of Justice to make sure that this particular election commitment is fulfilled would need to be in the forthcoming budget that the new Treasurer will deliver during the next sitting week.

There was also a commitment for a new Rowville Country Fire Authority fire station with the proposed move from Taylors Lane to Wellington Road. There has been some movement around the purchasing of a new site, but no money has been forthcoming for the actual station to relocate. I would have thought that was the important bit, similar to the invisible police station at Wobbies World. The land is secured, but unless there is something actually built on it and it is operating for the purpose that was promised by the coalition members at the time of the election campaign, then it is still just an empty paddock with a sign on it from the state government.

There was a commitment made in the Warrandyte-Kilsyth area that there would be a new site in Ringwood for a headspace centre. As we know, headspace provides tailored youth mental health services. That has not been forthcoming; in fact it seems to have gone off the radar. It seems that this commitment has been earmarked for the Knox area rather than the Ringwood area. There is real concern that that particular election commitment will not be funded and will not come to fruition. The new Treasurer needs to take this into account when he gets out his calculator and slide rule, has his spreadsheet in front of him and is doing his numbers in the next few weeks. He needs to make sure that these sorts of commitments, which are important, are fulfilled. Whatever funding is needed for these sorts of commitments to be fulfilled, the Treasurer needs to make sure it is delivered.

There was a \$400 000 commitment for a set of traffic lights at the intersection of Cambridge and Swansea roads in Kilsyth. That has not been forthcoming at all. If the lights are to be built in this term of this government, as was promised by the coalition candidate

at the time and also by the coalition party leaders, the Treasurer will have to deliver that funding in the budget next sitting week. There are no ifs or buts about it.

Going back to the commitment of \$4 million each for four different primary schools, the issue is that it is not clear whether a lot of science and maths went into the actual quantum attached to the coalition's election commitments. The quote for the traffic lights at the Kilsyth intersection was \$400 000, but I would be wary of saying that is the correct amount. The coalition committed, I think, \$900 000 for traffic lights at the intersection of Tormore and Boronia roads in Bayswater, but they ended up costing something like \$1.2 million or \$1.4 million. Maybe the Treasurer needs to look at what is a realistic amount of money to fulfil this election commitment regarding the Kilsyth intersection. We do not call on the Treasurer to provide the \$400 000 in funding that was put out in the coalition's propaganda; what we say to the Treasurer is that he needs to make sure the correct amount of money is provided to fulfil the election commitment the coalition made.

The coalition also made a commitment to traffic measures at the intersection of Eastfield Road and Morinda Street in Ringwood East. This was for a much lesser amount of \$200 000, which surprises me, and I doubt very much whether it will cost that little. That was an election commitment the coalition candidate and leaders made when they went to the election in 2010. The Treasurer needs to make sure that when he delivers the budget in the next sitting week it commits an adequate amount of funding to fulfil the commitment that candidate and his party made at that time.

The coalition also committed \$200 000 towards the Croydon South Primary School site, which is no longer being used for educational purposes. At the time the coalition said it would spend the money on repairing the site and retrofitting it to some degree so that community organisations such as the local University of the Third Age (U3A) group could use the facility. I am not sure how the Treasurer will estimate the cost of doing this, as it will now cost a lot more.

The government cannot retrofit and repair the buildings on the school site because since the coalition came to office those buildings have been demolished. For the Treasurer to fulfil the commitment to have a facility on this land suitable for community organisations such as the U3A to use, he will have to commit an amount of money that will build a whole new building for that purpose. If the government particularly wants to fulfil its election commitments — if it did not simply go to

the election having made up a heap of commitments it would not fulfil — one of the things it will have to do is construct a new building on the site where Croydon South Primary School previously existed.

There was a commitment by the coalition candidate for Kilsyth that there would be an upgrade of the Mooroolbark train station and in particular its car park, which has not happened to this point. I do not think the coalition put a money figure on that commitment at the time, but it was an election commitment. It has not happened to this point. I do not know whether it is an oversight by the government, if it has just forgotten it, but this commitment was listed in its literature. It was a commitment to the voters, the voters voted for this particular proposition, and it has not been fulfilled to this point. The Treasurer needs to take this into account when he is delivering the budget next sitting week.

Another worthy election commitment that unfortunately has not been fulfilled — again, I do not know whether it is an oversight — was for a 7.1-kilometre walking track between Carrum and Warburton, which would link Bayswater North to Mount Evelyn. This commitment was for \$5 million. Once again, I am not too sure whether that would be enough to fulfil the commitment, but the money was not forthcoming in previous budgets. If the new Treasurer does not deliver it in the budget to be released next sitting week, there is no way this commitment can be fulfilled and this particular link and track delivered. If the government is serious about fulfilling the commitments it took to the 2010 election, it is important that the Treasurer deliver that \$5 million plus — the commitment was for \$5 million, but we have found that these figures were rubbery at that stage — in the budget next sitting week.

The previous Treasurer, when he was the candidate for Scoresby at the last election, committed \$10 million towards duplicating the east end of High Street Road, or the part that goes between Burwood Highway and ends at Stud Road. The coalition committed \$10 million to duplicate this particular part of High Street Road. I remember the previous Treasurer, Mr Wells, being very passionate about this project for a number of years, even when he was in opposition, which is good for him. Good on him for being passionate about the duplication of High Street Road in that part of his electorate.

The issue is that when he was Treasurer Mr Wells failed to deliver money in the budget to fulfil the commitment to duplicate High Street Road, so it is important that when the shiny new Treasurer delivers his budget in the next sitting week that money is

actually delivered. I am not sure if \$10 million will be enough to deliver the duplication of High Street Road, but if the government is serious about fulfilling the platform it took to the people in the 2010 election, then it is important that the funding for this project is there.

I would be very surprised, even if the funding is there, if the work needed to duplicate this particular part of High Street Road could be done in the time remaining in this term of government. The coalition committed to completing this work during this term of government. However, it is quite a major piece of work to duplicate this part of High Street Road, so I would be very surprised if the government can fulfil its passionate commitment — —

Hon. D. M. Davis — Passionate?

Mr LEANE — Yes, passionate. Mr Wells was passionate about this particular stretch of road for a number of years; I give him credit for that. For his dream to be fulfilled a lot of money will have to be delivered for this project by the new Treasurer in the upcoming budget. I am glad Mr Davis supports that position, because the last thing Mr Davis would want, as the Leader of the Government in this house, is to be seen as having gone to an election making a number of election commitments only for the term to finish and it become obvious that those election commitments were not delivered. In that case the period of time and the documentation would all end up just being rhetoric.

I applaud the government on its announcement of \$66 million for an upgrade of the Ringwood train station and bus exchange. The background to this is that the Brumby government provided \$39 million for the Ringwood bus exchange. At the time QIC, as the owner of Eastland, and the Maroondah City Council were very passionate that the part of the Maroondah Highway where the bus exchange is located be brought up to a good standard. That would encourage QIC to put money, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, into a project it has announced to upgrade Eastland. That is great. It is great that this amount of construction work is available in the outer east.

When the Baillieu-led coalition came into government it decided that it did not like the bus exchange program so it stopped the project and tore up the contracts. It would be interesting to know how much it had to pay to the existing contractor in order to walk away from that project when it reneged on that contract. The Eastland project mooted by QIC could have already started if the government had not stopped the \$39 million worth of work at the bus exchange two and a half years ago. However, in fairness, the coalition went to the election

saying it would do that and that it would do both the train station and the bus exchange at the same time. The coalition made a \$60 million election commitment at that time.

The Ringwood train station is a very old station which has been there for a long time. My understanding is that for the station to be brought up to a good standard, suitable for disability access and including other modern facilities it will cost over \$100 million. The coalition made a commitment to scrap the \$39 million for the bus exchange and do both the bus exchange and Ringwood train station for \$60 million. The new Premier made a pre-budget announcement last week in which he said that \$66 million would go towards the station and the bus exchange. The way I see it is the train station project is underfunded to the tune of approximately \$26 million. If that is \$26 million, it is \$75 million short of what the train station will cost. I would be very keen to find out what part of the train station project the Napthine and David Davis government — —

Hon. D. M. Davis — On a point of order, Acting President, the member has made assertions on a number of points about calculations and costs of projects. I am wondering if he is quoting from a document that he would be prepared to make available to the chamber.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ondarchie) — Order! That is not really a point of order. I am sure government members will have the capacity to debate the matter when they have an opportunity.

Mr LEANE — To assist the minister, I will email him scanned copies of his party's 2010 election commitments, with the quantum next to each of them. I am happy to do that because that is what I am quoting from — —

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ondarchie) — Order! Mr Leane to continue.

Mr LEANE — I am more than happy to do that for Mr Davis. I am nothing if not helpful; I always try to help in these situations. I will send Mr Davis those documents. Maybe Mr Davis has forgotten the election commitments made by his party across a number of areas.

Hon. D. M. Davis — I have been ticking off the outstanding commitments. one by one

Mr LEANE — Let us talk about the election commitments in Mr Davis's portfolio. Let us talk about the promise made both in the coalition's literature and

by Mr Davis himself that 800 new hospital beds would be delivered across the state — —

Hon. D. M. Davis — They are under way.

Mr LEANE — No, they are not. Mr Davis demands to see documents with numbers on them from the opposition, but he has never once reciprocated in this chamber, even though he has been asked a number of times to tell us where his 800 new hospital beds are. Mr Davis made a commitment that there would be 100 new hospital beds in his first year of government, yet he has not been able to identify one of those hospital beds — —

Hon. D. M. Davis interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ondarchie) — Order! If Mr Davis and Mr Leane want to have this chat, I am sure they will have an opportunity to do so in the front bar of a pub somewhere after the sitting day.

Mr LEANE — I do not know if it would be the front bar, but thank you, Acting President.

This motion states:

That this house calls on the Napthine government to fund its outstanding election commitments when it delivers its 2013–14 state budget.

This is the second-last budget that this government will deliver. However, with a year and a half remaining in its term, money has to be provided now for projects to be delivered before the term ends. Eighteen months is a very short time. Mr Davis should take this motion seriously. He should tell the Treasurer that an enormous amount of money needs to be provided for him to deliver the 800 hospital beds he promised the government would deliver during this term. Mr Davis has not been able to identify the 100 beds he promised he would deliver in the coalition's first year of government. The first year is over, and there are no 100 beds. Not once has he been able to stand up and identify where the 100 beds are. In any case there have been fewer beds over that period. Wards were shut during the government's first year, and there was \$616 million of cuts to funding. How could that support new hospital beds? It does not make any sense.

This motion should be taken seriously, because the coalition parties went to the election saying, 'This is what we will do if you vote for us to form government'. That is the reality, and that is what happened with the Liberal-Nationals coalition. It was elected to government with a majority in both houses, and there is nothing impeding the passage of bills through these two houses. There is nothing stopping this government from

delivering what it said it would deliver. If the opposition health spokesperson at the time, who became the Minister for Health, said to the electorate of Victoria that in the first year there would be 100 new hospital beds and across the four-year term of the government 800 new hospital beds would be delivered, then I think the electorate's expectation would be that this should be fulfilled, and for it to be fulfilled there needs to be funding in the budget.

As I said, the budget will be delivered 18 months out from the end of the government's term, and there needs to be a lot of work and catch-up to deliver its promises. The expectation is that the money will be there when the new Treasurer delivers his budget when next we sit in this place.

I do not think anyone on any side of this chamber should get too antsy about the motion. Its basic premise is what should be reasonable and fair. If election commitments are good enough to be made, they should be good enough to be fulfilled. We will wait in anticipation. As I said at the start of my speech, it is very hard to identify how some of the election commitments in the material released by the previous Premier, Mr Baillieu, when he was the opposition leader — such as making the streets safe, easing the cost of living, easing congestion and other broadbrush statements — can be fulfilled. But in fairness they should be fulfilled, and so far they have not been. This government has 18 months. It will present a budget in the next sitting week, and the money needs to be there. We look forward to a vast improvement in the delivery of the coalition's election commitments. If there is an 18-month flurry of activity from the government and it all gets delivered, I will be the first to congratulate it.

Mr RAMSAY (Western Victoria) — I appreciate the opportunity to talk about some of the outstanding election commitments, particularly those in the Western Victoria Region, which I represent, and more particularly in the Ballarat region, in which I am investing a considerable amount of time at the moment. I read the motion and I thought initially, 'How strange that on opposition business day the opposition would give government members the opportunity in this chamber to talk about the wonderful and outstanding election commitments that the government has already delivered and will continue to deliver through both the 2013–14 budget and the following budget'. Then I thought that perhaps that is not the intent of the motion.

I referred to my trusty dictionary and looked up the word 'outstanding'. There are a number of definitions of that term. They include: prominent, conspicuous, eminent and striking. I thought I had been given a real

opportunity here today to talk about some of the more striking, standout, prominent and eminent election commitments that have been delivered in my region. On that basis, I will quickly and briefly talk about some of those election commitments.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr RAMSAY — Mr O'Brien provided some research documents to help me with that terminology, and I thank him for that.

In the debate on the previous motion, in relation to the east–west link, I referred to the importance of having infrastructure that will ease traffic congestion on the access point to the West Gate Bridge, particularly from the western area that I live in and represent. There has been significant investment, and I congratulate the state and federal governments and the federal coalition for their work in relation to the duplication of the Princes Highway west. There has been a significant investment of nearly \$800 million in the leg from Waurn Ponds to Winchelsea and in the commitment to the second leg from Winchelsea to Colac.

Another election commitment was a \$1 billion project for the Western Highway. The duplication is well under way through the Beaufort-Burrumbeet area on the way to Ararat. It is pleasing to see the commitment and the significant capital investment in infrastructure represented by the construction and duplication of these highways. The state of Victoria has a nexus between its financial hub in the CBD and the western corridor, which encompasses growth zones that need a quick and efficient transport system. This is not only the case for roads but also, importantly, as Mr Barber has expressed on numerous occasions, the ongoing investment in the upgrade of rail tracks and train sets.

In the spirit of the motion as I understood it, I thought it would be worthwhile highlighting some significant investments in this government's election commitments which have been made in two years — just two budgets. I am happy to report that in the Western Victoria Region, which includes Ballarat and the greater Ballarat area, we have delivered 98.6 per cent of all the election commitments announced pre-election. I have been tracking this list during my tenure to make sure we actually deliver on all those election commitments by 2014.

I am happy to report that we have delivered on election commitments like the commitment of \$1.8 million for the refurbishment and expansion of Ballarat District Nursing and Healthcare. I see the Minister for Health, David Davis, is in the chamber; he was a strong

advocate for this investment and commitment and was there at its opening. Just recently the minister was also at the opening of the Ballan District Health and Care redevelopment — —

Hon. D. M. Davis — What did the lower house local member of Parliament say about that outstanding development? He was opposed to it.

Mr RAMSAY — He was never exactly supportive of it, Minister. I turn to the leadership program implemented by the Committee for Ballarat. The government has delivered some wonderful leadership programs throughout the state and it provided a \$800 000 grant for the delivery of the Ballarat program. We committed \$2 million to the Ballarat Regional Soccer Facility and we have actually embedded \$3.1 million into that facility. We are looking for the federal government through Regional Development Australia to complete that project so it will be ready to host games at the 2015 AFC Asian Cup.

The Minister for Water, Peter Walsh, was in Ballarat the other day to launch the integrated water cycle management project for Central Highlands Water. As was promised, there has been a regional office of the Department of Premier and Cabinet in Ballarat for two years. It was committed to and has been delivered.

Turning to the Creswick Bowling Club, members may recall this little bowling club suffered three floods in September, January and March. I am pleased to say that not only did we commit \$300 000 to the club but we also committed \$600 000 for its relocation to the Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve.

I had the pleasure of opening the 150th year celebrations at the Buninyong Botanic Gardens with \$50 000 allocated for the memorial gates and dry stone wall. It is a lovely feature that exemplifies what is good about the Western District and the volcanic plains with their windmills and dry stone walls.

Mr Barber — I love windmills. Let's get some more windmills!

Mr RAMSAY — This is to pump water, not power, Mr Barber; there is a significant difference. I was happy to launch the *Kyneton Food and Wine Directory* which received funding of \$40 000. We have heard about the natural gas connections. Obviously a considerable amount of work has been done in relation to the economic delivery of natural gas to the 12 designated towns. I am happy to say that tenders are now being sought for some of the towns that have more difficult terrains. These towns will be connected to natural gas,

either directly through the mains or through a reticulated system from a tank.

The community called for a helipad at the Ballarat Base Hospital. Again I refer to the Minister for Health, who convened a working group to look at the possible options. The group delivered a recommendation to the minister, and I am pleased to say it is a commitment which will be fulfilled in relation to the extension of the ambulatory care service, increased bed numbers, a new car park and the helipad. They were committed to in 2010 and are being delivered as we speak. During its 11 years in government Labor talked about a helipad but was not able to deliver it.

I have 4 minutes left so I will talk about some other wonderful projects in the region. Labor has been trying to nitpick our election commitments, which typifies the motion it put forward today, because the reality suggests that the state government is well advanced in funding and delivering on its election commitments. A classic example is where the member for Ballarat West in the Assembly, Sharon Knight, runs to the *Ballarat Courier* — and she does this on a regular basis — and says, 'The coalition has not delivered. The Napthine government has not delivered the election commitment for the Sebastopol police station'.

If the member for Ballarat West had bothered to either ask us or ask the superintendent of police in Ballarat, she would find that in fact we are looking at a request from the Ballarat City Council, Ballarat police and the emergency services to create an emergency hub in the new growth corridor of Lucas. We will not only be providing a police station but there will also be an emergency service hub for the Country Fire Authority, the State Emergency Service and an ambulance. We are improving on the original commitment, but all the member for Ballarat West can do is criticise us for not delivering that project. She did it purely on the basis of getting media attention. She did not ask the stakeholders why it was not being delivered or find out the progress of that commitment.

That typifies Labor's response to some of these election commitments that are yet to be delivered but are being worked on to improve the original commitments. The announcement of the tender for the Bendigo Hospital and the improvements to that original election commitment means it will have by all estimates \$200 million worth of extra facilities. It is a wonderful opportunity for us to add value. Instead of being critical I considered this motion on the basis that it is an opportunity for us to talk about the wonderful election commitments that have been fulfilled by the Napthine government. They are ongoing commitments and will

be fulfilled over the next two budgets. We look forward to the opportunity to present a new round of election commitments in our next term of government.

Business interrupted pursuant to standing orders.

STATEMENTS ON REPORTS AND PAPERS

**Department of Primary Industries: report
2011–12**

Ms DARVENIZA (Northern Victoria) — I am very pleased to rise and make some comments on the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) annual report 2011–12. Firstly I congratulate DPI staff for their commitment to delivering the programs and policies that promote the sustainable development of Victoria's primary and energy industries. In this report we see that DPI has achieved a number of highlights. For DPI 2011–12 was both challenging and productive. Floods severely impacted large areas of the state, and Victoria had one of its worst outbreaks of Queensland fruit fly.

DPI successfully developed Growing Food and Fibre, a \$61.4 million investment over four years, with \$15.7 million ongoing in subsequent years. The benefits of this program to the dairy, grain, red meat and horticultural industries are significant. They include boosting productivity and profitability, and maintaining market access for Victoria's primary industries.

DPI responded effectively to a variety of biosecurity threats, including Queensland fruit fly, green snail and myrtle rust. In September 2011 the green snail pest was discovered in Cobram in northern Victoria and was quickly quarantined and contained. The biggest biodiversity threat was the outbreak of Queensland fruit fly, and Victoria faced one of the worst seasons ever. My electorate of Northern Victoria Region, a well-known fruit-producing region, was hit particularly hard. New quarantine zones were declared around outbreaks, and DPI undertook an extensive program to effectively manage these outbreaks and protect the fruit industry, including major eradication and control programs, and inspections by DPI officers of properties in outbreak areas.

In late February and early March and in June 2012 flooding caused significant large-scale damage to communities across Victoria, including agricultural areas. Communities in northern Victoria bore the brunt of the March floods, and staff from across DPI were deployed during the emergency response to the floods and should be congratulated for their efforts. DPI contacted around 2500 producers within the

flood-affected areas during March and assessed almost 1400 agricultural properties for damage.

DPI also played a major regional coordination role, working with other government agencies, local government and community groups. The DPI made important contributions to the Department of Sustainability and Environment-led Victorian government submission to the draft Murray-Darling Basin plan. It also led the Victorian government submission to the parliamentary inquiry into the capacity of the farming sector to attract and retain young farmers and respond to an ageing workforce. DPI carried out an exhaustive body of work in the dairy industry as the primary research provider in the Dairy Futures Cooperative Research Centre. DPI's achievements this year include the DNA genotyping phase of the 10 000 Holstein Cows Genome Project — a huge achievement.

Sadly the department has undergone significant changes in northern Victoria. Offices in Cobram, Birchip, Kyneton, Ouyen and St Arnaud have closed, and reception service has been slashed in Kerang, Echuca, Swan Hill and Rutherglen. All up, the Liberal-Nationals coalition has slashed 200 DPI jobs, and the Premier has refused to rule out more job losses as a result of the 2013 state budget announcement. These cuts mean an immeasurable loss of knowledge across many industry sectors.

The recent decision by the Premier to merge the departments of primary industries and sustainability and environment will set environmental policy development, protection of threatened and endangered species, sustainability and action on climate change back decades. The merger completely goes against the coalition's 2010 election promise to restore DPI to its rightful status as the lead government agency responsible for all management issues on private land. It is imperative that we consider the impact this will have on our rural and regional communities, because it will not only be primary producers who suffer but the wider community. This is just another example of how members of the Liberal-Nationals coalition fail to understand what is important to rural and regional Victoria.

This is a very good report. I encourage all my parliamentary colleagues to have a read of it, because it is very comprehensive and deals with the diversity, skill and importance of DPI's work.

Family and Community Development Committee: opportunities for participation of Victorian seniors

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — It gives me a lot of pleasure to speak on the government response to the Family and Community Development Committee's report on its inquiry into opportunities for participation of Victorian seniors. At the outset I must say how encouraging the government response to the report is. The government has looked at the recommendations and answered those recommendations with great thought and insight. Government members have looked at the issues that have been raised with a great deal of responsibility, and they have been very complimentary about the report, which was pleasing to see because the committee members worked extremely hard on this inquiry and we learnt a great deal.

It is particularly salutary to understand how many seniors there are in this state and country. As I have said before, it was disconcerting to hear someone say during this inquiry that a senior Victorian is anyone over 45 years of age. That aside, we received some very productive information, which I will refer to this evening. The report was tabled in August 2012. One of the things that came through quite a lot in the discussions with the people who presented to the committee was the issue of the silo mentality in governments and how complex it is to get through these silos. People felt it was very tiresome to have to explain their stories to so many government departments. They said the silos themselves were inhibitors to getting better delivery of service. We heard that in a number of cases, but this situation occurs not only in the aged-care sector and to senior Victorians.

As I have told members of this chamber before, I was instrumental in the establishment of the state disability plan, so I know that people with a disability across Victoria are saying the same thing. Having a whole range of silos means that to get service delivery smooth and transparent is very difficult. I am very proud to say that the state disability plan engaged with 11 ministries and portfolio areas, with both the ministers and the department heads, to make quite certain we could break down some of those barriers and have a smooth implementation process and a joined-up government response, so I was particularly pleased to see the government's response to the committee's seniors report.

I will go over what it was that we found. I refer to page 90 and the heading 'Partnership across levels of government'. It was pointed out by so many different

people how complex this is. For example, the Retirement Villages Association told the committee:

Current planning systems are driven by the state and implemented at local level. This system is not conducive to accelerated planning to ensure housing is delivered in an appropriate range of formats for older people and in the locations they wish to live (and age in place).

There was also a recognition of the home and community care (HACC) system. Victoria's HACC system is quite different to those in every other state. Here in Victoria there is a great involvement and delivery of service from local councils. In every other state it is quite different; they do not have quite the same level of contact with the local councils. The committee was told by National Seniors Australia that:

Victoria has the highest number of people receiving HACC services of any state or territory, with numbers growing in the order of 5 per cent per year. Local government is the largest public sector provider of HACC services.

... assistance offered through HACC varies considerably across the state.

That is another area that is important.

Committee members travelled to the United Kingdom and the Netherlands and learnt that there is a cabinet committee and a senior executive group in the United Kingdom government charged with the responsibility of furthering policy relating to ageing and older people. They focus on joined-up government. The Family and Community Development Committee's recommendation 3.6 to the government is:

... that the Victorian government establishes a central lead agency in the form of a commissioner for older people, reporting to the lead minister for older people, and with the authority to:

oversee activities across agencies and promote joined-up practices and partnership with other levels of government ...

I was very pleased to see the response. It states:

The ministerial advisory committee, through the commissioner, will report to the Minister for Ageing, who is the lead minister for the health and wellbeing of older people, including their participation. The commissioner and the ministerial advisory committee will be supported by the Department of Health. The achievements of the commissioner will be included in the Department of Health's annual report to the Victorian Parliament.

I am very pleased to see that response.

Ambulance Victoria: report 2011–12

Mr EIDEH (Western Metropolitan) — I rise to speak on Ambulance Victoria's 2011–12 annual report.

It was pleasing to see that this organisation, despite its setbacks in the past year, has continued to deliver high-quality services to all residents across the state. I must congratulate Ambulance Victoria's chair, Just Stoelwinder, and his fellow members of the board for their leadership over this period. I also would like to extend congratulations to its chief executive officer, Greg Sassella. I doubt that anyone in this house would question the importance of ambulance officers or the call support staff who send them on their lifesaving missions. Their round-the-clock hard work is immeasurable, and I thank them. In addition to these important individuals, on behalf of Victoria I also thank those in the community who help and contribute to Ambulance Victoria, such as the auxiliaries, donors and volunteers. Without their hard work Ambulance Victoria would not be able to save millions of Victorians on a yearly basis.

In its last financial year Ambulance Victoria proudly responded to more than 5.5 million Victorians located across an area of over 227 000 square kilometres and attended just under 802 000 incidents, which is an increase of 1.7 per cent over the previous year. This included just under 130 000 emergency road incidents in the five rural regions, 355 507 emergency road incidents in the metropolitan region and 4418 emergency air incidents. These figures are a testament to the hard work that Victorian paramedics do on a daily basis, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

Despite this, with the population continuing to grow naturally there has been an increase in the demand for services. The annual report indicates that this has been due to an ageing population, an increased incidence of chronic disease and, unfortunately, a decrease in the availability of health services, which is most prevalent in regional areas. Despite this increase in demand, the government has not committed any further funding to this important organisation. Instead, by decreasing membership fees and increasing outstanding fees, the government has in essence taken money out of this vital system.

Despite the report indicating that a total of 273 new university graduate paramedics are joining the team, the Napthine government has plans to cut the Ambulance Victoria five-day driver induction program in 2014. Did this government forget to consider the financial backlash this would have? New recruits will not have this vital training for their own and their patients' safety. Again Victorians are able to witness this government's lack of understanding of the importance of education. How can we expect Victorians across the state to deliver the best possible care when this

government is failing to provide the resources? What is next?

On 1 July 2008 Labor united all three sectors of the Victorian ambulance services. On 24 August 2011 the Minister for Health, David Davis, appointed a new board, which he in turn hoped would create a new start for the organisation. I ask: will this be a new start for Ambulance Victoria with a decreased budget allocation, decreased resources and fewer recruits? I certainly hope not. It certainly will not be the start of better pay and working conditions. Victorian paramedics are the most skilled in the country, and yet they remain the worst paid in Australia. A recent study which surveyed 600 paramedics found a staggering 55 per cent expected to leave the industry in the next few years due to poor working conditions. This is terrible for them, their families and our state.

However, I do not wish to overshadow the efforts of the hardworking paramedics across the state, which this annual report has recognised. Unquestionably many Victorian lives have been saved thanks to our paramedics. I know that every single member of this Parliament would hope that if their loved ones needed the help of a paramedic, an ambulance would arrive to deliver vital health care in a timely fashion. I hope that this government reflects on this during its budget considerations. Paramedics need the government's support to ensure that they continue to save lives. I commend the report to the house.

Auditor-General: Allocation of Electronic Gaming Machine Entitlements

Mr ONDARCHIE (Northern Metropolitan) — How timely it is that I rise to speak after Mr Eideh, who talked about issues with delivery. I rise to make a statement on the Auditor-General's report of June 2011 entitled *Allocation of Electronic Gaming Machine Entitlements*. A finding of the report is that 27 300 10-year gaming licences were issued for \$980 million. The Auditor-General estimated the value of those licences to be between \$3.7 billion and \$4.5 billion, a revenue loss to Victorian taxpayers of approximately \$3 billion. That is \$3 billion that this state could have done with, but because of the failings of the Bracks and Brumby and Lenders governments Victorians were short-changed by \$3 billion. The opposition sits here today talking about what should have been delivered. I ask Mr Eideh what could have been delivered with that extra \$3 billion.

At the time Mr Lenders was the Treasurer and Tony Robinson, the former member for Mitcham in the Assembly, was the Minister for Gaming. The Leader of

the Opposition and member for Mulgrave in the Assembly, Daniel Andrews, was also a Minister for Gaming during the term of the previous government. Mr Lenders issued a press release on 20 May 2010 in which he accused the then Baillieu-led opposition of being hypocritical about the revenue associated with the gaming machine licence auction. He said the opposition's claims that the gaming machine entitlement auction raised less money than expected did not stack up against the projected auction figures. He said that claims the government raised less than the government expected from the entitlement auction were also wrong and that the evidence of that was in the budget.

Who got it right: Mr Lenders or the Auditor-General? In fact, when the then Baillieu opposition claimed that the revenue raised from the auction was less than expected, it was right. In his press release of 20 May 2010 Mr Lenders said:

The opposition's complaints that this government raised less than we expected from the auction are untrue ...

In fact they were indeed true. When you add the \$3 billion shortfall — the \$3 billion that Victorians could have used — to the massive failings of the previous government over 11 years, you wonder what could have been delivered for Victoria. In particular the previous government failed the residents of Northern Metropolitan Region, which I represent.

Add to that the mismanagement of the desalination plant, which will cost Victorians \$1.8 million a day for the next 27 years in interest charges, and the monumental mismanagement of the Melbourne Markets relocation project that saw a cost blow-out of millions of dollars as identified by the Auditor-General. But that is okay because the Premier, Dr Napthine, and the Minister for Major Projects, Mr Hodggett, have fixed it. This government has had to fix the disastrous mismanagement of ICT projects such as the myki ticketing system, which saw a \$1.44 billion cost blow-out. We saw the ineptitude of Labor's financial mismanagement with a \$1.1 billion blow-out in regional rail. There were blow-outs of \$360 million in the cost of roads such as the M1 upgrade and funding black holes. The Minister for Health, David Davis, knows about the funding black hole that is associated with hospitals such as the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre and the Royal Children's Hospital ICT project that was left for him to fix.

The personal myki ticketing system of the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, Daniel Andrews, known as HealthSMART, has seen blow-outs of \$243 million, and the Auditor-General found there was no business

case for that project. There was no appropriate rigour in relation to the north-south pipeline with more than \$1 billion of taxpayers funds being spent on blatant political advertising by the previous government.

We need services in the north. We need an improvement in health services, and I know Minister Davis is working on that. We need improvements to education services, and I know the Minister for Education, Mr Dixon, is working on that. We need another secondary school for the Mernda and Doreen area; people there have been crying out for it. In my two years in this place people in my electorate have been telling me that we are 10 years behind where we need to be in terms of infrastructure for the northern suburbs of Melbourne. What could we have done with the extra \$3 billion? We could have delivered the services that Victorians are looking for. But the previous Bracks and Brumby governments failed us. Ms Mikakos and Danielle Green, the member for Yan Yean in the Assembly, carp every day about what needs to be done. What could they have done with the \$3 billion?

Budget update: report 2012–13

Ms PULFORD (Western Victoria) — In his contribution, Mr Ondarchie made some comments on the Auditor-General's report entitled *Allocation of Electronic Gaming Machine Entitlements* and canvassed a wide-ranging number of subjects. I would have to say he was pretty loose with the truth. On this occasion I was planning to say a few words about the budget update for 2012–13, which has been kindly listed on the notice paper by my good friend and colleague Mr Leane. I would like to take the opportunity to respond to Mr Ondarchie's complete disregard of the bit in the Auditor-General's report which talks about the legislative requirements that were placed on the gaming machine auction process by this chamber.

In his contribution Mr Ondarchie omitted to mention that a major factor in the allocation of those entitlements was that a very large number of the machines had been through an earlier pre-auction stage, which was a direct consequence of the negotiations that occurred in this place on the legislation that was being considered here. Indeed the then shadow Minister for Gaming, Michael O'Brien, now the Treasurer, claimed credit for those changes.

The Leader of The Nationals in the other place and members of The Nationals in this place also claimed credit for them. There was a victory lap across regional Victoria and a huge victory lap in this chamber. The

former shadow minister, who has also been known to run the lines that Mr Ondarchie was running today, issued a media release saying how fabulous he was because of his great success in having the legislation amended while it was going through the Parliament. Mr Barber was involved in that as well. Mr Ondarchie omitted to mention that in his comments. When government members talk about a \$3 billion hole in the budget from that process, I think they are being a little loose with the truth.

I will get back to what I was planning to say before I was provoked into responding to Mr Ondarchie. This is the last week before the budget, so Victorians await with interest —

Hon. D. M. Davis — The last sitting week.

Ms PULFORD — Thank you, Mr Davis; it is the last sitting week before the budget. I think Victorians are waiting with great interest to see whether some of the cosmetic changes that the government has made recently will change the direction of the state. This financial year, which is coming to an end, has been characterised by debate around health, education and the state of our economy. In health, as members would know, the government has cut \$616 million.

Hon. D. M. Davis interjected.

Ms PULFORD — I am glad the Minister for Health is here to join the debate. He is unable to identify the location of a single hospital bed, and we know the waiting lists story.

In education, the big story out of the budget last year was of course the wholesale destruction of TAFE, for which the government has made no apology and seeks to provide no explanation. It is just outrageous —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms PULFORD — Clearly government members are a little sensitive about this, as they should be. The government's lack of leadership and lack of vision for the economic future of the state has been a hallmark of this financial year. The budget, which will be handed down in the next sitting week, is an opportunity for the government to get the show back on the road. It is little wonder that the government has failed in health, education and job creation both here in Melbourne in terms of major projects and across regional Victoria, where momentum has been lost as it has lurched from crisis to crisis since budget day last year.

Municipal Association of Victoria: report 2011–12

Mr FINN (Western Metropolitan) — In rising to speak today on the Municipal Association of Victoria annual report 2011–12, it occurs to me that the role of the Municipal Association of Victoria has expanded quite significantly over the years. I recall the days when local council was referred to in terms of roads, rubbish and rates, but these days we see local councils involved in economic development, community harmony — whatever that might be — and environmental works. In terms of the environmental work that a number of councils do, and a lot of them do some great work, unfortunately a significant number of them have fallen for the great green con. That is a tragedy because the money is going to fight something that does not actually exist, namely, global warming, instead of going into providing a proper environment for the ratepayers of those municipalities.

Of course there has been an expanded role in planning for local councils despite the efforts of the previous government which tried desperately hard to squeeze councils out of planning altogether. It occurs to me that some councils might need to go back to basics; perhaps they have gone a little bit too far beyond the reach of where councils should be. When I see councils debating motions on foreign affairs and condemning foreign governments and all that sort of nonsense, I do not think that serves the ratepayers as well as perhaps councils did when they were talking about roads, rubbish and rates as they used to.

Libraries have been an important part of local government for some years, and it is worth pointing out that this government, the Liberal-Nationals government, upped the ante by \$3 million in the last budget. There is a library being built in Sunshine, just at the back of my electorate office, and I anticipate I will be attending the opening of that in the not-too-distant future, just as I attended the announcement of that by the Minister for Local Government, Jeanette Powell. That would have been just last year, so they have really got a wriggle on.

You would have to say that Brimbank has come a fairly long way in a relatively short period of time because —

Hon. D. M. Davis — And I think Natalie Suleyman is coming here.

Mr FINN — I might get to that, Mr Davis, because I am sure the house would recall that Brimbank was giving local government a very bad name. There was

corruption, there were shenanigans, there was shysterism and all manner of things going on at that council that led the government of the day to sack that council and appoint administrators. I am pleased to say that the most recent group of administrators that have taken over in Brimbank are doing an exceptionally good job. Certainly we do not see the sort of carry-on we had associated with the Brimbank City Council over a long time. We do not see party politics being put ahead of the people.

It is of great concern to me that those days, which may be behind us, might come back. It concerns me even more when I hear that, despite all the contempt that was shown to the people of Brimbank by that council, the then mayor of the Brimbank council, Cr Natalie Suleyman, is being touted as a potential member of this house. Can one believe that the Labor Party would nominate somebody like Natalie Suleyman, who held the people of Brimbank in such contempt and treated them so badly, to be a member of this house and represent those same people? How rotten is the Labor Party that it would even contemplate doing such a thing? How deeply does the Labor Party hold the people of the west in contempt when it would consider putting somebody like Natalie Suleyman in this house to represent the people she used to rub under her feet as dirt?

This is quite a good report, and I commend it to the house.

Auditor-General: *Management of Freshwater Fisheries*

Mr ELASMAR (Northern Metropolitan) — I rise to speak on the Auditor-General's report entitled *Management of Freshwater Fisheries*, which is dated March 2013. Today it is safe to say that people who recreationally or commercially fish are mainly men. It is both a sport and an industry that takes time and patience. It has elements of tranquillity coupled with excitement that once experienced is never forgotten. In Victoria the recreational angler and the fishing industry, which includes hatcheries, contribute about \$825 million to our economy. As many as 40 percent of the estimated 720 000 fishers are private anglers who enjoy their sport in Victorian waters. This is a significant number.

The Auditor-General's report highlights a number of serious problems in the former Department of Primary Industries (DPI). According to the report of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) it would seem that generally DPI failed in its legislative requirement to develop an ecosystem and a sustainable

fishing industry for Victoria's future generations of anglers. Notwithstanding DPI's efforts to restock hatcheries for recreational purposes, the number of freshwater fish continues to decline. This situation is not entirely the fault of DPI, because, as the VAGO report explains, in 2011 an extensive package of reforms to improve the management of freshwater fish hatcheries failed to materialise due to a lack of support from key fishing industry groups. Unfortunately for Victoria and the industry as a whole, the department was unable to convince those splinter factions to get behind the reforms that would have clearly benefited them.

The Auditor-General has made nine recommendations in his report, and while all the recommendations are worthy of implementation, recommendation 4 incorporates a comprehensive and logical framework to arrest the decline and improve the long-term sustainability of the Victorian freshwater fishing industry. It would seem that fisheries and wildlife, as it used to be called, later known as DPI and now known as the Department of Environment and Primary Industries, was living on a day-to-day philosophy with no integrated strategies or long-term plans to ensure the survival of freshwater fishing both as an industry and as a popular Victorian sport. I can only hope the minister will intervene and arrest this decline and somehow pull all the parties together in a proactive and productive way to save a flagging and waning industry from disappearing completely.

Budget update: report 2012–13

Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I wish to make a statement on the *2012–13 Victorian Budget Update*. Today there has been a long discussion around election commitments the coalition made in its pitch to the electorate about what it would deliver if it were elected to form government. One of those commitments was that it would ease the cost of living. Unfortunately in this budget update the facts are there: the government has done the opposite by increasing motor vehicle registration fees, which flies — —

Mr Barber — You have to tax something!

Mr LEANE — I understand that there has got to be something to tax, but it sort of flies against the promise to ease cost of living pressures. I am a bit surprised too that in the cost-saving measures of this budget update there was a cut to funding for managed disability accommodation. I appreciate, as Mr Barber said, that funds need to come from somewhere, but I am sure that he would agree with me that this is not an area that needs to be particularly looked at and perhaps there

could be some cost savings in other areas. It is a little bit disappointing that those cuts to managed disability accommodation were brought forward in this budget update.

Also in the forecasted funding there will be a massive cut in relation to aged-care facilities. I understand that \$75 million will be cut from public aged-care facilities in metropolitan areas as predicted in the forward estimates. I am surprised that the government would take that particular position as aged care is something that needs more, not less, funding into the future. It is surprising considering that, as I said before, this government came to office with a number of commitments made to the electorate in the 2010 election campaign, but unfortunately, as we see in this budget update, all it delivers is a cost increase to motorists for their vehicle registration and cuts to services in some pretty important areas. It does not deliver the government's commitment to implement the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission recommendations lock, stock and barrel, as was promised by the government. It does not have any money for the new hospital beds that were promised by the Minister for Health, Mr Davis, and it does not deliver any of the commitments that the coalition made on coming to government.

In saying that, this is a budget update and the full budget will be delivered in the next sitting week of Parliament. Perhaps I am being a bit too critical and that those big-ticket commitments will be funded when the new Treasurer hands down his budget in the next sitting week. I look forward to that and I hope it happens. There are some government commitments that I look forward to and I am sure all the community looks forward to them. We are holding our breath in anticipation.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the house do now adjourn.

Rail: Lynbrook station

Mr SOMYUREK (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Kim Wells, regarding the security around Lynbrook railway station. As a resident of Lynbrook I was relieved when the former Labor government funded and built the Lynbrook railway station as, like most Lynbrook residents and residents from surrounding suburbs, I had been waiting

many years for the construction of the station. However, the joy of having a train station conveniently located on the edge of our estate has been tempered in recent times by the alcohol-fuelled violent behaviour of, mainly, youths disembarking at Lynbrook station, particularly on Saturday nights. In view of the above I ask the minister to implement the necessary measures to ensure this violent behaviour does not continue around the Lynbrook train station, which is located in an otherwise idyllic setting with local recreational facilities being enjoyed by young families only a few hundred metres away from the railway station.

Health: federal funding

Mrs PETROVICH (Northern Victoria) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Health, the Honourable David Davis — I am glad that he is here tonight in the chamber — and relates to the long-term impacts on the Victorian health sector following the 2012–13 federal government health cuts.

Mr Leane — They put the money back.

Mrs PETROVICH — We wish! Since January the commonwealth government has backflipped on its decision to cut \$107 million from the Victorian health sector, but the damage has already been done. In my electorate the Kilmore, Seymour, Bendigo, Northern and Mildura hospitals are all examples of hospitals that have been severely disadvantaged by the federal health cuts. Essential health services in the Bendigo community have also been severely disadvantaged: \$100 000 was cut from mental health services, surgery waiting lists hit 1500 and 24 beds were forced to close. Bendigo health services are still recovering from the effects of these cuts, yet, like many other health services across the country, Bendigo will be hit again by more federal health cuts.

As at 1 July the Gillard federal government is committed to cutting a further \$368 million of funding from the health sector over the next three years, and again it is the hospitals, the health services and the people of Victoria who are forced to bear the brunt of the Gillard government's mismanagement. Waiting times are up due to the commonwealth cuts, critically ill patients are being forced to wait for lifesaving surgeries and hospitals are now understaffed.

The recent Senate inquiry into the commonwealth's decision to cut health funding in states across Australia condemns the Gillard government and supports statements made by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Victorian government. The independent Senate inquiry described the commonwealth government's

actions as 'extraordinary and indeed indefensible'. A direct quotation from the inquiry provides — —

Ms Broad interjected.

Mrs PETROVICH — You should be advocating for your community, Ms Broad, as I am now. A direct quotation from the inquiry provides a level of insight into the findings of this report and the extent to which the Gillard government has deceived the Australian people. It says:

... the states signed up in good faith to the funding agreements, but the commonwealth pursued politically motivated funding cuts to improve its financial position at the expense of public hospital users.

The negligence and poor planning of the Gillard Labor government has and continues to put the lives of Victorians at risk. Labor members in this very house voted only last year in support of these irresponsible cuts — neglecting the needs of their own communities. Candy Broad and Kaye Darveniza — and Joanne Duncan, the member for Macedon in the other place — should be ashamed. I am proud to say that I am a member of a party that believes in the rights of the individual and believes in accountability. I ask that the minister provide details of the long-term impacts of the federal government's health funding cuts.

Bayside planning scheme: amendment

Ms PENNICUIK (Southern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy. The water sensitive urban design policy, clause 22.08 of the Bayside planning scheme, is scheduled to expire on 31 May this year. At its 17 July 2012 meeting council resolved to write to the Minister for Planning requesting that he:

... executes his powers pursuant to section 20(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to prepare and approve an amendment to the Bayside planning scheme to make the water sensitive urban design (stormwater management) local policy at clause 22.08 of the Bayside planning scheme a permanent provision by removing the expiry provision at subclause 22.08-6 of the policy.

The above resolution followed a meeting of councillors with the minister in which he indicated he would take the matter on notice. Council subsequently lodged a formal request, pursuant to section 20(4) of the Planning and Environment Act, to prepare and approve an amendment removing the expiry subclause from the policy. This request, known as amendment C121, was lodged on 4 September 2012, and council is yet to receive a formal response from the Minister for Planning or his department regarding its request.

Departmental staff have advised the council that the matter is yet to be progressed.

I have previously championed this issue, which in another iteration was called amendment C44. I raised it with the previous government in July 2007 and September 2008, and I again stand here asking a Minister for Planning to make this a permanent feature of the Bayside planning scheme.

This council was a pioneer in preparing water sensitive urban development policy when there was no comparable direction provided in state policy. This policy has subsequently been used by other councils that have either introduced or are preparing policies based on the Bayside policy. Bayside council continues to receive a positive response to the requirements of the policy from applicants, with a positive level of compliance achieved as part of relevant planning permit applications. This was confirmed by research undertaken by the council in 2011.

The need for this amendment to become a permanent provision is urgent as it is due to expire on 31 May. I ask the minister to remove the sunset clause and introduce the policy as a permanent provision of the Bayside planning scheme.

Fire services levy: reform

Mr ELASMAR (Northern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Local Government. Due to changes last year to fire and emergency services financial arrangements the fire services levy is due to be collected by local councils across Victoria from 1 July 2013. Over the last few weeks I have been contacted by constituents in my electorate who are fearful of not receiving proportional refunds from insurance companies which have already charged full-year premiums for the fire services levy. Local councils are concerned about what support the government will provide to them as collectors of the new charge and need support from government during the transition. I ask that the minister work with local councils to ensure that ratepayers are not worse off under the new arrangements and will not lose out financially.

Medical research: funding

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter this evening is for the Minister for Health. It concerns funding implications for medical research institutes after an imposition from the federal government. I know the minister is very supportive of research institutes in Victoria — for example, the

Burnet, the Baker and the Walter and Eliza Hall institutes. He has been a great advocate for all of them and understands the necessity for medical research in Australia, particularly in Victoria.

The institutes not only do amazing work in progressive identification of diseases and disease control but for a significant time Victoria has been known internationally for punching above its weight because of the excellence of our research scientists and all concerned in these areas. A range of people in this area have been international leaders in this field, and we can see today some of the work that Victorian research scientists are doing in a whole range of areas, Alzheimer's being one of them. We are once again leaders in the field.

However, this research cannot be done without a considerable amount of funding, and as everybody in this chamber would well and truly understand — and I am sure the minister does too — the problem with funding is that you have to have certainty. You have to know that you can employ those research scientists and that they will have the materials they need to conduct the research they need to do and that keeps us in the international position we enjoy. It is therefore very concerning to see yet another example of the federal government trying to cost save to fill the huge black hole of its deficit.

I remind the chamber that when the Howard and Costello federal government was in power it delivered a \$96 billion surplus. We are now over \$330 billion in deficit. It is just extraordinary. Now the federal government is trying to scrimp and save on everything it possibly can. In this instance, the people who are being hurt are the research institutes. The federal government has made significant changes to their funding mechanisms and is now going to pay the research institutes on a monthly basis rather than a quarterly basis. In fact there is going to be a \$70 million shortfall across the country. But, most importantly, the federal government is going to pay the institutes in arrears. How can our researchers do the work they need to do?

The action I seek from the minister is that he advocate vigorously to the federal government to ensure fairness at all costs and to fix this funding anomaly.

Mental health: Seymour services

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — The matter I raise is for the attention of the Minister for Mental Health, Ms Wooldridge, and it relates to concerns that are being expressed by residents and health

professionals in Seymour and the surrounding areas about plans to provide them with substandard access to mental health services. Labor's parliamentary secretary to the shadow Minister for Health, Wade Noonan, who is the member for Williamstown in the Assembly, has met with mental health staff in Seymour who expressed their concerns about plans to downgrade mental health services for the southern Hume region, including Seymour.

Their concerns, which relate to these plans by the Victorian Liberal-Nationals coalition government — I will refer again to the Victorian government and what might happen in the Victorian budget in a moment — to remove the on-call after-hours service, are that they believe it will result in more mentally ill people being transported to Shepparton and Melbourne for treatment, which is not acceptable. In addition, they have spoken directly — and they are clinicians — about their efforts to have the local member, Ms Cindy McLeish, the member for Seymour in the Assembly, meet with them. They have not had a response, which is obviously totally unacceptable to the Seymour-based clinicians.

As a result the union representing Victoria's psychiatric nurses and mental health professionals, the Health and Community Services Union, is calling on Ms McLeish and the Premier, Dr Napthine, to support mental health services in Seymour and the surrounding region in the forthcoming Victorian budget to ensure that this downgrading of services and the plans which are being talked about to remove the after-hours service do not occur, bearing in mind that families affected by mental illness do not only have this need for services during business hours. There needs to be access to services around the clock, and not having access to after-hours services would, in anyone's terms, be a second-rate, unsafe and unacceptable approach to providing services for Seymour and the surrounding region. I urge the government to provide the necessary budget resources.

Box Hill to Ringwood rail trail: bike track

Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is for the Treasurer, and it concerns some funding for a bike track, known as the eastern rail trail, that was committed to by his government when in opposition prior to the 2010 election. The bike track would run along the rail trail from Box Hill to Ringwood station. I think the coalition committed \$5 million to build this particular trail if it were to be successfully elected to government, which it obviously was.

This is a fantastic project, and it would be great to see it come to fruition as promised. One of the highlights of

this trail is that it would create a link for students between their homes and a number of high schools along that trail. It is also a trail that would intersect the EastLink bike track which, as members know, runs from Ringwood all the way to the Mornington Peninsula. It is a great facility. I am not sure that people particularly want to ride that far, but it is a good facility for linking bike tracks across the eastern side of town.

Responses

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I have no matters from previous nights, but I have six matters tonight. One is from Mr Somyurek, and it is a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services concerning Lynbrook station. Mr Somyurek claims there is violence, particularly alcohol-fuelled violence, on Saturday nights, and that necessary measures need to be invoked to stop the violence. I will pass that matter to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. However, members of the chamber would be interested to note that it was the coalition that committed to put protective services officers (PSOs) on railway stations to ensure that there is greater safety. Labor pooh-poohed the idea and opposed that step. I am not sure whether Lynbrook is one of the stations that is very close to getting its PSOs, but they are being rolled out ahead of schedule across the metropolitan area and in key regional centres.

I can see the need for security on our railway stations, and I can assure Mr Somyurek and his community that the state government is determined to make sure that people are safe. That is why we are putting PSOs on railway stations. The theory is that Labor will remove the PSOs if it were ever elected to government again, because it has always hated the idea of PSOs and has opposed them from day one and continues to viciously oppose them.

A matter was raised for my attention by Mrs Petrovich concerning the long-term impact of cuts by the federal government. The chamber will well know that the federal government cut funding to Victoria; \$107 million was taken — —

Mr Leane interjected.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — Mr Leane should know that it has not all been put back. A number of country hospitals do not have the money, and a check very late yesterday and again this morning has revealed that even hospitals like the Royal Women's Hospital have not received their funding from the federal government as promised — almost \$2 million. They are still waiting, week after week. Mr Leane disgracefully voted in

favour of the cuts, and he should hang his head in shame.

Mrs Petrovich has been a very strong advocate for Northern Victoria Region in ensuring that those cuts are reversed. I am pleased to say that the federal government did reverse the \$107 million, but the \$368 million share of the \$475 million cut based on falling population in Victoria has yet to be corrected. We need the federal government to indicate that it will put the money back beginning 1 July. Around \$100 million will be taken out of Victorian hospitals next financial year — money that was promised by the federal government — and that is a significant cut in funding from what it had earlier promised.

I indicate to Mrs Petrovich that I will certainly fight to ensure that this does not occur, that the money is restored to the full, promised level and that the long-term impacts that she points to of the federal government reducing its promised money are reversed by the step of the federal government putting the money back, as it should, whether it be to the Northern Hospital, whether it be to Seymour hospital or whether it be to Mildura Base Hospital, which I can indicate to Mr Leane has not been paid as late as today. Mrs Petrovich can be very assured of that. Key hospitals in Victoria have not received the money — for example, Mildura hospital is owed more than \$1 million by the federal government, and that money has not yet been put back in.

Ms Pennicuik raised a matter for the Minister for Planning, Mr Guy, about water sensitive urban design in the Bayside City Council area. I am very familiar with this as I was a shadow environment minister and shadow planning minister; I also represent Southern Metropolitan Region, as do Mrs Coote and Ms Pennicuik. I am aware of the good work that has been done by the Bayside council in terms of water sensitive urban design policy. I know for a fact that the planning minister is also aware of those matters. I will make sure that he is aware of this matter and responds as Ms Pennicuik has sought in terms of an amendment and other steps. I will pass this matter to him.

Mr Elasmr raised a matter for the attention of the Minister for Local Government, concerning the fire services levy. He talked about its impact on individuals. I indicate that insurance companies that misbehave in this process will encounter the full wrath of Professor Fels, who has been appointed as monitor for this matter.

Mr Elasmr also asked about the cost to councils and about ensuring that ratepayers are not worse off. I will

pass the matter formally to the Treasurer so that he can respond in detail, but I can indicate that this is a major reform the government is making. It is part of our response to the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, and we are very aware of its recommendations. I can also indicate strongly that the Treasurer has determined that this is a good outcome for the community. Those who have not paid insurance or who have underinsured will have the opportunity to pay their fair share, and those who have paid their fair share will not be penalised. I make the point to Mr Elasmar that the Treasurer is working hard to put a fairer system in place. I know that Professor Fels will act in the interests of consumers to ensure that insurance companies act in a fair way.

Mrs Coote raised a matter with me as Minister for Health concerning our medical research institutes and the funding implications of federal decisions. It is true that the federal government, in its midyear budget update, changed the funding arrangements for medical research institutes. These are important to Victoria as they provide a vital base for health and medical research, and the federal government's decision to change the funding arrangements is unfortunate indeed. It will result in a \$70 million shortfall in funding to key medical research institutes.

The Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes, headed by Professor Brendan Crabb of our very own Burnet Institute, has spoken out strongly about the impact of these cuts. He has been quoted as saying:

We have had flat funding from the NHMRC ... for the past four or five years ...

Due to recent changes in the payment schedule, the sector is facing an immediate \$140 million in cash-flow deficit. This will translate to an ongoing \$70 million reduction in research outlays this year.

As Mrs Coote correctly outlined, the association will receive 11 payments instead of 12 payments a year, and this will have a significant financial impact.

This is a dumb policy from the federal government. I am certainly well aware of it, and have spoken to a number of people at medical research institutes about it. I intend to formally meet with the association to indicate the Victorian government's support. I know Mrs Coote is aware of the importance of medical research, as is Ms Crozier, with the Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute, the Burnet Institute and other key medical research institutes based in our electorate of Southern Metropolitan Region and in and around Parkville. I do not believe the federal Minister for Health, Tanya Plibersek, or indeed the federal Treasurer

understand the full implications of what they have done. They do not understand that these medical research institutes are in significant measure funded by philanthropy and other additional sources of money. To hit their cash flow and funding in this way is a silly move that deserves to be reversed. The Victorian government will certainly advocate for our medical research institutes. I hope to meet formally with Professor Crabb and others shortly to make it clear that the Victorian government understands the impact of the federal decision and will seek to have it reversed.

Ms Broad raised a matter for the Minister for Mental Health, Ms Wooldridge. It concerns commentary by Wade Noonan, the member for Williamstown in the other place, and I am not sure exactly how much store I would place on that particular commentary. I will pass the matter on. I know that Minister Wooldridge is in close contact with clinicians throughout central Victoria and that she is determined to see good outcomes in terms of mental health. There has been a significant increase in the state budget in that area, and the minister is focused on delivering good outcomes, including after-hours services. I will make sure the matter is passed on to Minister Wooldridge so that she can investigate any details that are relevant for response.

Mr Leane raised a matter for the Treasurer concerning a bike track in the Eastern Metropolitan Region. I am familiar with the inner eastern component of that, which has been talked about. If I may be indulgent, I am not sure that it is formally a matter for the Treasurer; I think the responsibility lies with the Minister for Environment and Climate Change or the Minister for Roads. I will seek advice and, with Mr Leane's indulgence, pass it to the relevant minister.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ondarchie) — Order! The house now stands adjourned.

House adjourned 6.35 p.m.

Thursday, 18 April 2013

The PRESIDENT (Hon. B. N. Atkinson) took the chair at 9.34 a.m. and read the prayer.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Membership

The PRESIDENT — Order! I inform the Council I have received a letter from Mr Edward O'Donohue. He wrote:

I write to tender my resignation as a member of the Accountability and Oversight Committee with immediate effect.

I wish the committee well in its future activities.

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY and MCD UNIVERSITY OF DIVINITY

Reports 2012

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills), by leave, presented reports.

Laid on table.

PAPERS

Laid on table by Clerk:

Adult Multicultural Education Services — Report, 2012.

Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Box Hill Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Centre for Adult Education — Report, 2012.

Chisholm Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Deakin University — Report, 2012.

Driver Education Centre of Australia Ltd — Report, 2012.

East Gippsland Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Gordon Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Holmesglen Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Kangan Batman Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

La Trobe University — Report, 2012.

Monash University — Report, 2012.

Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

RMIT University — Report, 2012.

South West Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Statutory Rule under the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 1998 — No. 38.

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — Documents under section 15 in respect of Statutory Rule No. 38.

Sunraysia Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Swinburne University of Technology — Report, 2012.

University of Ballarat — Report, 2012.

University of Melbourne — Report, 2012.

Victoria University — Report, 2012.

William Angliss Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

Wodonga Institute of TAFE — Report, 2012.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Adjournment

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

That the Council, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, 7 May 2013.

Motion agreed to.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Membership

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — By leave, I move:

That Mr O'Donohue be discharged from the Accountability and Oversight Committee and that Mr Philip Davis be appointed in his place.

Motion agreed to.

MEMBERS STATEMENTS

Police: Mount Waverley station

Mr TARLAMIS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I rise to speak on a notably undelivered and misrepresented election commitment by the government and the member for Mount Waverley in the Assembly regarding community safety in his electorate. Given the member's apparent confusion when it comes to getting the name of his own electorate right — it is 'Mount Waverley', not 'Waverley' — I can understand that he simply may not know the

difference between achieving an election promise and reannouncing it.

A recent post on the member's website describes the 24-hour staffing of and renovations to the Mount Waverley police station as 'closer with funding announcement'. I suppose it is understandable that the member became a little excited. He hopped on Twitter and proudly retweeted the Premier's announcement that the government had delivered 'yet another election commitment to improve community safety'. Bearing in mind that the 24-hour police station was already supposed to have been delivered, I imagine this would have led to a fair bit of confusion among Mount Waverley residents as the station, as it stands, is still only open from 9.00 a.m. until 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday. Five days a week does not equal seven, and 9 to 5 does not equal 24 hours. Not that we should be surprised; after all, what other result might we expect from a government that ripped \$65 million out of the Victoria Police budget?

Unfortunately using political naivety as an excuse will only get you so far, and the member for Mount Waverley should know better. This misleading entry on his website will not fool any of his constituents, who will be only too aware of the fact that he has been talking about this police station for a long time but has been very short on action. I dread to think what other cuts we will see in the forthcoming state budget from this government, which will invariably push other election promises to the side in the vain hope that Victorians will not notice.

Pound–Shrives roads, Hampton Park: safety

Mr SOMYUREK (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I rise once again to request the state government take action to improve the safety of motorists who use the intersection of Pound Road and Shrives Road in Hampton Park. As well as having received many constituents' complaints about this intersection over the years, I continue to have the misfortune of using this intersection occasionally. There are no traffic lights at this busy intersection, which makes turning right out of Pound Road a nightmare in peak hours, and the number of accidents at this intersection reinforces the dangerous nature of this road.

Dandenong Market: rental concession

Mr SOMYUREK — I would like to commend the Dandenong Market for giving its traders a \$100 000-plus rental concession after a public campaign over their financial struggles. However, business is starting to look up for the Dandenong

Market traders, as evidenced by increases in rentals at Dandenong Market outstripping increases at other major Melbourne markets.

Teachers: enterprise bargaining

Mr SOMYUREK — I condemn the Victorian coalition government for taking 18 months to resolve the teachers' pay deal. The former Premier made a promise that he had no intention of delivering. This caused significant disruption to the Victorian school system and the lives of students.

Environment: government performance

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — This government is about to find out how fast you can lose votes when you proudly display your anti-environment colours. It has cut back solar support, made it nearly impossible to propose a new wind farm and set up tenders to sell as much coal as it possibly can. After banning protestors and the media from duck shooting opening day, an illegal massacre of endangered species ensued. On threatened species, the newly updated list shows more than 50 species moving up the list to a more endangered status. The government wants to bulldoze more trees when it should be planting them, and later today it will bring a bill into the Parliament to entrench woodchipping of native forests when nearly everyone in Victoria wants it to end.

Despite two Auditor-General reports saying the Department of Primary Industries failed to enforce environmental protections, the government has put the former Department of Primary Industries in charge of the environment. Transport now means massive new freeways and rail projects deferred indefinitely. The Minister for Environment and Climate Change is invisible but unleashes abuse when challenged. Then there is the group of radical climate change denialists within the government led by Mr Finn, and no member of the coalition has the guts to challenge him, contradict him or tell him to shut up.

An environmental protection plan is a must have for nearly every voter in this state. Leaving aside those vested interests making money out of destruction, almost no-one wants to vote for an anti-environment party. Since the Leader of the Opposition does not have a Green bone in his body, that leaves only one person capable of articulating a policy — that is, the new Premier. I look forward to debating him on the question of the environment, the biggest question of this century.

Holocaust: commemoration

Mrs KRONBERG (Eastern Metropolitan) — On Thursday, 4 April, I was privileged to join members of Melbourne's Jewish community at the commemoration of Yom Hashoah, the Jewish day of remembrance. We witnessed an extremely moving ceremony and were immersed in utterly beautiful singing in Yiddish marking the passing of 70 years since the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. The commemoration was named '70 Years after the Uprising — Voices of Warsaw and Beyond' and was organised by the Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV), which is the peak body of Victorian Jewry, Australia's largest Jewish community. It is important for all Victorians to know about and support the aims of the JCCV, which seeks to attain a better society by promoting understanding between faiths, generating a greater respect for and understanding of the Jewish way of life, ensuring a safer Jewish community and acquiring a better knowledge and appreciation of the Shoah, or as we know it the Holocaust, and its lessons. It is important that a deeper appreciation of Israel's efforts to achieve peace and understanding is developed across the Victorian community.

Monash University: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev partnership

Mrs KRONBERG — On another matter, I attended a profoundly enlightening conference last week in Melbourne, which was conducted as a collaborative venture between Monash University and the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Israel. Having visited the Ben-Gurion university in 2009, I looked forward to the conference, and I was not disappointed. This was a splendid example of cooperation and a driving force in providing a practical and rewarding means of learning from each other and working together. The topic of the conference was sustainability; my area of interest is how sustainability is applied to urban design. I congratulate the organisers of this important milestone event, which also happened to shine a light on the contrast between the behaviour of those involved in this successful event and the appalling behaviour and the mindlessness driven by the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement that has been reported out of the University of Sydney.

Australia Lebanon Chamber of Commerce and Industry: gala ball

Mr ELASMAR (Northern Metropolitan) — On Saturday, 23 March, I was honoured to attend the second anniversary gala ball of the Australia Lebanon Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The night was a

celebration of the bilateral relationship between Australia and Lebanon. The ball was a resounding success, and I congratulate the chamber's president, Mr Faddy Zouky, and the members of the board on a wonderful evening.

Victorian Lebanese Community Council

Mr ELASMAR — On another matter, on Thursday, 28 March, I attended a function organised by the Victorian Lebanese Community Council, which is comprised of policemen and women of Lebanese ancestry. I was pleased to address the gathering, and I am very proud of their achievements; they are an integral part of our Victorian community.

Victorian Amateur Football Association: season launch

Mr ELASMAR — On another matter, the Victorian Amateur Football Association were kind enough to invite me to attend their season launch on Wednesday, 3 April. It was a great night, and I am glad I was in attendance. The president of the association, Mr Michael Hazell, hosted the event. Guest speaker Mr Barry March, president of the Richmond Football Club, gave an inspirational speech. My congratulations go to all the recipients who received certificates of merit. It was a thoroughly enjoyable occasion.

Boston: bombings

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — Today I want to make a statement on what has happened in Boston. People across the world have been shocked by what we have seen happen at the time of the Boston marathon, a very well-established event that is an emblem across the world. Boston is a sister city of Melbourne and a city with which we have much affinity. I refer not only to our history, laws and language but also to a strong history of scientific and medical research and a history of strong universities.

The tragic events that have occurred in Boston in these last few days make it very clear that no peaceful society can take its security for granted. More than 150 people have been injured and there have been a number of deaths, and shock and a terrible horror has descended over the community in Boston. I know the people of Boston. I have visited Boston, and I was incredibly impressed by both the city and the people who live there. I know they will stand up to this sort of intimidation and attack, this great horror. The lesson for all of us is a strong one: we must be vigilant and careful with our security. I know the spirit of the people of

Boston will shine through. I also know that our sympathy as a community is with them.

Liberal Party: McEwen federal candidate

Ms BROAD (Northern Victoria) — I refer to the recent decision of the Liberal Party to endorse a member for Northern Victoria Region, Mrs Petrovich, as the Liberal Party candidate for the federal electorate of McEwen. Given that the Victorian government, led by Mr Baillieu and now Dr Napthine, is struggling to deliver on a multitude of Liberal-Nationals election promises made in 2010, it is not surprising that the Liberal Party has decided not to count on the re-election of the member in the third position on the Liberal-Nationals ticket for Northern Victoria Region. Those promises include the Wallan-Kilmore bypass to the Hume Freeway north of Kilmore, natural gas to Wandong, reducing the cost of living for families, not cutting public sector jobs, making teachers the best paid in Australia — and the list goes on.

While the Liberal Party is perfectly entitled to choose not to take its chances at the 2014 Victorian election in the third position on the Liberal-Nationals ticket for Northern Victoria Region, what it is not entitled to do is put its hands in Victorian taxpayers pockets to fund its campaign for the federal seat of McEwen — —

Mrs Petrovich — On a point of order, President, the member is reflecting on a member — me — and I ask her to withdraw.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I do not believe there has been a personal reflection on Mrs Petrovich in the remarks that have been made. Ms Broad has referred to Mrs Petrovich's selection as a candidate at a federal level, but the remarks that she is making are about the government.

Mrs Petrovich — If I may, President, the remark that I took offence to was that she said I had my hands on the taxpayers money.

The PRESIDENT — Order! Mrs Petrovich, she did not say that.

Mrs Petrovich — She did.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I have got pretty good ears, Mrs Petrovich. Ms Broad did not say that. She referred to the government, not to Mrs Petrovich as a member.

Ms BROAD — The Liberal Party should do the right thing by Victorian taxpayers and pick up the bill for all its candidates' costs from the date of selection.

Hon. D. M. Davis — On a point of order, President, the member is referring to a matter which is analogous to Mr Pakula's situation in the last sitting week in this chamber.

The PRESIDENT — Order! What is the point of order? This is a vexatious point of order. It is designed to try to disrupt the member from making a statement. Members are entitled in their statements to canvass — —

Mr Drum interjected.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I beg your pardon, Mr Drum.

Mr Drum — To say whatever they want.

The PRESIDENT — Pretty much, and indeed you do. In a members statement members are allowed to canvass issues that they regard as something that ought to be put on the record and that ought to be discussed. Ms Broad is talking about government commitments. She has made a reference to Mrs Petrovich, but I do not believe that reference was a personal reflection that was adverse to Mrs Petrovich's position. Her only commentary in respect of Mrs Petrovich's position was that the Victorian government's policies are likely to have some impact on voters' intentions at the next election. Ms Broad is entitled to make that assertion. I might disagree with that, but she is entitled to make that assertion. Mr Davis's point of order is not a point of order. The fact that the situation might be analogous to some other member's circumstances is not a point of order. It is not part of the process or the proceedings of this Parliament. Let us not have those sorts of points of order.

Ms BROAD — While it is at it, the Liberal Party should promise that it will not waste the public funds which were very recently spent on setting up a new electorate office in Woodend by guaranteeing the Liberal Party replacement will not require yet another new office somewhere else at further expense to the taxpayer.

Higher education: federal funding

Mrs PEULICH (South Eastern Metropolitan) — Most Victorians are horrified that the Gillard Labor government has made a decision to slash hundreds of millions of dollars of funding and support from Victorian universities and their students, including the most needy. The federal Labor government has cut over \$6.7 billion from the education budget in just over six months, and Victorian Labor is silent on this. Locally in South Eastern Metropolitan Region the indicative

figures for the Labor government's cuts to Monash University total \$48 million.

The needy students will be burdened with greater debt. Lower socioeconomic status students who get start-up scholarships will have to pay back the value of their assistance after they reach a defined income threshold. That will see this group of students hit with greater debt in their post-study years than other, higher socioeconomic students who were not eligible to receive start-up scholarships.

In addition, thousands of local families will be hit with higher study costs with the abolition of up-front fee discounts. Families that have saved to pay for their children's university fees up-front will now face an instant 10 per cent fee hike. Individuals investing in their own future will now get slugged by the taxman if they dare spend more than \$2000 on further education.

This demonstrates Labor's contempt for people taking their future into their own hands. At a time when Julia Gillard is travelling around the country promoting her third or fourth education revolution she is in fact robbing Peter to pay Paul. In fact what the federal Labor government is doing is robbing the older brother or sister who is at university to pay for the education of younger siblings in primary or secondary schools. It is deplorable, and I urge Victorian voters to see through it.

Baroness Thatcher

Mr FINN (Western Metropolitan) — I rise to express my deep sorrow at the passing of one of the truly great leaders of the past century. Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister of Great Britain when it was not all that great at all. In fact Britain was in a bad way. Years of rampant militant unionism had knocked the UK to the canvas, and it seemed there was no getting up. Mrs Thatcher, as she then was, knew differently. Here was someone with a vision of where she wanted her country to be. She set about instilling her values of hard work and reward for effort and transformed Britain from an economic basket case into a thriving modern economy. She was also determined to support freedom wherever she could and, along with President Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II, she helped create the environment in which the Iron Curtain would crumble and millions would know liberty for the first time. She was a strong leader who served her nation and the world in the way leaders should.

Just as Baroness Thatcher showed us the heights of human achievement, the rabble that has celebrated her death in Britain and elsewhere, including Australia, has displayed the depths to which humanity can sink. Short

of the nutbags at the Westboro Baptist Church, I have never before seen anything like what we have witnessed from the extreme left over the past week or so. For the political left hatred is oxygen. Without something or someone to hate, there is no reason for its existence. To the rent-a-crowd boofheads protesting against a frail elderly lady who has left us, I can only suggest they take a lesson from Margaret Thatcher's book. It just might not be too late for those pathetic creatures to in some way make this world a better place.

Margaret Hilda Thatcher certainly did that. We are all the better for her having been among us. May God bless and keep her.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I remind members that there is a condolence book for Margaret Thatcher in the library for those who wish to avail themselves of the opportunity to sign it.

Baroness Thatcher

Mrs PETROVICH (Northern Victoria) — I express my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Margaret Thatcher, who died on 8 April. Margaret Thatcher served the British people as their Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990. She dedicated 11 years of her life to serving the needs of the British people and bringing life to the English economy.

Margaret grew up in a middle class family of grocers and attended Oxford University to study chemistry at an honours level. Margaret had a keen interest in politics from adolescence and a strong belief in the power of the individual and a strong economy. Never one to bow down to public pressure, Margaret Thatcher often faced polarised views and made difficult decisions, such as the primary school milk ban, the poll tax and the taking of the Falkland Islands.

Margaret Thatcher defied the odds by becoming the first female Prime Minister of Britain. She beat back inflation rates which were averaging 13 per cent and increased employment levels across the board. As a woman in politics she paved the way and inspired many women by busting through the glass ceiling, and she was always true to herself.

During this time the male-dominated politics of the British Isles had fallen victim to the unions, which were calling strikes that threatened the economy of Britain. Margaret Thatcher's strength as a leader not only brought successful economic reforms to the English people but was also key to ending the Cold War and bringing political stability to the international community. I commend Baroness Thatcher for her

service to the British people and send my deepest condolences to her family and friends. I remind them that her bravery and commitment to the people of Britain will never be forgotten. Her funeral was a fitting tribute to a wonderful woman.

Dementia and Driving in Victoria

Ms CROZIER (Southern Metropolitan) — I would like to acknowledge the work of Alzheimer's Australia Vic. in bringing the difficult issue of dementia and driving to the public's attention. On Tuesday I had the pleasure of launching the discussion paper *Dementia and Driving in Victoria* at the Victorian Parliamentary Friends of Dementia meeting. I would like to thank my parliamentary colleagues who attended the meeting, including Mrs Coote, Mr Philip Davis, Ms Broad and members from the Assembly.

Those present heard from a number of experts including Melinda Congiu from the RACV, who discussed the recently launched *Dementia, Driving and Mobility*; Associate Professor Mark Yates from Ballarat Health Service, who gave a clinical perspective of dementia and issues with driving; and Anne Fairhall, a carer who gave a consumer perspective. Anne shared her experience as a carer and described the difficulties for both families and carers when faced with having to manage the issue.

The discussion paper looks at the impact of driver cessation, the mobility needs of people with dementia, driver testing, education and information, support and the prevalence of dementia. In Victoria today there are 74 600 people living with dementia; by 2020 this figure is expected to be 98 000 and by 2050 it will be around 246 000. Dementia is a significant issue that all Victorian communities will face as the ageing of the population increases. Improving access to information and education on dementia and driving is an important initiative. Again, my congratulations go to Maree McCabe and all those at Alzheimer's Australia Vic. for the work they have done and continue to do in this difficult area.

SUSTAINABLE FORESTS (TIMBER) AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Introduction and first reading

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) introduced a bill for an act to amend the Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004 and the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 and for other purposes.

Read first time; by leave, ordered to be read second time forthwith.

Statement of compatibility

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (the charter act), I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the Sustainable Forests (Timber) Amendment Bill 2013.

In my opinion, the Sustainable Forests (Timber) Amendment Bill 2013, as introduced to the Legislative Council, is compatible with the human rights set out in the charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview of bill

The bill amends the Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004 (the SFTA) and makes miscellaneous amendments to the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 to reflect the amendments to the SFTA. The bill aims to simplify the operation of the SFTA with respect to the allocation and vesting of timber resources and the operation of timber harvesting operator licences. The bill streamlines the process by which timber resources are vested in and allocated to VicForests, and removes the regime of timber harvesting operator licences. These amendments do not interfere with the property rights of any individual.

Human rights issues

The bill does not engage any human rights protected under the charter act. I therefore consider that this bill is compatible with the charter act.

The Hon. Peter Hall, MLC
Minister for Higher Education and Skills

Second reading

Ordered that second-reading speech, by leave, be incorporated into Hansard on motion of Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills).

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

That the bill be now read a second time.

Incorporated speech as follows:

This bill amends the Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004 and the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010.

The Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004, or SFTA, is the key enabling legislation for native timber harvesting in Victoria. The SFTA establishes the framework for the state government to allocate and vest native timber to VicForests from Victoria's state forests. The SFTA also provides the framework for sustainable forest management.

This bill follows an extensive review of the SFTA conducted in 2012. The review was a key element of the government's timber industry action plan and proposed amendments to the SFTA that will deliver clarity, efficiency, security and sustainability to Victoria's native timber industry.

The bill clarifies the purpose of the SFTA, to recognise the role of the act in enabling long-term access to timber resources. To ensure its sustainable future, Victoria's native forestry industry requires greater resource security and certainty to facilitate long-term industry investment. Improving long-term resource security underpins the industry's ability to access finance for investments in processing infrastructure, value adding and product and market development.

The bill strengthens the allocation of timber to VicForests, which would enable VicForests to offer longer term contracts to industry and improve the industry's capacity to achieve competitive returns on investments.

The bill amends the current two-stage process of vesting timber to VicForests, through an allocation order and timber release plans. Timber assets will vest under an allocation order only. This will improve clarity and efficiency, provide resource security, reduce regulatory burden on industry and more clearly separate the process of transfer of timber resources from the process of operational planning.

The bill removes the time limit on the period of an allocation order. Removing the time limit will provide VicForests with the incentive to actively manage all of the area identified for timber production in the allocation order.

While the bill proposes an indefinite allocation order, the allocation order will be used as the mechanism by which maximum contract length is set and will specify that VicForests could only offer up to 20-year timber supply contracts. Contracts greater than 20 years will require the approval of the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security in consultation with the Minister for Environment and Climate Change and the Treasurer. However, contracts greater than 20 years are likely to form a very small percentage of VicForests total supply commitments and will be offered on a competitive basis.

The bill reforms the management of timber resources and harvesting by VicForests by placing responsibility for approval of timber release plans with the VicForests board. While the timber release plans will not play a role in vesting timber resources, they will remain a key planning, auditing and consultation tool for VicForests.

The bill removes the timber harvesting operators licence system and supporting regulations. The current timber harvesting operators licence system duplicates occupational health and safety and environmental standards governed by other legislation and regulation. This will bring the native timber industry in line with other industries with similar risk profiles, such as mining, that do not have similar regulatory burdens. The timber harvesting operators licence system will be phased out within 12 months of commencement of this bill.

The bill maintains current traditional owner procedural rights in relation to timber production on Crown land by making consequential amendments to the Traditional Owner

Settlement Act 2010 to reflect board approval of the timber release plans. In addition, the bill ensures there can be no invalid effects on native title rights and interests.

The bill does not propose changes to Victoria's sustainable forest management framework. VicForests, and other forest managers, will continue to be subject to all current environmental standards.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr LENDERS (Southern Metropolitan).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 2 May.

**RAIL SAFETY NATIONAL LAW
APPLICATION BILL 2013 and TRANSPORT
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (RAIL
SAFETY LOCAL OPERATIONS AND
OTHER MATTERS) BILL 2013**

Second reading

**Debate resumed from 21 March; motions of
Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education
and Skills).**

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I welcome the opportunity to speak on these two bills. What they do is implement a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreement to pursue a national transport regulation scheme, particularly in relation to national rail safety and setting up a national rail safety investigator and national regulations for the heavy vehicle, rail and commercial marine sectors. That was the ambition of COAG, and these two bills seek to implement that ambition.

I will start off by referring to the Transport Legislation Amendment (Rail Safety Local Operations and Other Matters) Bill 2013, which really complements the Rail Safety National Law Application Bill 2013 by providing amendments to the Victorian Rail Safety Act 2006. It preserves large parts of that bill — the Victorian legislation — because not all Victorian railways are covered by the federal scheme; indeed there are seven heritage and tourist railways that have opted out of national regulation and are outside the national safety scheme. The second of the two bills effectively amends the state legislation, the Rail Safety Act 2006, so that there is the preservation of that legislation to allow the seven heritage and tourist railways to stay out of the national system.

That in itself raises a question about whether we actually have a national safety system when you have

the preservation of state legislation. In essence you have a two-tiered model, with some railways under the national scheme and others under the state scheme. While I respect the right of those seven railways to stay out of the national regulations, it raises questions about the effectiveness of that regulation. It raises questions about whether or not we are indeed providing a simplified national standard. Those are issues the government needs to consider and address as it goes forward, because it seems to me that if you are focused on safety and want to have a national standard and best practice, there is a question about why we do not have that across the board and why we have this group that is exempted.

The second-reading speech in relation to the Rail Safety National Law Application Bill refers to the fact that Victoria has been lucky in the sense that it has avoided major rail disasters. That is and has been the case thanks to much hard work and effort of many people. The second-reading speech also refers to the exception, which is level crossing tragedies, which continue to bedevil Victoria. The second-reading speech is explicit in its concern about the injuries and the deaths that occur at level crossings. It is for that reason that a document setting out the risks associated with each of those level crossings has been made publicly available. Everyone can see information on the most dangerous level crossings in Victoria. The Australian level crossing assessment model list has exposed the fact that this government has prioritised a level crossing at Brighton which is ranked at 223 on the list of the most dangerous and congested level crossings.

The minister's second-reading speech refers to the impact level crossings have on Victorian safety, yet we see the government's actions in prioritising a level crossing which is ranked at 223 on the Australian level crossing assessment model list. A number of promises have been made by the government in relation to crossings at, for example, Main Road, St Albans, which is fourth on the list. The government made an election commitment to provide \$10 million for planning and construction in its first term, and again that has not been delivered. However, as I said, funding has been found for the crossing, which is ranked at 223 on the list. If you go through the list of level crossings, you will see that there is no commitment and no funding for any of the priorities until, as I said, you get to no. 223. The government needs to provide an explanation for this vacuum when it comes to level crossings, particularly when the second-reading speech is clear about the impact this has on community safety.

Another aspect of the bill I wish to draw attention to is the requirement for a service level agreement between the national regulator, the safety director and the Minister for Public Transport, as well as delegations from the national regulator to the safety director and the Transport Safety Victoria staff. In essence the bill sets up a framework, a lot of which will be populated by this service level agreement. The concern the opposition has is that we are signing off today on a framework without this service level agreement having been delivered.

It is surprising, given that Council of Australian Governments discussions commenced in June 2009, that some three or four years later we still do not have the underpinning service level agreement, and again this warrants an explanation by the government. What we have been asked to do is to sign off on a framework without actually seeing the substance of that framework. I suppose our other concern when it comes to the service level agreement is the fact that it appears the bill provides that the minister can unilaterally set aside the agreement. We are concerned at the power given to the minister to unilaterally set aside that agreement.

As I said, this is really framework legislation set up in order to give effect to national undertakings and agreements. The new authority that is set up under the bill will be based in South Australia. A number of other states have now implemented legislation to give effect to the bill. The opposition does not oppose the bill but asks the government to consider those comments.

We do note that rail patronage in Victoria has experienced significant increases over the last decade. We are concerned that in a broader sense the government has not responded by providing sufficient trains to meet that demand. Recent announcements, as we have seen with this government, will certainly not feed the demand in terms of patronage. We welcome the increase in patronage on public transport because if we can get more people on our trains, we will have less congestion on our roads. But you cannot get more people on trains unless you make those trains available. It is important to remember the priority that should be given to public transport as a way of promoting the environment and also as a way of reducing congestion.

As I said, the opposition will not oppose the two bills. We welcome the nationally consistent approach, but we are concerned that there will still be a two-tiered model under this approach. We are surprised that there is still a lack of agreement to provide a body for what is in essence framework legislation. But with those

observations, the opposition will not oppose the legislation.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — The purpose of this set of bills is for Victoria to adopt South Australia's piece of model legislation so that we can have a national rail safety law, after which that regulatory responsibility will be passed back to our own state-based transport safety regulator and we will be back to where we started from. However, I agree that it is good to have a national rail safety legal framework because increasingly we have interstate rail operations for the purpose of both passenger and freight movements. In Victoria they are mixed in with state-based operations. Perhaps we will soon have progress towards a high-speed rail up and down the east coast of Australia. We are the only continent, apart from Antarctica, to not have one. I am hoping I get to ride on one in Australia before the penguins are riding on one around Antarctica! Having said that, we support the framework that is here.

I should spend a moment talking about the issue of rail safety in Victoria. The first thing to say is that riding by rail is much safer as a mode of transport than getting in your car and taking the same trip. Our national rail safety bodies estimate that it is approximately six times safer to travel by rail than it is to travel by car when measured as a certain number of hours of travel or kilometres of travel. In fact, while we make good efforts on road safety here in Victoria, the best and fastest way to reduce the road toll would be through mode shift — that is, to move increasing numbers of journeys onto rail from our roads. It is disappointing that yesterday's Auditor-General report into traffic congestion noted that Public Transport Victoria is no longer working under any kind of target for mode shift. Without such a target it is pretty hard for the government to work out where it is heading — how many trains it wants to buy, how many rails it wants to build and, for that matter, how many services to offer on each set of tracks.

Assuming current levels of growth, we need a big expansion in rail capacity. The budget papers for this year indicate a target of 2 per cent growth in train passengers and very little growth in tram passengers. In fact in another report tabled in the Parliament on Tuesday we see that the December quarter rail patronage figure grew by 3.4 per cent, or to look at it another way, the government predicts 2 per cent growth this year, and I am sure Mr O'Donohue has been briefed on this notwithstanding that he is now moving on to another set of portfolios. In the first half of the year there has already been growth of 1.3 per cent, and

last quarter seems to have been the quarter when patronage took off. This government has had it easy in fact because in its first two years of government there has been very little growth in train patronage, which is a function of the after-effects of the global financial crisis and the impacts we are still feeling on employment. This impacts on city centre employment, which is one of the major drivers of rail patronage.

In 2005 the previous government, which did have a public transport mode shift target, was nevertheless caught short when it got the type of patronage growth that its rail target anticipated. That government planned for 20 per cent of mode share to be by public transport, and when that kind of growth started happening around about 2005 it got the shock of its life and did not know how to cope. In some instances we saw growth of more than 7 per cent in rail patronage just in one year. That is how fast it can start to grow when factors such as city centre employment, petrol prices and inner city residential growth all come together in a fairly short period. This government could very well be caught short, and unlike in 2005 when there was a fair bit of room on the trains in the morning peak, now we know they are chock-a-block with anything from 800 to 1000 passengers still regularly on trains on some lines coming into Melbourne in the morning. That is a problem for the government.

In terms of safety, we should look at the incident statistics for both heavy and light rail — light rail being trams — as reported by Transport Safety Victoria for the 2012 calendar year. These statistics are on its website in quarterly and annual reports. They are very easy to follow. There is a clear definition of what is a reportable incident. It has to be a serious incident that would require public transport operators to give information to the government. The good news is that fatalities on heavy rail — mainly trains — have fallen from 17 in 2008 to 10 in the year just gone; however, the figure for last year was in fact an increase on the 2010–11 figures. While a significant number of these fatalities are listed as trespassers on the system, the figure also includes members of the travelling public, passengers and, in some years, employees. In terms of serious injuries, that number has also fallen from about 90 in 2008 to about 40 last year, but that is still up from a couple of years ago.

The road toll is reported on almost a daily basis. It seems to me that although these sorts of figures are available in quarterly statistical reports, they are almost never written up and the causes of these accidents are not looked into by the public and rarely by this Parliament.

Moving over to trams there is a slightly different story. Bearing in mind that the regime we are proposing today will cover rail at a national level while trams will be left to the state regime, both sets of responsibilities will be dealt with by our state transport safety regulator. There was one fatality involving trams in 2010, two fatalities in 2011 and one fatality in 2012. In terms of serious injuries in 2012 there were two collisions between a tram and a person and three between a road vehicle and a tram. There were many more collisions between the two types of vehicles, but this is referring to collisions leading to a serious injury — generally the type of injury that would see someone taken from the site of the accident directly to hospital under Transport Safety Victoria's definition. There were 7 slips, trips or falls on trams last year and 16 the year before that, and there were 2 falls getting onto and off trams last year.

I have to reiterate that travelling by train and tram is very safe compared to taking the identical trip by car, but we want it to be a lot safer. I have witnessed some accidents involving trams that I found quite horrific, and I can bring clear images of them up in my mind right now. Just a couple of months ago I saw a gentleman who was crossing Elizabeth Street near the GPO building step off the kerb, cross the car lane and, with absolutely no awareness of what was heading towards him from his right, be hit by a tram and thrown quite high into the air and for a long distance, after which the tram passed between me and him, so I could not see whether he had gone under the tram. After the tram stopped I saw passers-by walking him off the road, so he appeared to be ambulatory at that stage.

A couple of years ago I was on another Elizabeth Street tram and saw an elderly woman trip from the top of the three stairs — it was one of the older style trams — and fall headfirst into the so-called safety zone. That is the area that is about 1 foot wide with a tram on one side, vehicles on the other and a concrete and metal rail sticking up. She landed on the ground and simply did not move. The tram stopped, all the following trams had to stop and an ambulance was called.

There are things we can do to prevent these types of accidents. Members would have seen on tram stops the image of rhinos on skateboards as part of a Yarra Trams advertising program. That campaign seems to have been effective in terms of reducing collisions between persons on the road pavement and trams — we can see a decline there — but in terms of trips and falls inside trams and getting to and from trams we are not seeing a sustained improvement. In fact an article that was published in the *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* suggested that trips and falls inside trams

and getting to and from trams were on the increase in a statistically significant way.

It is my belief — and there is some evidence for this — that that is due to the dramatic overcrowding we have seen on trams over the last five years. If you look back to the mid-2000s, on many tram journeys you would have seen most people seated and one or two people standing, although perhaps it was not so good during peak hours. Now what we are seeing is that at all times on a weekday, and on weekends as well, there are sometimes hundreds of people standing on trams, with very few getting a seat. It is not surprising that there has been a quite rapid rate of growth in trips and falls involving trams, because the number of people regularly standing on trams and having to cling to supports or force their way through crowds to move around trams, including getting on and off the vehicle, has risen quite dramatically, and that has created this effect that I am seeing.

I have not yet seen a specific program from Yarra Trams as to how it will make steady improvements to the slips, trips and falls aspect of this problem. To do that we need a rapid rollout of platform stops. It is certainly possible for people with disabilities and in wheelchairs to use trams; it is also easy and safe for the rest of us. It is possible to board trams faster now, and strong protection is provided for people who have to move out into the middle of the road to catch trams. The rollout of platform stops has been at a very slow rate. In fact the government has not complied with the requirements of the federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and shows no sign of moving to compliance in the near future.

Then there is the question of overcrowding, which needs to be reduced. The government is responsible for the tram procurement contract. It was signed by the previous government late in its term. The tender was supposed to deliver half a dozen trams prior to last Christmas and 10 per year for five years after that. I would call that a relatively small order of trams. In the next decade we will not be able to keep up if we see the same rate of growth that we have seen over the last decade. Nevertheless, that has now been delayed, and we are told that maybe some of those trams will be on the rails by June for testing purposes, after which the rest of the order will be delivered as per contract. I am waiting to see if that happens.

At the same time I am aware that the contract contains an option to purchase more trams, and faster, under a price that has not been made available to the public; it was blacked out of the version of the contract I

obtained. I believe the government should make that figure public. It should move to exercise that option and get us more trams, because the current situation is intolerable; it is driving people off public transport. In the interests of disclosure I should say my regular tram, at the point at which I board it, is the most overcrowded tram in Melbourne. People physically cannot get on the tram. They are left behind on multiple services. It is just dangerous. I find myself doing what tram conductors used to do, and that is looking out for people as they are getting on and off the tram.

My tram route goes past the hospitals, and I frequently see people on the tram who are on their way to a medical appointment who already have a broken arm or a bad leg. They find it hard to get on and off the tram and navigate their way through the vehicle. In the good old days the conductor used to monitor the whole length of the tram and ring the bell to signal the driver that all passengers were seated or in a safe position and it was safe for the driver to take off. Currently the driver has enough to worry about, including avoiding on-road collisions with pedestrians and other vehicles, without having to monitor the whole length of the vehicle, especially when it is very crowded.

That is another good reason for us to re-introduce tram conductors. They would be self-funding because they would reduce fare evasion. This could be commenced with a trial; before we rollout a conductor on every single tram, first to last, we could run a trial on one line to see the impact on fare evasion, collecting revenue and passenger safety, and to assist the driver on a small scale.

Sydney, for its one tram, has a conductor. It is only a short trip. It goes from the centre of the city — —

Mr Ondarchie — Paddy's Market.

Mr BARBER — To Paddy's Market and the casino, yet the conductor on that tram manages to more than collect his or her own wages back at the same time as offering a great service. Sydney, when it comes to the operation of trams, now has a more advanced attitude than Melbourne.

I urge all members to have a quick look at Transport Safety Victoria's statistics on heavy rail and light rail accidents to see how it is improving. Unfortunately it is the operators and the government that must take some responsibility in this area. In that field our transport system is completely Balkanised. We have the transport department, Public Transport Victoria (PTV), multiple different operators using the same set of tracks at different times, Yarra Trams, a safety inspector, a chief

investigative officer, VicTrack, outsourced subcontracted maintenance — —

Mr Ondarchie — Have you been to the UK?

Mr BARBER — We will come to the UK in a minute if Mr Ondarchie likes; we could have a whole debate on that. There have been many tributes to Margaret Thatcher this week. But in the area of rail privatisation, members might like to know that Mrs Thatcher was a very reluctant convert. In fact they just got her over the line at the end of her tenure as Prime Minister. It was actually John Major who rolled it out, and it has been a complete disaster. There are still some regional rail franchise operations, but in terms of the bulk of rail passengers who come through the city of London, the public-private partnership (PPP), which involved both construction and operation, fell over. It was hundreds of millions of dollars in the red.

Mr Ondarchie interjected.

Mr BARBER — Mr Ondarchie has lost interest in this topic all of a sudden. He wanted to get into the question of rail safety.

Mr Ondarchie interjected.

Mr BARBER — It is of very real relevance, because there have been some serious failings in the area of rail safety in the UK, which led to the reversal of the John Major privatisation reforms in many areas. In the city of London the whole thing just literally fell over; the PPP just collapsed. In fact the House of Commons has had multiple inquiries into what went wrong. It is now back in public hands.

Somewhere in the middle of that history lesson the ideas of British rail privatisation were imported to Victoria. We split our rail into not really competing but separate geographic monopolies. Despite that arrangement falling over, the Bracks government decided to tender it out again. When the system all but collapsed under Connex the government tendered it out again, and now we have Metro Trains Melbourne. When the new government arrived there was a brief honeymoon when Metro appeared to be getting on with the job. After about 12 months Metro worked out that it is a lot easier to put pressure back onto the government, let the government pay and let taxpayers suffer the inconvenience of a whole series of operational changes that were designed for the convenience of Metro in running the choo-choo trains the way it wanted to, forgetting about the fact that you are actually trying to deliver a service for the passengers on those trains. We have seen this time and time again with slower running,

more changes, whole batches of services being cut out of the city loop and so forth.

Why it is that governments, Liberal then Labor and then Liberal again, despite all the evidence, want to keep privatising rail when public transport can only be run in the public interest? Private profit is never going to deliver the integrated and smooth running system we want here. This government and the Minister for Public Transport, Terry Mulder, love to stand behind Metro while Metro goes out there and not only takes the blame for anything that goes wrong but actually takes on the job of explaining to the public the vision for public transport. We saw it a couple of weeks ago. Metro, which has five years left on its eight-year contract, was explaining what the rail system will look like in 30 years time. Where was the minister? Shuffling around somewhere behind the Metro representatives and behind them was Public Transport Victoria.

PTV now has a rail plan, but it is not clear who owns the plan. It was a bid by a government agency to the government, but the government is yet to decide whether this is a plan that it is willing to fund and deliver. It is very confusing — almost as confusing as trying to make a complaint about public transport. You do not know whether you are going to myki, Metro, the Ombudsman, PTV, the Department of Transport or VicTrack at the interface of all of it.

Many of those matters, although they might concern the convenience of passengers, frequently come into safety decisions. As I said, rail travel is very safe, despite the best efforts of the government to make everyone scared about using it by showing ads on TV about how scary it is to be on a railway station platform at night. But it is all right: just in time around the corner come a couple of protective service officers (PSOs). Why was it that that station and its surrounds were so forbidding, unpopulated and unwelcoming in the first place? Because the government will not staff the system.

Mr Ondarchie interjected.

Mr BARBER — Mr Ondarchie should be aware that we had a vote in this place about expanding the PSO system. Despite the fact that Labor came out and said it was against it, Labor members voted with the government for the expansion. Only the Greens voted to oppose the expansion of the PSO program, because we argued that with private security guards, authorised officers, transit police and railway staff already out there and apparently responsible for different operations on the public transport system, adding PSOs to the mix

would create more confusion about who is responsible for public safety, ticketing and other compliance. We know most public safety issues occur at a small number of railway stations and that half those issues happen before 6.00 p.m. For some reason we have two people standing on railway stations that barely see a few dozen people in a day doing not much. That same delivery of person power could be making things a lot safer; for example, on trams coming home late at night.

That is an area of rail safety that is not particularly covered by this bill. I was taken off onto one of my other favourite topics: the dehumanisation of the system and the relentless cutting of staff that Liberal governments have done over time and that Labor governments have failed to address, which is now creating a problem which I acknowledge is a problem. I think Mr Ondarchie's solution to it — that is, two guys with semi-automatic pistols — is not necessarily the most effective or well-considered solution.

Mr Ondarchie — The public like PSOs. Why don't you?

Mr Finn — Because they are police, and he does not like police. The Greens don't like police. They do not like authority or law — —

Mr BARBER — Mr Finn says the Greens do not like police, but the police — or at least the Victoria Police Association — apparently like the Greens, as we saw in the last Parliament. It was the Greens who were able to speak up for the industrial rights of police officers through the Police Regulation Act 1958.

Mr O'Donohue — The Police Association is very good at speaking for itself.

Mr Finn — I will give Greg a call and see what he says.

Mr BARBER — Give Gomer a call! The Police Association is very good at speaking for itself. If Mr O'Donohue would like to check out the edition of its newsletter that came out before the last election, he would not need to take my word for it as to what the Police Association thought about the Greens' policies going into that election. It is interesting, though, that at the previous election the Bracks government had a written election deal with the Police Association, but by the time 2010 came around the Police Association was saying it was only the Greens who understood the industrial rights of police officers as workers working in the public service.

Mr Ondarchie interjected.

Mr BARBER — I think the Police Association has been philosophical about the PSO program, but it would be aware, as most of us are, about the potential for rolling out the program the way it was dreamed up by the former Baillieu government — or the ‘Baillieu experiment’ as it is now referred to. Mr Ondarchie seems to have trouble acknowledging any pitfalls or problems, but as time goes on we will get a chance to scrutinise that program.

There is one other issue to address with this bill — that is, the question of Public Transport Victoria and the former Department of Transport. In a previous iteration of legislation governing those bodies, we discovered that there had been a long-running dispute between Transport Safety Victoria (TSV) and the department over whether the department was subject to regulation by TSV. The department, and apparently PTV, do not consider themselves to be rail operators; they franchise that responsibility out. Over a period of years Transport Safety Victoria tried and failed to get the Department of Transport to develop its own safety plan. Those bodies make safety decisions. During a brief committee stage on this bill I hope we can have a discussion with the government about how those bodies are covered under this legislation, and if they are not covered, why not?

Mr O’DONOHUE (Eastern Victoria) — I would like to respond to the positions of both the opposition and the Greens. I am pleased Mr Tee clarified the position of the opposition because during his contribution I heard him say he opposed the bill, then he said he did not oppose the bill. Finally, he clarified his position as not being opposed to the bill, which we welcome. The Greens support the bills, notwithstanding Mr Barber’s lengthy critique of a range of matters that ultimately are extraneous to these two bills. The government welcomes the support from the Greens.

I would like to address some of the matters raised by both Mr Tee and Mr Barber. Mr Tee criticised the fact that seven heritage and small railway operations have chosen to stay out of the national regulatory framework. Mr Barber referred to this as a two-tiered system. The government makes no apology, and indeed the Minister for Public Transport, Mr Mulder, stood up for those smaller operations that had no connection to the broader national network. He gave them the choice of being covered by either a national regulatory framework or the state-based system. If Mr Tee is suggesting that very small heritage railways should be regulated by the national regulator based in Adelaide, I look forward to him making that case to those seven operations which, when given the choice by this government, opted to stay within the state-based

framework. We make no apologies for that. The purpose of these bills is to create a national framework, and ultimately the major beneficiaries of that will be the larger networks, particularly those that operate on an interstate basis. We reject the suggestion that it makes some sort of confused two-tier system.

Mr Tee’s second general proposition was about the failure of the government to address concerns about a number of level crossings. Mr Tee, as is the wont of the opposition, focused on an upgrade that is taking place in Brighton. This is not a level crossing removal; it is a safety upgrade. Mr Tee made the assertion that there is no investment in level crossing no. 1 on the Australian level crossing assessment model list while crossing no. 223 is being funded. The level crossing he referred to in Brighton is not being removed or grade separated; it is being upgraded with safety improvements. I am sure Mr Tee will be pleased to know, and I am happy to inform him, that in his own electorate the Mitcham Road and Rooks Road level crossings in Mitcham were fully funded in the last budget. He seems oblivious to this. The pre-construction process there is well advanced and is, as I said, in his electorate. I am sure he will welcome the news, which he was clearly unaware of, that the level crossings at Mitcham Road and Rooks Road will be removed. This is a very exciting, complex project.

Mr Tee will also be pleased to know that in the Liberal bastion or heartland of Springvale Road, Springvale, the government has invested significant funds to remove the level crossing. It was a significant bottleneck in your electorate, Acting President, in the Liberal heartland of Springvale Road, Springvale. The government is removing two level crossings in the Liberal heartland at Anderson Road in Sunshine. This is part of the regional rail project. Members will recall that the former Minister for Public Transport, Mr Pakula, took that crossing out of the scope of the regional rail link. It took a Liberal government and Minister Mulder to reinsert two level crossings at Anderson Road in Sunshine.

When Mr Tee makes these ridiculous assertions about some sort of pork-barrelling for Liberal-held seats, he is wrong. The coalition is investing significant resources to remove level crossings across the network. We had a very clear agenda in this space prior to the last election, and we are implementing that agenda. As I said, places like Springvale Road, Springvale, and Anderson Road, Sunshine, are not traditional Liberal territory. The notion that this is some sort of pork-barrelling exercise is absolute nonsense.

Mr Tee also raised the issue of there being no service level agreement finalised, and he said that somehow the act will give the minister the ability to set aside a service level agreement at any time once it is finalised. This claim is incorrect. The bill does not permit the Minister for Public Transport to unilaterally declare that a service level agreement is not in force. The minister may only make a declaration if the minister is of the opinion that no service level agreement is in force. That means the service level agreement must have been terminated before a declaration is made. The minister cannot just deem that no service level agreement exists. That would be unlawful under the basic principles of administrative law, because the minister would have no jurisdiction to make such a declaration. A service level agreement must have come to an end before a declaration is made.

I turn to the points made by Mr Barber during his contribution to the debate. Mr Barber is nothing if not consistent. In the world of green economics, introducing tram conductors would be a cost-neutral exercise. In the world of the Greens, and by Mr Barber's own recollections of his own travels, people commute three or four stops to the CBD. I have seen various news articles in papers that cover the areas of Dandenong, Berwick, Frankston and Lilydale and a range of other places on the edge of the suburban network, so I know that the reality is that people who commute to and from the city in the middle of winter leave work at 5.30, 6.00 or 6.30 p.m. and may not get to Berwick, Cranbourne, Dandenong, Lilydale or Frankston railway stations until 7.30 or 8.00 at night.

The feedback in the public commentary in the local papers, the feedback I have received as a member for Eastern Victoria Region and the feedback that the minister and other members of the coalition have received is that the introduction of protective services officers (PSOs) on the network is making the metropolitan railway system safer. The PSOs are making people feel safer and are encouraging a spread of travel at later hours. Notwithstanding the Greens' opposition to the PSOs, their introduction at railway stations has been a great initiative. I again make the point that at least the Greens are consistent in that they oppose the PSOs on the railway network.

However, with the Labor Party we have a hotchpotch of positions. When in government Labor mocked the coalition's policy, but now we are in government and it suits them, Labor members oppose having PSOs at railway stations. In a speech Mr Merlino, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and the member for Monbulk in the Assembly made he cited a commentary from

England which referred to a similar officers over there as 'plastic police'. He mocked the PSO concept, but at the same time he asked, 'Where are the PSOs for Belgrave station?'. Let me say to Mr Merlino and members of the opposition that they cannot have it both ways. They cannot say on the one hand, 'This is outrageous; this is a waste of taxpayers money, and we oppose it', and on the other say, 'By the way, where are the PSOs for my station? Where are they for the station in my electorate?'. They cannot have it both ways. Again I give Mr Barber credit for at least being consistent.

Mr Barber also said that tram infrastructure needs to be upgraded. Obviously Mr Barber has not been to the Domain interchange recently, because if he had, he would have seen the recently completed Domain interchange works, and he would be amazed at just how much that interchange has been transformed.

Mrs Coote — An excellent job.

Mr O'DONOHUE — Absolutely. They did an excellent job. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate all those involved: the minister, Yarra Trams, the contractors, the various other stakeholders, including VicRoads with its management of St Kilda Road, and the residents —

Mrs Coote — And the commuters.

Mr O'DONOHUE — The commuters and everyone else associated with that project. For that significant project to have been completed during the Easter break is a remarkable achievement, and it will deliver significant efficiency on the St Kilda Road corridor by giving the no. 8 tram a dedicated left-hand turn, which is an example of some of the significant infrastructure improvements happening across the network.

In response to Mr Barber's general assertion that there is no plan and no investment in future infrastructure or capacity, I am sure Mr Barber is aware that since coming to government the coalition has delivered over 1000 additional services on the metropolitan network. There are new trams and new V/Line carriages on order. Minister Mulder and Premier Napthine have announced that eight new trains are on order. In addition, the regional rail link project is progressing.

At a more micro level, I was very pleased to join with my colleague the member for Bass — the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Ken Smith — to open the new bike cage at Pakenham railway station last week. We have a range of

significant investments on order to increase rail capacity, and we are also implementing micro projects, such as new bike cages that will encourage people to travel to their neighbourhood railway station and make public transport travel easier for them.

I also want to touch on the issue of the road toll and the investment being made in that space. Any death is a tragedy, and any accident or significant injury is most regrettable. The 10-year action plan released by the government and the increase in Safer Roads Infrastructure program funding to \$1 billion over 10 years — \$100 million per annum — will deliver significant infrastructure improvements across the road network over the next decade. That is very welcome and a very good investment made by this government.

These two bills are, as Mr Tee described, the product of a Council of Australian Governments arrangement that will establish a national regulator in South Australia. We welcome the support of the Greens and the 'not oppose' position of the opposition. I congratulate Minister Mulder for standing up for the heritage of tourist railways by giving them the choice of either signing up to the national scheme or staying part of a state-based regime. This is a sensible law that will improve efficiency and safety across state borders, and we welcome the support of the opposition parties.

Mr EIDEH (Western Metropolitan) — We are debating two bills concurrently, because they are related and it make sense to debate them together. I am deeply concerned about rail safety, given that one of the most dangerous rail crossings in the entire state is not that far from my electorate office. However, this government has preferred to fix smaller, less dangerous intersections in Liberal electorates. I do not wish to offend those opposite, but the rail crossing in Brighton, an electorate in the Assembly represented by Ms Asher, has not cost lives. However, the St Albans crossing remains unchanged due to this government's particular twist on priorities. Updating a level crossing in Brighton that is ranked way down at no. 223 on the Australian level crossing assessment model (ALCAM) list of the most dangerous and congested crossings is a high priority for a government that has not lost touch with the people because it was never in touch with them.

This is absolutely critical because the ALCAM list exists to ensure the safety of the public is given priority by addressing those areas of greatest need and greatest danger. The minister and government members have gone against the ALCAM recommendations by upgrading first and foremost rail crossings in their own

electorates. All that I can say to the communities in St Albans, Coburg, Moonee Valley and elsewhere is: pray that you remain safe until we can put a minister and a government into office that cares. Those opposite do not like hearing what I am saying, but the minister's own priorities, as displayed in the budget papers, prove that this government has an unmitigated bias against electorates such as my own.

Our state's population is expanding. Public transport is becoming far more critical year by year, and with that comes concerns about safety — the safety of those on board and the safety of those who cross rail lines, tram lines or roads, whether on foot or using vehicles of whatever type. Yet to date this government and the Minister for Public Transport have barely been heard on this issue. I hope these bills may be followed by more action in the area of public transport, as our state's growing needs have taken two and a half years for this government to recognise.

I also hope the next state budget will start to make up for this miserable lack of attention to rail safety in electorates not held by conservative members. I respectfully ask those opposite who have an interest in the whole state — and there are some — to ensure that all Victorians have access to rail upgrades according to the ALCAM recommendations and not according to political party interests. My electorate, my community, deserves far better than this government has afforded them to date.

These two bills may force the government to act in a positive direction. The national laws that will be adopted with the Rail Safety National Law Application Bill 2013 are a step forward and have already been adopted by other states and territories. The Transport Legislation Amendment (Rail Safety Local Operations and Other Matters) Bill 2013 modifies Victoria's Rail Safety Act 2006 to bring the national laws into effect by amending the Victorian act where necessary. A few issues and a delay in the bills coming before us have been caused by the irrational and unreasonable demands by the minister and his department to be excluded from the national set-up in certain areas; they have secured exclusion clauses that anyone who loves reading contract law would find very amusing but also very disturbing.

The bills were presented to the Parliament in the other place before certain mandatory preparations were made, so I hope the government members who follow can satisfy the house that the government has finally sorted out the service level agreement. Very simply, this failure by the Napthine-Ryan government puts

Victoria's ability to actively and realistically support the national framework in serious doubt. Operators, the people involved in the network, have due cause to be deeply worried. However, it is true to form for this government for bills to be brought before the Parliament before all the related aspects are completed, with very little discussion and often the briefest of briefings for the opposition.

It is characteristic of a government that still has not sorted out a real agenda for government. Perhaps the new Premier should follow the lead of former Premier John Brumby who delivered an annual statement of intentions, which set out a clear agenda for the government's priorities and plans. If this government had followed Mr Brumby's excellent lead, we would not have experienced missing out on budget funding that will mean our state will be at least 47 trains short of the needs of the public in 2017. That is barely four years away. Our state deserves better.

Mr ONDARCHIE (Northern Metropolitan) — I rise this morning to join this cognate debate on the Rail Safety National Law Application Bill 2013 and the Transport Legislation Amendment (Rail Safety Local Operations and Other Matters) Bill 2013. It is a pleasure to follow my friend and colleague Mr O'Donohue in making a contribution about these two bills. Mr O'Donohue is the former Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and is now the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, and the advice we have all received is that next week he will be a minister of the Crown. We on this side of the house are extremely proud of Mr O'Donohue and his progression. I know the people of Eastern Victoria Region are very proud to have one of their local representatives becoming a minister of the Crown in the Napthine coalition government. I congratulate him, and I am proud of him.

The Rail Safety National Law Application Bill provides for a national safety regulation scheme, including a national safety regulator and a national safety investigator in Victoria in accordance with the state's intergovernmental obligations. South Australia will be the host jurisdiction, and the regulator will be based there. Members opposite and Mr O'Donohue have outlined a whole lot of clauses in these bills, and it is not my intention to revisit them now. There are some exceptions to the scheme such as the tramcar restaurant and Puffing Billy. The national scheme will adopt the US rail safety scheme approach which enables the national regulator to delegate powers back to the states, and we have already talked about that this morning.

I want to address the comments made by Mr Tee, Mr Eideh and members of the Greens this morning, because these are very efficient bills. The members opposite strayed far and wide, and it is beholden on me, on behalf of the government, to address the nature of their wanderings away from the bills. Mr Tee and Mr Eideh accused the government of pork-barrelling with some of our investments in rail safety improvement, but, as we have seen in this chamber time and again, Mr Tee was scant on facts. He has missed the point again; maybe he is still standing on the platform when the train has already departed. The government is making transport investments in all seats, not just Liberal-held seats. They include building level crossings at Springvale Road, Springvale, in a Labor-held seat, and Main Road East and Main Road West in St Albans, in a Labor-held seat; and two grade separations in Anderson Road, Sunshine, which is another Labor-held seat.

I know other ministers have made significant announcements in non-Liberal seats. For example, the Minister for Housing made an announcement about investment in youth foyers and public housing in Broadmeadows, which is in a Labor-held seat. For members opposite to get up in the chamber today and accuse the government of not acting for all Victorians is both disingenuous and false, and I condemn them for it.

These bills go to the fact that we are looking to improve the transport system for all Victorians. In April this year the Premier, the Honourable Denis Napthine, and the Minister for Public Transport, the Honourable Terry Mulder, announced a \$176 million order for eight brand-new X'trapolis trains to be fitted out here in Victoria by Ballarat train manufacturer Alstom.

Mr Somyurek — It is the local content.

Mr ONDARCHIE — And that is what it is about. I thank Mr Somyurek for his interjection, and I will pick that up.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr O'Brien) — Order! Mr Somyurek is out of his place.

Mr ONDARCHIE — This government is about supporting Victorians and Victorian jobs, and this is another example of that. We know the transport system needs improvement because we inherited it from the former government. Mr Eideh used the example of former Premier Mr Brumby and said he would be the act to follow. I have to tell Mr Eideh that if we were to follow Mr Brumby, we would be in trouble, because at the very least we know that in his capacity as the Premier of the state, with Mr Lenders as his Treasurer,

Mr Brumby botched the \$3 billion that could have been taken from the electronic gaming machine auction. What could we have done with that \$3 billion in this state? I would caution Mr Eideh on using Mr Brumby as an example of how to run a good government in Victoria. I can add to that the desalination plant, the botched myki ticketing system, HealthSMART and a range of projects that the previous government landed this generation and the next generation with. It is outrageous.

Ms Crozier interjected.

Mr ONDARCHIE — As Ms Crozier rightly points out, there are also the failings in the health system: the unfunded Olivia Newton-John wellness centre and the unfunded ICT project at the Royal Children's Hospital. The list of things that the former Bracks and Brumby and Lenders governments left this government to fix goes on and on.

I know there is more to do in rail, and I have been advocating very strongly for an increase to rail projects. Mr Eideh talked about things that need to be done, and I remind him of Labor's commitment to rail projects in this state. The people of South Morang, where I live in my Northern Metropolitan Region electorate, were promised a train station by the Bracks-Brumby government in 1999. In 1999 families moved into the South Morang area because they thought they were getting a railway station. It took 13 years to arrive.

Those young people, who were paying mortgages and bills and trying to educate their children and make sure they were well looked after, were expecting a railway station to turn up but had to wait 13 years. Those young children who grew up in these family homes were driving motor vehicles before the railway station arrived. That is outrageous. It was outrageous for the Labor Party to make those commitments and lift the expectations of people in that area and then take 13 years to deliver that project. It is another example of the Labor Party in this state, and federally, making commitments to Australians that it is not going to deliver on.

There are university students in Victoria today who are bemoaning the fact that the Gillard federal Labor government — led by a person who in her university days protested outwardly for more funding for university students — is now cutting funding from universities. I notice that these problems are being handed back to the state for people like the Minister for Higher Education and Skills, Mr Hall, to deal with. It is outrageous that ALP members can stand in this place

today and condemn the failings they see in this government when they handed it the problems. They should apologise. These are two very simple bills. I urge their quick passage through the house.

Mr ELASMAR (Northern Metropolitan) — I will make a brief contribution to the debate on the Rail Safety National Law Application Bill 2013 and the Transport Legislation Amendment (Rail Safety Local Operations and Other Matters) Bill 2013. The Rail Safety National Law Application Bill 2013 establishes the national rail safety regulator and the national rail safety investigator. The framework for this was agreed at a meeting of the Council of Australian Governments in June 2009 after extensive consultation with the freight industry. The main object of the bill is to introduce a new national regulatory framework for rail safety. The national law essentially modernises the state's existing regulatory framework, and while major aspects of the local scheme remain unchanged, alterations and improvements are made throughout the bill relating to definitions, offences, penalties and other provisions.

A primary focus of the bill is to make sure that the drug and alcohol control provisions in the national rail safety law for workers, such as train drivers and signal operators, are properly integrated with the drug and alcohol control scheme in Victoria's existing legislation. Notwithstanding that fact, I understand that \$2 million earmarked or set aside for rail safety personnel training has been reallocated to another non-training program. It is essential that sufficient money is allocated to ensure that staff will be trained properly and appropriately in their new roles and responsibilities. This is critical to the effectiveness of the provisions in the new bill, as the bill incorporates provisions to random breath-test or drug-test personnel.

Another purpose of the bill is to update Victoria's Rail Safety Act 2006 as a result of changes to rail safety regulations negotiated by Victoria and other jurisdictions during development of the national law. From what I understand, this is a complex bill which lacks clarity of application, given the number of heritage operators — seven in all — that have chosen, on the invitation of the Minister for Public Transport, to opt out of the national system.

The bill essentially attempts to divert freight carriers from our roads and onto our national rail system, and we do not oppose this. On the news we have all seen incidents of horrific rail derailments and fatal level crossing accidents. The bill is an attempt to put in place a uniform standard of safety for all rail workers and

passengers. The capacity to have an investigation of these all-too-frequent occurrences — and frankly one is too many — by a chief investigation officer who is empowered to facilitate and coordinate agency-wide personnel across the transport department has to be an improvement on the current situation where there is no consistent formula of demarcation.

RAIL SAFETY NATIONAL LAW APPLICATION BILL 2013

Second reading

Motion agreed to.

Read second time; by leave, proceeded to third reading.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (RAIL SAFETY LOCAL OPERATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS) BILL 2013

Second reading

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Committed.

Committee

Clause 1

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — Under part 5 of the principal act, the Rail Safety Act 2006, both the Public Transport Development Authority and the secretary of the former Department of Transport are exempt from that act. I ask the Minister for Planning: does that mean they are both still exempt from the provisions of the new Rail Safety National Law Application Bill 2013 we passed a minute ago?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I seek leave for Mr O'Donohue to join me at the chamber table.

Leave granted.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I, firstly, say to Mr Barber that I am advised that Public

Transport Victoria and the secretary of the former Department of Transport are specifically exempt under the current state framework because they do not run operational railways. They are, however, still covered by the general duties in the national law. The underlying principle of the scheme is that safety responsibilities should lie with the persons controlling the railway — and that of course is the operator. Nevertheless it is likely that Public Transport Victoria and potentially the former Department of Transport are caught up by the national law for the purposes of accreditation and may be required to develop a safety management system. That is subject to consideration by the national regulator. Some transitional regulations may be required to ensure a smooth transition from the current state-based framework.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I thank the minister for his very satisfactory answer to my question.

Clause agreed to; clauses 2 to 129 agreed to.

Reported to house without amendment.

Report adopted.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

COMPANY TITLES (HOME UNITS) BILL 2013

Second reading

Debate resumed from 21 March; motion of Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills).

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — The bill gives effect to the government's commitment in its 2010 plan for consumer affairs — that is, to confer jurisdiction on the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) to hear and determine disputes over neighbourhood matters affecting company home units. The aim is to promote lower costs and speedier access to justice. Currently residents of a company title building who are in dispute with other residents or the company only have recourse to the courts, including the Supreme Court. The government says it is interested in promoting lower costs and speedier access to justice; however, in the VCAT jurisdiction both the delays and the costs are rising, so we are not at all clear about the government's agenda in relation to increasing fees. It is

fair to say, though, that VCAT is a long way from its original philosophy of being a user-friendly jurisdiction where ordinary citizens could represent themselves.

We are talking about apartment blocks owned by corporations established under the Corporations Act 2001. A person becomes entitled to use or occupy an apartment by buying shares in the corporation, which then gives them a right of use and occupation for a particular apartment. The company title corporation's constitution typically contains the rules of the use and occupation in the block, so it is a very different mode of living to the experience all of us may have had where we live. These rules give the board of directors of the corporation the ability to control many aspects of the use and occupation of the apartments, including the approval of share sales, leasing of apartments and matters such as whether apartment owners can have pets.

Stratum title properties combine elements of both a strata subdivision, with land or building subdivided into individual lots, and company title, with a service company established under the Corporations Act managing the residual land. Rather than having a specialised owners corporation, unit owners under stratum title hold shares in the service company that manages the residual land. Service agreements invariably include schedules incorporating covenants on the registered proprietor which have effect as if they are rules — for example, not to park in a car space allocated to another owner, not to make structural alterations and additions, not to create a nuisance. Similarly, service agreements also include covenants on the service company — for example, to repair and maintain the residual land.

The bill gives VCAT the jurisdiction to hear and determine neighbourhood disputes which are defined as disputes that affect a company title corporation or a service company and relate only to a neighbourhood matter or matters. A schedule to the bill contains an exhaustive list of neighbourhood matters, including health, safety and security; residual land; units; design of residual land or units; behaviour of persons; dispute resolution; notices and documents. The exclusions include several types of dispute: disputes relating to the sale, transfer or forfeiture of shares; disputes relating to lease or licence of a unit; disputes relating to the winding up of a company title corporation; or disputes in which a party to a dispute claims relief from oppression under part 2F.1 of the Corporations Act 2001.

The Law Institute of Victoria (LIV) input to the Greens in relation to this bill was that whilst LIV supports the

exclusions in clause 5 and that such disputes are more appropriately heard in the courts, not VCAT, there is a problem with a lack of consistency since VCAT's jurisdiction regarding owners corporations is not limited in such a way. Its submission says:

VCAT should have the power to hear and determine company titles home units disputes without the above exclusions, and the provisions of the Corporations Act 2001 (cth) displaced to this extent; or

the Owners Corporations Act 2006 ... should be amended to limit VCAT's jurisdiction in a manner consistent with that proposed in the draft bill.

It would be good if we could hear a government speaker respond to LIV's position on this. Parties that are allowed to apply to VCAT to resolve a neighbourhood dispute include a shareholder or former shareholder of a company title corporation or service company, a company title corporation, a service company, a unit occupier or former occupier, and a unit mortgagee. The LIV queried whether there would be any circumstances under which a former shareholder could apply for a neighbourhood dispute to be heard by VCAT. The LIV also submits that managers and former managers of company title corporations or service companies should also be able to apply to VCAT to resolve a neighbourhood dispute if that is the way things are to work. This would be consistent with the position in section 163 of the Owners Corporation Act 2006.

In its submission, VCAT — and it is interesting to see an arm of the judiciary making a submission on a bill — states that it is not uncommon for a service company to engage a manager as an owners corporation does. Clause 7 does not, unlike the Owners Corporation Act, authorise a manager or former manager to be an applicant to VCAT, and the neighbourhood matters listed in the schedule do not include a manager's performance of the manager's functions. The bill not only does not allow for a manager to be an applicant but it does not provide a means by which a shareholder with a grievance against a manager can air that grievance at VCAT if the service company itself does not choose to do so. It has also been argued that the director of Consumer Affairs Victoria should be able to be an applicant.

An issue was raised by the Law Institute of Victoria in relation to clause 8(1)(c). The bill grants VCAT remedial powers to make any order it considers fair to resolve a neighbourhood dispute except for orders that would alter a person's shareholding or lead to the winding up of a company title, corporation or service company, or change the composition of the board of directors. These excluded orders could affect a person's

interest in the property or change corporate governance arrangements. The orders VCAT can make include an order that a person do or not do something, an order varying a term of a contract or agreement, and an order declaring a term of a contract or agreement to be void or not void.

The LIV has concerns about clause 8(1)(c), which allows for an order for the payment of a sum of money found to be owing by one party to another. It says this could allow VCAT to make an order in respect of overdue owners corporation fees and charges, and if that is the case, then the no-costs order provision under section 109 of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 1998 would apply. The LIV argues this would be unfair in these cases. Effectively it hoists expense onto innocent third parties, being the other lot owners.

Clause 9 allows VCAT to impose a civil penalty of up to \$250 if a person has failed to comply with a rule of a company title corporation or service company.

Clause 10 lists the factors VCAT must consider when making an order.

Clause 11 confers flexibility on VCAT with respect to orders relating to money, enabling it to specify the proportions each shareholder must pay. Strata Community Australia (Vic.) in its September 2012 submission expresses the view that clause 11(c) lacks clarity in terms of reference to a person who is not a shareholder. From reading its submission, instead of it stating that there is a prohibition of the corporation or company from levying a contribution from another party to the dispute, there must be reference to a shareholder and not just to a party under this proposed section since a company or corporation has no power to levy any person who is not a shareholder. So Strata Community Australia's suggestion, and it would be good to hear from a government speaker in response to this, is that the clause 11(c) should be amended to state:

prohibit a corporation or company from levying a contribution from a shareholder who is a party to the neighbourhood dispute.

In relation to clause 12, if a dispute relates wholly to neighbourhood matters, a court must stay proceedings if VCAT can hear the matter and if the court is satisfied that the proceedings would be more appropriately dealt with by VCAT. If a dispute does not relate wholly to neighbourhood matters, VCAT will not have jurisdiction to hear the dispute.

In relation to clause 16, all penalties, including civil penalties, payable under this act must be paid into the

Victorian Property Fund (VPF) established under the Estate Agents Act 1980. Strata Community Australia in its submission states that the Victorian Property Fund is too broad for it to be established under the Estate Agents Act 1980 without the VPF giving proper recognition of appropriate purposes related to the strata sector. I believe that in earlier debates there have been some disputes about what these funds should best be used for.

The bill will also amend the Estate Agents Act to bring in VCAT's jurisdiction and, as I said earlier, the schedule sets out a range of matters to be considered as neighbourhood disputes, including the adequacy of measures to ensure the safety of children in units, which I imagine could bring in a whole range of complicated matters, possibly even in the jurisdiction of family law.

One of the matters listed as a neighbourhood matter is the design, construction and landscaping of residual land or units. The Law Institute of Victoria questions whether that relates to the pre-construction phase. In a separate submission Strata Community Australia wanted to know why clause (4) of the schedule — that is, units forming part of land owned by company title corporations — should be confined to company title properties and not be extended to properties with service companies; for example, repair and maintenance of units. It said that there is invariably a covenant by an owner in the schedule to a service agreement to keep the unit in good and tenantable repair and maintain all services on and servicing the owner's units. This dichotomy is reflective of a distinction pervading the list of matters whereby a company title corporation is taken to have more control over units than a service company. Strata Community Australia questions that distinction.

Among another set of concerns raised by VCAT is whether it would be adequately resourced to deal with additional matters arising from this legislation. Like all our judiciary at the moment, VCAT feels it is bearing an increasing burden and that the amount of funds it receives is not similarly increasing. There has been a steady increase in the number of cases dealt with under the owners corporation list since 2010, and there is a significant amount of resource pressure there. At the same time funding from the Victorian Property Fund went from \$1.2 million to \$1 million, an 18 per cent reduction. The lodging of proceedings under the legislation will add to the case load associated with that list. As we know, when resources are cut from the judiciary it affects the timeliness with which the matters are dealt. Alongside this new legal mandate, VCAT is asking for additional funds.

VCAT also notes that there is no amendment to the way money from the Victorian Property Fund can be used to take account of company title corporations and service companies as well as owners corporations for the purposes of dispute resolution and advocacy, for example. This matter does not affect VCAT, but VCAT draws the government's attention to it.

The Greens are happy to support the bill. It has caused significant difficulty that people have had to go to higher courts to deal with this uncommon if not unique arrangement covered by the legislation, so we are happy to support the bill.

Mr SCHEFFER (Eastern Victoria) — The opposition will not oppose the Company Titles (Home Units) Bill 2013. The explanatory memorandum states that the bill confers an additional jurisdiction on the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) to hear and determine disputes affecting company title corporations and service companies for building subdivisions.

The minister's second-reading speech indicates that the legislation gives effect to the government's election commitment to enable VCAT to hear and determine neighbourhood disputes involving residents who live in company title home units. The minister explained that company title home units are apartment blocks owned by corporations established under the federal Corporations Act 2001 and that buying a share in the company confers the right to use and occupy an apartment.

The bill indicates that a service company is responsible for the part of the estate that is common property and that the service company manages and maintains these common areas. The board of directors of the corporation operates under rules that require it to control the overall use of the apartments, and the separate service company — in which unit-holders also own shares — will have committees or chairpersons to manage the residual land.

Currently people involved in company title corporations and service companies have recourse only to the Supreme Court and other courts to resolve any dispute that may occur between members of the company and the company itself. As has been observed, this is onerous and expensive, and as many of the disputes are not complex they do not warrant the attention and consideration of a court. That is why it is sensible, as the bill provides, to confer a new jurisdiction on the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal to hear simple and legally straightforward neighbourhood disputes.

The bill therefore provides a schedule that lists the neighbourhood matters that comprise the jurisdiction of neighbourhood disputes that VCAT may hear and determine. Clause 5(3) identifies those matters that are not neighbourhood disputes and that therefore are not matters that can be heard or determined by VCAT. These relate to the sale, transfer or forfeiture of a share or shares in a company title corporation or service company; a lease of a unit of the property; a licence to use a unit; and the winding up of the company title corporation or service company. It is clear why these matters cannot be considered to be neighbourhood disputes.

Part 2 of the bill sets out the jurisdiction that VCAT has over neighbourhood disputes, including who is entitled to apply to VCAT. Clause 8 details the orders that VCAT can include as part of a determination and those that cannot be made — basically, orders that affect a person's shareholding and matters relating to the constitution of the company. Clause 10 identifies the considerations that VCAT must factor into its determination. Clause 11 aims to cover off on how VCAT should manage orders that involve the payment of money.

As we know, the government issued an exposure draft of the bill last year and received a number of submissions, including from the Law Institute of Victoria, Strata Community Australia (Vic.) and the Victorian Conciliation and Administrative Tribunal itself. Mr Barber commented on some of the issues that were raised in those submissions, and I also wish to put some of those matters on the record on behalf of the opposition. Each of the submissions identifies concerns relating to the drafting or substantive provisions of the bill. While the opposition raised these matters in the Legislative Assembly, so far as I know the government has not responded, and the opposition believes it should.

In its submission on the exposure draft of the bill, the Law Institute of Victoria says the bill is a positive development, and it is, but it also raises a number of concerns to which the government should respond. The first amongst these is that the bill at clause 5(3) lists categories of dispute that are not neighbourhood disputes that VCAT cannot hear or determine. The Law Institute says that in fact VCAT is not limited by this provision because it has this power under the federal Corporations Act 2001 and that the Victorian Owners Corporations Act 2006 and Subdivision Act 1988 should be amended to be consistent with the Company Titles (Home Units) Bill 2013 we are considering.

The law institute also queries whether VCAT should hear applications from a company title corporation or service company regarding overdue fees. According to the law institute, this power appears to be unintentionally inconsistent with VCAT's powers in relation to owners corporation matters. The law institute notes that applications for the restitution of fees are not listed in the bill as neighbourhood matters and therefore cannot be neighbourhood disputes that fall within VCAT's responsibility.

A further matter is raised in the law institute's submission relating to part 2 of the bill, which is headed 'VCAT jurisdiction over neighbourhood disputes'. In particular the submission draws attention to clause 8(1)(c)(i), which states that in determining a neighbourhood dispute VCAT may make any order it considers fair, including an order for the payment of a sum of money found to be owing by one party to another party. The law institute reminds the government that if VCAT is to be given the power to hear applications on overdue charges and fees, steps should be taken to ensure that other lot owners who are not liable for any arrears in fees and charges are not involved. The opposition has made it clear that we do not offer a view on these matters but places on the record that the minister should respond to them.

The opposition has also encouraged the government to respond to matters raised in a submission from Strata Community Australia. The first of these is explained on page 1 of its submission under the heading 'Drafting deficiencies' where it questions why the definition of 'rule' in the bill, is restricted to a clause of the constitution of the company title corporation or service company and can also refer to a by-law, rule or regulation made by the company title corporation or service company in accordance with its constitution.

Strata Community Australia thinks that the meaning of 'rule', under 'Definitions' in clause 3, should extend to a term of a service agreement, which is specifically excluded. Strata Community Australia makes the point that service agreements invariably include schedules incorporating covenants that have the same effect as rules. The submission cites examples such as the requirement to 'not park in a car space allocated to another owner' and 'not to make structural alterations and additions'. It also says that service agreements also include covenants by the service company to repair and maintain residual land.

Strata Community Australia also makes the point that the schedule to the bill that lists neighbourhood matters is unclear and that the matters listed in item 4 are confined to company title properties, whereas they

could be extended to properties with service companies. The submission says that owners invariably have a covenant in the schedule to a service agreement to keep a unit in good order and repair and maintain all services for an owner's unit.

The opposition believes that the point made in the Strata Community Australia submission on clause 11 warrants an answer from the government. Strata Community Australia suggests that clause 11, headed 'Monetary orders', must have been incorrectly drafted because as the wording stands the bill empowers VCAT to prohibit a corporation or company from levying a contribution from another party to the dispute. Strata Community Australia believes that there has been an error and that clause 11(c) should clarify that the prohibition would apply to a shareholder because a company or corporation has no power to levy anyone who is not a shareholder. The opposition believes that the government should clarify these matters.

The opposition has also drawn attention to the submission of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal on the exposure draft of the bill, which was prepared by Justice Garde. The submission says that clause 7 of the bill does not authorise a manager to be an applicant to VCAT. It points out that under the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act a dispute between a manager and the service company that has engaged the manager constitutes a consumer and trader dispute that falls under the jurisdiction of VCAT.

By contrast, under the bill before us today a dispute between a shareholder — a unit holder — of a service company and a manager will not be a consumer or trader dispute because the manager supplies services to the service company, not to a shareholder. The VCAT submission points out that the bill does not enable a shareholder to take his or her grievance against a manager of a service company to VCAT unless the service company does so. Again the opposition does not take a position on this but believes the government should provide an explanation.

We have also drawn attention to the funding implications of the bill, which were raised by Mr Barber, and we urge the government to take into account Justice Garde's appeal in VCAT's submission. VCAT has provided evidence that the number of applications that are being lodged in the owners corporation list is increasing markedly and posing considerable resource challenges because there has been no corresponding increase in the level of funding. On this basis VCAT says that proceedings under the new act will be comparable to the proceedings of other

kinds lodged in 2011–12. It estimates that the costs will be significant. VCAT states that the situation is serious and that it is incumbent on the minister to explain how VCAT is expected to manage it.

The opposition raised a number of these matters in the Legislative Assembly. As far as I am aware the government has not responded to either the issue of funding or to the other matters. We seek an explanation from the government to bolster the bill.

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — It gives me great pleasure to rise to contribute to the debate on the Company Titles (Home Units) Bill 2013. I was hoping that we would be able to resolve this before lunch, but I have quite a lot to say in answer to the questions raised by Mr Scheffer and Mr Barber, so I will commence my contribution now and then complete it after question time.

In the *Liberal Nationals Coalition Plan for Consumer Affairs*, released in 2010, the now government made a commitment to provide the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) with jurisdiction to hear company title home unit disputes relating to domestic issues in order to promote lower costs and provide speedier access to justice. This bill gives effect to that commitment.

As others have said, a public consultation process was held, throughout which the public was generally supportive of the bill. Some technical issues have been raised in today's debate, and I will detail them at some length later on. However, submissions providing comment on the exposure draft of the bill were received from the Law Institute of Victoria, VCAT, Strata Community Australia, the Australian Institute of Conveyancers Victorian division, the Real Estate Institute of Victoria and a small number of individual stakeholders.

In addition to this, both Ms D'Ambrosio, the member for Mill Park in the other place, and Ms Pennicuik took up the offer made by then Minister for Consumer Affairs, Michael O'Brien, of a detailed briefing, at which they asked a number of questions. I believe this has enabled us to speed this bill in the direction we are taking it today. I would like to take this opportunity to thank both the opposition and the Greens for their support and understanding and for taking up the minister's offer of an in-depth briefing, because I think that has made this an expedient bill. We will be able to deal with the bill today as well as the issues raised in that briefing.

In the time remaining to me prior to question time I will explain for the benefit of the chamber that company home title units are apartment blocks owned by corporations established under the Corporations Act 2001. A person becomes entitled to use and occupy an apartment by buying shares in the corporation, which then gives them a right of use and occupation of a particular apartment.

A company titles corporation's constitution typically contains the rules of use of and occupation in the block. These rules give the board of directors of the corporation the ability to control many aspects of the use and occupation of the apartments, including approval of share sales, leasing of apartments and matters such as whether apartment owners can have pets. It might be an easy thing to say, but each of those examples is fraught with challenges.

Stratum title properties combine elements of both a strata subdivision, with land or buildings subdivided into individual lots and company title, with a service company established under the Corporations Act 2001 to manage the residual land. Rather than having a specialised owners corporation, unit owners under stratum title hold shares in the service company that manages the residual land.

Finally, residents in company title and stratum title properties have similar issues regarding access to justice to resolve disputes that arise with their company title corporation or service company. The Corporation Act and the Supreme Court and other courts are the only forums to deal with disputes between members of a company and the company itself. In their contributions Mr Scheffer and Mr Barber both noted how unduly expensive it is in the current regime. This bill goes a long way to enabling a much more streamlined and cheaper approach to what to date has been quite a complex issue.

It is interesting to note there are currently about 950 Victorian home unit companies registered with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, comprising both company title corporations and stratum title service companies. As has been said, the bill confers jurisdiction on VCAT to hear and determine what are defined as neighbourhood disputes that affect a company title corporation or service company in a building subdivision, and these relate only to neighbourhood matters. As Mr Barber pointed out, there is an extensive list of what this relates to in the schedule to the bill. Some of those are worth noting here — for example, neighbourhood matters include health, safety and security, residual land, units in building subdivisions or forming part of land owned by

company title corporations, units forming part of land owned by company title corporations, design, behaviour of persons, dispute resolution, and notice and documents. It is actually quite comprehensive and is detailed in the schedule. It is all quite well laid out.

Business interrupted pursuant to standing orders.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Technology sector: broadband-enabled innovation program

Mr SOMYUREK (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question is to the Minister for Technology, Mr Gordon Rich-Phillips. I refer to the broadband-enabled innovation program and particularly to the regional cystic fibrosis e-health and telemonitoring pilot program that he launched last month. In his press release of 27 March the minister said that the program:

... would leverage the high-capacity broadband being rolled out across regional Victoria —

and that the program:

... will free clinicians to see the growing number of patients with this chronic disease and improve equity and access to health-care services, particularly for those in rural and regional Victoria.

What advice has the minister received from his department about the domestic upload and download speeds required for this project to be viable?

Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Minister for Technology) — I thank Mr Somyurek for his question, which is a very specific question about upload and download speeds required for the cystic fibrosis broadband-enabled innovation program (BEIP), which I was very pleased to announce last month. It is a fantastic project. I am not sure how Mr Somyurek thinks these projects come together or if he thinks I have been briefed on the technical speeds required to deliver that project, but I can say to Mr Somyurek that this is a project that the Victorian government is very pleased to support. We have put in place the broadband-enabled innovation program, which is an \$18 million commitment by the Victorian government to harness the potential of high-speed broadband. This government has been very clear that it is supportive of the rollout of high-speed broadband.

I think I know where Mr Somyurek is going with his question and his interest in this issue. The fact is the Victorian government is supportive of the rollout of high-speed broadband. That is not to say that the

Victorian government believes the way in which the national broadband network (NBN) is being rolled out by the commonwealth currently is the best way in which that infrastructure can be provided. The government has been very clear about that. There are a number of shortcomings in the rollout of the NBN; however, that does not mean the Victorian government does not support the rollout of high-speed broadband. Our broadband-enabled innovation program is specifically designed to create the applications to use the rollout of high-speed broadband, whether it is fibre, wireless or satellite broadband, to actually harness the potential of that. We are delighted to support that program and delighted to support the cystic fibrosis trial.

Supplementary question

Mr SOMYUREK (South Eastern Metropolitan) — The minister referred to high-speed broadband continually throughout his answer. Can the minister define high-speed broadband? For example, does high-speed broadband mean download speeds of 25 megabytes and upload speeds of 5 megabytes? As the minister well knows, telemonitoring requires very fast upload speeds.

Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Minister for Technology) — I thank Mr Somyurek for his supplementary question. I do not think Mr Somyurek will find any point of difference between the position he is taking and the government's view on this. Of course high-speed broadband is required for high-speed broadband programs, and that is why the government is supporting the BEIP program. Where we might differ with Mr Somyurek and his colleagues in Canberra is whether that same degree of high-speed broadband is required in that same way into every residence. There is a difference between rolling out high-speed broadband to deliver productivity benefits through projects such as the cystic fibrosis project that I was delighted to launch last month and using high-speed broadband to download movies in residences late at night. There is a difference in the use of that technology, and there is a difference in the benefits from that technology.

Teachers: enterprise bargaining

Hon. R. A. DALLA-RIVA (Eastern Metropolitan) — My question without notice is to the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession. Would the minister explain to the house the basis of the claims by the Australian Education Union that teachers will receive salary increases of up to 20.5 per cent under the enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA) agreed to in principle yesterday?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession) — I thank my colleague Mr Dalla-Riva for the question and certainly his interest in matters associated with enterprise bargaining agreements (EBAs). The first thing I have to say is I am delighted that the government was able to reach agreement yesterday with both the Australian Education Union and the Australian Principals Federation regarding a new EBA. It is an in-principle agreement because, as members will well know, it needs to be ratified by a majority of the membership of each of those organisations and also with the Fair Work Commission. It will be a few more weeks before that evolves, but the expectation is that this is an accepted — —

Mr Viney interjected.

Hon. P. R. HALL — If Mr Viney has a couple of questions, I will welcome questions from him. We are at question two; we have another eight to go yet.

Mr Viney interjected.

Hon. P. R. HALL — As I said, I am happy to answer that question, and I hope he is next with this particular question.

The agreement that the government reached with those unions yesterday clearly provides for a 3 per cent salary increase in the year 2013 and a 2.75 per cent increase in 2014 and 2015. If we also take the rollover provision of the previous EBA of 2.75 per cent in 2012, that makes a total of 11.25 per cent. Therefore, referring to the question asked by Mr Dalla-Riva, how do you explain the difference between 11.25 per cent and the 16 to 20.5 per cent claim by the union?

An honourable member interjected.

Hon. P. R. HALL — It is an important question and is important to understand this. The larger figure quoted by the Australian Education Union is true to the extent that it is an accumulative figure for a teacher who benefited from the government's 11.25 per cent increase under the EBA, plus it assumes satisfactory progression through various salary levels. It is true that if a teacher progresses each year under the terms of the agreement and also benefits from the salary increase offered by the government, they will achieve those figures, and I would say deservedly so. We have always said from day one that good performing teachers should be well rewarded, and they will be under this agreement.

What also needs to be clearly stated, though, is rather than an automatic progression through each of those

salary levels, as has been the practice in the past, there will be a rigorous assessment of performance, and people will need to deserve their promotion to the next salary level. Therefore if a teacher performs well, as we expect the majority will — perhaps not the great majority, but the majority — then they will progress through the salary levels. They will benefit from the increases provided for in the agreement and therefore will receive increases of the order of 16 to 20 per cent.

It is an excellent outcome for teachers and principals, and I might add for school support staff as well. We are pleased an agreement has been reached. We think it is a fair and reasonable agreement that will ensure that good teachers in the system are well rewarded and that will retain and attract teachers to the system. I thank all the people involved, particularly the departmental negotiation team who have slavishly worked over this now for a long period of time. We have achieved an outcome which I think all Victorians will benefit from.

Austin Health and Northern Health: merger

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question is for the Minister for Health. Earlier this week the minister and the Premier were asked questions about the government's plan to amalgamate the Northern Health and Austin Health services. Can the minister confirm the accuracy of the Premier's statement in the Parliament on Tuesday that the health services themselves asked the government to pursue this course?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — What I can say to the member is that there have been discussions with the health services and board members of both health services have had discussions with me about ways of integrating services and expanding services into the northern region. As the member will understand, there is significant population growth in the northern region of the state, and I think he understands that, although his colleague the federal Treasurer does not believe the population of Victoria is growing; he believes it is falling. However, I can assure Mr Jennings that if he is prepared to take a short trip to the northern part of metropolitan Melbourne, he will understand the enormous growth in population and the specific challenges that are faced there.

That is why last year the government put in place additional funding of \$25 million for an expansion of the emergency department at Northern Health — and that construction has commenced. That is a significant step towards dealing with some of the demand in the north. That is why in this chamber I recently referred to additional money being supplied for refugee help to a

number of our networks, particularly in the southern, northern and western areas, which face significant challenges. The challenge is to make sure sufficient resources are available. The point is that we need to find ways to make sure additional resources are put into those networks, that capital requirements are in place and there is resourcing to meet the demand. Discussions with staff from the health services are occurring. There are options for greater expansion and greater cooperation and collaboration between the two health services.

Supplementary question

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — Reflecting on the minister's answer, I can confirm that I trained in certain disciplines that enabled me to understand demographic trends, and I also visit the northern suburbs regularly. I can confirm his assertion that in fact it is a growing population and continues to grow. What I would like the minister to confirm is whether the Premier was correct in his report to the Parliament of Victoria that it was the intention of the boards of these health services to commence this amalgamation, or was it the government's idea?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — What I can clearly say to the chamber and the community is that for a number of years there has been discussion about the need to manage demand and to ensure that there are sufficient services in the northern region. I can confirm that discussions with health services have occurred over a lengthy period, and I can confirm very clearly that a number of people in those health services have raised the idea of greater collaboration and greater coordination between the health services and the need to have additional resources — both capital and recurrent resources — available for the northern region, particularly as that area goes forward. I can indicate very clearly that this is an ongoing discussion, and I have had significant input from board members.

Planning: Geelong activity centre

Mr RAMSAY (Western Victoria) — My question without notice is to the Minister for Planning, the Honourable Matthew Guy. Can the minister inform the house what action the government has taken to facilitate greater housing choice in central Geelong?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I thank Mr Ramsay for his question; it is the second one I have had this week on this most important topic, which is Victoria's second-largest city and Australia's twelfth-largest city — that is, central Geelong — and about the Napthine government's commitment to

central Geelong and how this government is ensuring that Victoria's population is going to grow sustainably and sensibly and across all parts of the state rather than just building a city state out of Melbourne, as was the Melbourne 2030 plan's initiative.

I can inform the house that I have introduced a very significant zoning change to central Geelong — that is, the activity centre zone for central Geelong. That is very important. It means that we have, for the first time, the equivalent of a capital city zone sitting over the central business district of our second-largest city to ensure that central Geelong can develop with certainty and with much greater density in the future than it has in the past.

This government sees Geelong as having an enormously bright future ahead of it. Mr Ramsay, Mr O'Brien and Mr Koch have been incredible advocates in this chamber for zoning changes and greater density in and around the Geelong area, and importantly Mr Andrew Katos, the member for South Barwon in the Assembly, has been an incredibly powerful advocate for greater Geelong and for Geelong in itself.

Mr Somyurek interjected.

Hon. M. J. GUY — Mr Somyurek, it might pay you to buy a VicRoads directory and head down to Geelong yourself. You might want to actually visit Geelong. Not many of your members in country seats actually live in regional Victoria, but on this side of the chamber we are proud to say that all of our regional members were either born in or are of the country and are proud to be of the country.

Honourable members interjecting.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I think the minister invited some of that cacophony of sound by addressing his remarks fairly widely rather than through the Chair as he had started out. I think that is the better practice. There was far too much volume from Mr Somyurek, and it is well beyond interjection when it is a barrage of comment.

Hon. M. J. GUY — The activity centre zoning for central Geelong will go a long way to building that city a much greater dense urban core. That is backed by the mayor, Keith Fagg, and the City of Greater Geelong. We want to see greater Geelong develop with a much denser city core and indeed build a city with a university in it — Deakin is to the north of the central business area — which has student accommodation. It brings vibrancy. It brings education.

Mr Ondarchie — And jobs.

Hon. M. J. GUY — It brings a whole range of jobs, as Mr Ondarchie says, to central Geelong. This activity centre zone change will ensure that that can now happen. It is something that is grossly overdue. This government got to work from day one to ensure that that activity centre zone could be put in place to realise that real change in central Geelong.

Importantly it balances off what the G21 regional growth plan initiative has for other areas of Geelong, and that is what I announced last week: developments around Lovely Banks to the north and of course the rebuilding and building up of the Armstrong Creek precinct structure plan areas. They are incredibly important to building a sustainable Geelong where we have outer urban growth but we mix it with greater density around the city core, and we do that sustainably and in a way that can encapsulate jobs and livability in Victoria's second-largest and Australia's twelfth-largest city.

Let me say again, on this side of the house we are proud supporters of regional and country Victoria. We are supporters of building a state of cities, not just a city state. That is so important for the future sustainability of Victoria. It is something that this government is getting on with and doing the planning work to see that Victoria builds and develops sustainably.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency: parliamentary review

Mr VINEY (Eastern Victoria) — My question is to the Minister for Health. On 23 October 2012 the minister moved for a review of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) to be conducted by the Legal and Social Issues Legislation Committee. As the minister knows, this agency was established as a result of an agreement signed by every state and territory government and the commonwealth government in March 2008. Under that agreement a review of the organisation is to be initiated by the ministerial council following three years of the scheme's operation. In evidence given at a public hearing of the committee last night it was confirmed that the three-year period does not expire until 1 July this year. Is it appropriate that as Victorian health minister the minister initiated a parliamentary review of AHPRA in breach of this agreement?

The PRESIDENT — Order! Do I understand these were public hearings last night? They were not closed meetings, and this evidence was led in public?

Mr VINEY — Correct.

The PRESIDENT — Order! Obviously the concern that I express is matters treated by committees need to be carefully visited in terms of any further comment, including in this place.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I can confirm that the agreement was for a three-year review of AHPRA. I can also confirm for Mr Viney and the house that the Victorian Parliament's responsibility is to the Victorian people. My responsibility as Victorian health minister is to the Victorian people, and I believe there are problems with the functioning of AHPRA. I have said this publicly, I have said it to AHPRA and I have said it at a number of the meetings of health ministers that I have attended. In fact that view is shared by a number of other health ministers around the country.

I sought at the Standing Council on Health to bring the three-year review forward, but I was unsuccessful in the first instance on that. I know the review will begin in due course, but the interests of Victorian patients, Victorian practitioners and the Victorian community are foremost in my mind. A national review will not necessarily get to all the issues that are significant for the Victorian community.

Let me instance a number of those. We had a situation in Victoria where we had a doctors' health program and we had a nursing and midwifery health program. At the time the scheme was put forward and agreed by the states Daniel Andrews — Mr Viney's leader and the member for Mulgrave in the Assembly — was the health minister. What he did not do in that agreement was establish a secure and ongoing funding source for the nurses' health program or the doctors' health program. I humbly suggest that a key aspect the committee in Victoria look at is the matter of the —

An honourable member — It is not funded.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — I have got to say it is not funded beyond 30 June in a secure and sustainable way. The nursing and midwifery funding is not secure and sustainable. I make the point that the security and sustainability of those programs is very much at the front of my mind, and that is in the interests of Victorian practitioners, it is in the interests of the Victorian community and it is in the interests of the Victorian health system.

It is my responsibility. The reason that I suggested the reference in the first place is that there are a number of problems with the functioning of the AHPRA system and a number of problems with Victoria's position

within that system. My view is not alone. I know for a fact that a number of ministers in other states share similar, and in some cases different, concerns. Many of those concerns will be dealt with in the national arrangements. I am not confident that there will be a full airing of all those matters in the national review.

However, I indicate that I regard it as my responsibility to make sure that there is a mechanism for those matters to be reviewed in Victoria by Victorians in the interests of Victorian patients and practitioners. I welcome the input of the Legal and Social Issues Legislation Committee, because I think it is well placed to look at matters that are in the interests of Victorian patients. I can indicate to the member that, as a member of that committee, he can do very good work in making sensible suggestions and working forward to get a better outcome.

Let me instance one other key matter. The cost of registration fees for doctors, nurses and other health practitioners has gone up significantly since we moved to a national system. One of the claims about the national system was that it would be more efficient. In fact the system has been more costly, practitioners have to pay more for their registration fees and those costs are ultimately paid by consumers. This is an important point about the efficiency of the system.

Supplementary question

Mr VINEY (Eastern Victoria) — It is interesting that the minister has confirmed that on failing to get the ministerial council to bring the review forward, he went out on his own frolic. I will just say in response to the comment that the minister made about the Victorian focus that in fact the reference is to review the annual reports of AHPRA, which are national reports, and members from his own side on that committee pursued questions last night in the public hearings on the basis of submissions from national medical bodies. We are pursuing national matters on this committee, not simply Victorian ones. I ask the minister: is it Victorian government practice to ignore binding agreements signed by every federal, state and territory government whenever it so chooses, and what does this say about his attitude to the important principle of sovereign risk?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I think the member misinterprets what sovereign risk is. I indicate that there will be a national review. There is nothing in the agreement that says there cannot be an earlier review by the Victorian Parliament. The Victorian Parliament is responsible for the legislation it enacted, and it is responsible ultimately for ensuring that we get good value and good outcomes for patients

in Victoria and for the Victorian health system. I make absolutely no apology for standing up for Victorian practitioners and for standing up for Victorian patients. What I do find offensive is Mr Viney's tendency to toady up to his Labor mates in Canberra. He has done it on matters of funding of health services, where he was prepared to support cuts to Latrobe hospital and cuts to key hospitals across Gippsland. He voted in favour of those, and he should hang its head in shame.

Mr Lenders — On a point of order, President, I draw to your attention that the minister is clearly debating the question and not answering Mr Viney's question on state administration and sovereign risk.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I uphold the point of order. This is in the area of debate. The minister has concluded.

I will make a short comment on this, and it is to the effect that I am a little concerned about matters that are on the agenda of committees and in the purview of committees that might present themselves as questions in this house. If the committees wish to pursue with ministers issues that are relevant to inquiries before committees, then it would be better to ask those ministers to appear before the committee, the reason being that in questions without notice there is a limited time frame in which a minister can answer. Perhaps the answer that is given will not always be the most considered answer, because it is an answer to a question without notice. Therefore, where committees have concerns or where they might seek information from a minister, it would be better to invite the minister, as I said, to appear before that committee and allow a fulsome examination of those matters and the questions that members of a committee might have.

In the circumstances Mr Viney has been responsible in the way he has presented that today, given the direction he is coming from and the fact that he is perhaps seeking to explore a wider area than is actually part of the committee's reference. Nonetheless, as I said, I have some discomfort about this process if it were to continue at other times. Members of committees might bear that guidance in mind in these matters in future.

Technology sector: government initiatives

Mrs PETROVICH (Northern Victoria) — My question is to Mr Gordon Rich-Phillips, the Minister for Technology, and a very good minister he is too. How is the government supporting the uptake of broadband, and what are the challenges in doing just that?

Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Minister for Technology) — I thank Mrs Petrovich for her question and for her interest in broadband in regional Victoria and for the opportunity to again talk about the Victorian government's broadband-enabled innovation program (BEIP). Mr Somyurek in his first question of the day asked about the cystic fibrosis trial that the Victorian government is supporting through the BEIP program. When that project is implemented fully it will allow sufferers of cystic fibrosis to receive more convenient consultations as well as receive more convenient treatment from their medical practitioners. That is a great project that really highlights the potential of high-speed broadband when it is supported by applications such as the ones that we assist through the broadband-enabled innovation program.

Last week I was delighted to be in Northern Victoria Region, Mrs Petrovich's electorate, with Ms Lovell at the centre for rural health in Shepparton for the launch of the latest broadband-enabled innovation program project, which is the UniTV project. This is a project which has been partnered by the University of Melbourne along with Ericsson, AARNet, Panasonic and of course the Victorian government to provide for the rollout of a high-speed broadband telecommunications television network between the Melbourne Dental School at the University of Melbourne, located in central Melbourne, and the centre for rural health in Shepparton.

This project allows students at the centre for rural health in Shepparton to view lectures, demonstrations and course material that are being delivered live in the classroom in Melbourne. During the course of that launch, which has been piloted particularly at the Melbourne Dental School at the University of Melbourne, we saw a demonstration of dental procedures being performed in Melbourne with students being able to critique, question and examine those procedures in Shepparton. Not only does it bring together the capability created by the broadband which is being made available, but it also brings together new technologies such as three-dimensional cameras which allow, in many instances for the first time, for very close examination of dental procedures.

It was interesting to hear from the head of the Melbourne Dental School about the contrast between the way in which dentistry was formerly taught with students basically needing to crowd over the shoulder of a dentist to experience procedures, whereas now the three-dimensional cameras are basically mounted on the tools that the dentist is using to allow an image to be created and beamed to students at that school in Shepparton. We also heard from some of the dentists

who now work at the hospital in Shepparton who, as a consequence of having been trained at the centre for rural health in Shepparton, have elected to be based as clinicians in rural and regional Victoria. It really highlights the potential and the importance of making those programs available throughout our regional centres, and that is why the Victorian government is delighted to support that.

One of the shortcomings Mrs Petrovich asked about was in the rollout of high-speed broadband. What we have seen with the national broadband network (NBN) is that, firstly, the commonwealth government has not allocated to Victoria our fair share of that rollout. Of the allocations for the three-year rollout program that NBN Co has announced Victoria only receives around 20 per cent of that allocation versus its 25 per cent population share. We also see that the rollout planned by NBN Co is in fact focused on inner suburbs in metropolitan Melbourne. One of the areas receiving the NBN is actually the CBD. Melbourne's CBD already has the best broadband in Victoria, but it is now getting NBN while regional areas and rural areas are not. We call on the federal government to ensure that we get an appropriate allocation into rural areas.

The PRESIDENT — Order! At the beginning of Mr Rich-Phillips's answer to that question, I heard — and I am not sure who actually said it — a comment which reflected on Mrs Petrovich and her motive for asking that question. I indicate very clearly that I take a tough line on this, because when Mr Pakula was mooted as a potential candidate for a lower house seat I did not entertain any interjections or commentary on Mr Pakula's possible ambitions and progress to a by-election for a seat in another house. Whilst Mrs Petrovich has been selected by her party to contest the federal election on, so far as we know, 14 September, the fact is that she is a member of this house and there is no responsibility on her to leave the house until quite close to that election. Mrs Petrovich has given me some indication of when she might be leaving the house, but until such time as she does I will protect very vigorously her right to participate fully as a member of this house, and I will not entertain inferences as to why she might be participating in particular debates or using questions or suchlike as a member representing her region at this time and being quite entitled to do so.

Wind farms: health effects

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question is to the Minister for Health. The minister may be aware that last week the Premier said at an opening of a new wind farm in the south-west that he

thought the turbines were magnificent and that Victoria's south-west was the perfect place for renewable energy production. We were particularly concerned about Mr Ramsay's representation on behalf of his constituents which he has raised on a number of occasions. One comment he made in the Parliament on 13 December 2012 was that his constituents were:

suffering a living hell as a result of the callous, insensitive and ad hoc plethora of wind farm planning permits handed out like confetti ...

In light of the concern expressed by Mr Ramsay on behalf of his constituents, is the minister in a position to be able to assist him or his constituents on the basis of the advice he has received about the health effects of wind farms?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I will confine my commentary — rather than express some expansive mode that Mr Jennings has outlined — to my portfolio responsibilities of health. I will make it clear that there are legitimate points to be made and to be discussed in a scientific way about the health impacts or otherwise of wind farms. I know that there have been a number of studies in the past, and I am aware of a large study that has the support of the University of South Australia.

Mr Lenders interjected.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — These are very important studies, so I am just trying to make the point that the University of South Australia, which leads that national study, will have an important role in assisting Victorians and national bodies in understanding the impacts. My department has certainly been discussing those issues with those researchers. We are very interested to see good, quality scientific research that seeks to put on an empirical basis, so far as is possible, decisions and understandings about the health impacts of wind farms and indeed the health impacts of a range of other environmental health factors across the community. In that sense I understand the basis of Mr Jennings's question.

I can indicate that my department has viewed this on a number of occasions with close scrutiny. We have had discussions with relevant universities about taking some role in some of that research. I can also indicate to Mr Jennings that the National Health and Medical Research Council has looked at the impacts of wind farms. Indeed at an early point it came to one conclusion and later came to a set of different conclusions. What I would say is that there are legitimate scientific questions to be answered on the

basis of properly conducted research and trials to establish the impacts of wind farms.

The responsible way forward here is to support and seek better scientific information. In the meantime decisions about wind farms are made by the planning minister, as Mr Jennings will understand. The coalition obviously made decisions at the election about setbacks and buffers to protect properties, and I will leave Minister Guy to answer the details of the planning aspects of these matters. However, I am certainly interested to pursue further steps that will elucidate and inform the community and government policy in a scientific way how we can best manage any health effects or otherwise of wind farms.

Supplementary question

Mr JENNINGS (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I thank the minister for his answer. It does not seem to me that he is in any position to act with the certainty of Solomon in relation to determining the balance of evidence before him. Can the minister take the opportunity to confirm whether he believes there is overwhelming scientific evidence that his department has collated and provided in advice to him?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I believe the member is seeking an opinion from me. Notwithstanding that, I am prepared to respond. I am happy to respond on what I regard as a significant community point. It is clear that there is some evidence on one side of the equation and some on the other side of the equation.

Mr Jennings — It's like climate change, isn't it? It's like climate change!

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — I am actually trying to be sensible and generous in this respect. I have sought advice from my department on these matters. What I can indicate is that there are significant gaps in the knowledge about the impact of wind farms on health and communities. That is why, on departmental advice and departmental discussion, we are seeking collaboration with some of the university projects, led out of South Australia, to get to a better understanding of these health effects. It is an entirely responsible position to look at the national arrangements — —

The PRESIDENT — Order! I thank the minister.

Early childhood services: teacher training

Mrs PEULICH (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development,

Ms Wendy Lovell. Can the minister inform the house of efforts being taken by the Napthine government to increase the availability of qualified early childhood educators?

Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development) — I thank the member for her question and her ongoing interest in all things education but particularly the quality of the teachers we have available to teach our children in Victoria, both in the education system and in the early childhood area. As we know, a strong and available workforce of qualified early childhood educators is essential to the future of early childhood education in Victoria. According to the most recent report on government services Victoria has the highest percentage of kindergarten staff with a qualification, at 94.6 per cent. That is something we can all be proud of.

However, with all the quality improvements we endeavour to instil into the early childhood area we cannot just sit on our laurels. We must continue to train more and better qualified early childhood educators to service Victorian families. This is why I am pleased to inform the house that 169 applications received through round 1 of the Early Childhood Qualifications Fund for 2013 have been approved. This \$1.3 million round includes funding for 94 early childhood teaching degrees and 39 diplomas of children's services. This builds on the 1992 scholarships we have already supported since coming to government. Another scholarship round will open later this year.

Victorian children deserve access to the best qualified early childhood educators, and I will continue working to ensure that every Victorian family has access to a quality early childhood program delivered by the best qualified early childhood educators.

Albury-Wodonga: air quality

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — My question is for the Minister for Health. Over the last few weeks I have spoken to residents of Albury-Wodonga who are experiencing quite poor air quality as a result of burn-offs that appear to be occurring under permit on both private land and on public land, presumably relating to fuel reduction and regeneration activities after woodchipping operations. This has been featured on the nightly news up there. People have experienced sore and itchy eyes, and one gentleman with asthma reported that for the last 10 days he has been shut inside next to an expensive air filter in the lounge room and has been wearing a mask with a filter when in bed. He said he made the mistake of going out to a friend's funeral last Friday, and as a result he had several rather

severe episodes on Friday night. Does the minister have a responsibility to ensure human health in this area?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I first of all want to thank Mr Barber for his question and indicate that he gave me some advance warning of this. I thank him for that. What I will indicate is that I do have some responsibility for air quality if there is a health impact. Monitoring of air quality is primarily the responsibility of the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) under the national standards. In terms of the burn-offs Mr Barber is referring to — and I presume this is the prescribed burning ahead of time to ensure proper safety outcomes and fuel reduction outcomes in — —

Mr Lenders — That is not what he asked; he was more specific than that.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — No, let me get there. I note Mrs Petrovich and the work she has done as Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Environment and the responsibility the Deputy Premier, Mr Ryan, has for that area in general. Obviously this is a point of balance. A number of points have to be balanced. There are industry concerns — and we have heard on a number of occasions about relevant industry concerns — and there obviously has to be a balance of safety and ensuring the right outcomes there.

I accept Mr Barber's point that there may well be a health aspect, and I will seek some formal advice on this and come back to him on this matter. I will seek some formal advice about any health impacts that may be generated and what ought to be done to manage those. However, this is obviously a balance between industry, the safety concerns that legitimately see fuel reduction make our community a safer place and any particular untoward effects.

Supplementary question

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — The minister referred to the EPA and its role in monitoring. In fact the EPA does very little monitoring of air quality around Victoria. However, the New South Wales government monitors air quality at Albury. Its data, which is freely available, says there are spikes of poor air quality — up to 200 parts per million of fine particles — on several days. I am asking the minister not as a matter of opinion but as a matter of scientific fact: does he believe that those levels of pollution are injurious to human health, and therefore does he believe that there is action that needs to be taken in terms of his responsibilities under the Health Act 1958?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I will seek formal advice on those particular levels. Again, I am not expert on the specific levels and I will seek that information. I will also, with the member's indulgence, pass the matter to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — I am his representative in this chamber — for advice on the Environment Protection Authority's monitoring regime and how that operates. I will come back with some formal advice.

Carbon tax: health sector

Mr O'DONOHUE (Eastern Victoria) — My question is to the Minister for Health, Mr Davis. Can the minister update the house on the impact of new commonwealth taxes on Victoria's health system?

Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) — I thank the member for his question and compliment him on the steps that will occur next week which will see him take on new responsibilities. I particularly thank him for this question because it is one that needed to be asked in this chamber this week.

The commonwealth government in its wisdom decided to put a carbon tax on our whole system in Australia, including Victoria. That includes all the health services, public and private, in our community. This is a matter I have discussed in this chamber before and one that the community has discussed more broadly. What is clear is that Prime Minister Julia Gillard has put a tax on our health services by requiring every health service to pay more money for the energy it uses, whether it be electricity or gas. This tax on our health services means they have to pay more for their electricity and gas and that means there are fewer resources available to be used for treating patients, supporting clinicians and doing the basic work of our health services.

It would be correct to say that health services in a normal business environment have a responsibility to reduce their energy costs; it is just good business practice. I certainly encourage them to do that. Across several governments there has been encouragement to health services to reduce their energy costs, but for any level of energy cost or efficiency the carbon tax will make that energy more expensive. It is a simple but unfortunate fact that every health service will be forced to pay more money because of Julia Gillard's carbon tax, and that will impact on every health service, public or private, in this state.

I turn to some of the major health services. Monash Health has paid in the first six months of the financial year \$684 830 in extra costs listed as carbon tax on its bills. Austin Health has paid \$601 997 in carbon tax for

the first six months of the year. This is a tax on health care by Julia Gillard and her ministers, Tanya Plibersek, the Minister for Health, and Greg Combet, the Minister for Climate Change, Industry and Innovation. It is a tax on health services. It is a dumb tax because it is not a tax that is reimbursed, unlike what happened when the Howard government brought in the GST and there was reimbursement for the costs of the tax to be paid by health services. A GST-free arrangement was put in place for health to recognise its special status. But that is not the case for our health services under the Gillard carbon tax.

Alfred Health paid \$403 000 more in the first six months of the year because it had to pay \$403 000 in carbon tax. For Ballarat Health Services it was \$250 000, Melbourne Health, \$234 000, Barwon Health, \$225 000, and Bendigo Health, \$220 000. These are significant imposts. Western Health, in Mr Finn's area, paid \$383 000. That is what those health services actually paid in carbon tax on their bills in the first six months of the financial year.

Mr Jennings interjected.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — Yes, they did. That is what it says: carbon tax on their bills.

Mr Jennings — On a point of order, President, there is an argument between the minister and me on this issue. My point of order is that there is no hospital in the country that pays carbon tax. They pay an attributed amount of money which is the equivalent of what the value of the carbon tax would be on their energy use.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I will determine the point of order because there is none. A point of order is about process. It is about a problem with our process. It is about a problem in terms of the standing orders of the Parliament. It is not about a member trying to get on the record a debating point, and Mr Jennings well knows this. Mr Jennings has taken the opportunity to get in his six pennyworth — a very old-fashioned term, I grant you — in terms of the minister's response. If Mr Jennings has concerns with the minister's terms in expressing his answer, there are processes available to him to explore those, including moving a motion that the matter be taken note of on the next day of meeting. At that point the facts can be discussed. This is not a point of order.

Hon. D. M. DAVIS — I advise Mr Jennings that \$6.7 million is the amount of carbon tax actually paid by Victorian public hospitals in the first six months of the year. He and his party disgracefully and shamefully

voted in this chamber in favour of that tax. Mr Jennings voted in favour of it, as did Mr Viney and Ms Broad.

Ms Broad — President, I have a point of order to raise, and I assure you at the outset that it is a matter relating to process and to what I believe to be a reflection on me. This is the first opportunity that I have had to raise this matter. You will recall that yesterday in question time, in response to a question I directed to Ms Lovell about the access of public officials to government housing towers, that in her response Ms Lovell made statements about where I live. At that point, President, you also made some remarks about this matter; however, your remarks are not recorded in *Daily Hansard*. The statement which is recorded in *Daily Hansard* in part from Ms Lovell is ‘Ms Broad actually lives in an apartment’.

As you will be aware, I live in country Victoria. I regularly make returns to the Parliament declaring where I live. Where I live was on the ballot paper at the last two elections. To allow a statement that I actually live in an apartment to remain in *Hansard*, given that I live in a house in country Victoria, which no reasonable person could compare with an apartment, is clearly wrong. I believe it reflects on me and my conduct, given that I swear undertakings to this Parliament, I think annually, about my residence. I raise this point of order in order to seek that the minister corrects that statement to the house.

The PRESIDENT — Order! Thank you, Ms Broad. I am obviously aware of the point you refer to from our proceedings at question time yesterday. I did ask Hansard staff to take into account the way in which Ms Lovell expressed her comment yesterday in her answer. I did so on the basis of a principle that I have about the security of members and the fact that I do not think it is appropriate that we have on the public record where members live, either by way of where they live as a principal point of residence or, in the case of country members, where they maintain accommodation in the city to allow them to pursue their duties here in Melbourne. As I understand the record, I am assured it does reflect that today, and I thank those people who took that into account.

We have some interesting issues now that occupy my mind from time to time, because what is said in this place actually goes out on the internet. What is said is already out there in the public and it is impossible to drag that back. In terms of the written record, we have some opportunities within reason to consider some matters.

I will read the passage as it now stands. I will come back and confirm my position on this, because I do not think it is fair to Ms Broad for me to make a final judgement on this at this time. It would be my view that the minister, in her comments, was not inferring that the accommodation in Melbourne that she requires to pursue her political responsibilities was in fact her principal place of residence. I do not think that the minister was entering that sort of debate at all. The minister was talking about apartment complexes and accommodation for people. She referred to her own arrangements, and it was in that context that she also referred to that. I do not think she was making any assertions or inferences on principal places of residence. She was simply saying that some members are in apartment blocks and they did not actually have some of the facilities that this particular development that she was referring to yesterday actually had.

I will look at the record again and make sure that what I have just said is an adequate explanation of the situation. If it is not, then perhaps I will have a discussion with the minister as well to ensure that the member’s grievance is addressed.

Ms Broad — President, I thank you for agreeing to look at the record. Perhaps I could make a request that in looking at the record we not seek to interpret what may or may not have been in the minister’s mind or what inferences may or may not be there, but simply stick to the facts and the factual statement about where I live as well as the statement made by Mr Guy earlier today about the fact that members do not live where they say they live. I am simply seeking that factual statements be accurate and that the question of second residences, which many members in this place, including Ms Lovell, maintain in Melbourne, are not relevant. Factual statements about where members live are about what they declare in their returns to the Parliament, what they declare in their returns to the Victorian Electoral Commission when their residence goes on the ballot paper, are very important matters and they should not be misrepresented in this Parliament.

Mrs Peulich — On a point of order, President, in view of the fact that you are actually taking the matters up and are going to give it some consideration on inspecting *Hansard*, could I also suggest that the matters Ms Broad has raised are not really matters that should be raised by way of a point of order. Members have adequate opportunity to make corrections, whether it is by a members statement or a personal explanation, where they feel that matters have been misrepresented. Many of us are routinely subjected to similar circumstances, both directly as members and also in relation to members of our own families. To

respond to this by raising a point of order the following day on a matter that is imputing, interpreting, attributing and stretching a long bow sets a very high benchmark for the level of debate in this chamber. The member certainly has all the opportunities to make the facts known if she feels that clarity is required. Related to that, there are inconsistencies also in the manner in which principal places of residence are reported in members returns, with some specifying the street, some even the number, others merely referring to the suburb. Perhaps that could also be looked at at the same time.

Hon. D. M. Davis — On the point of order, President, Mrs Peulich makes a very valuable point that it is a matter of fact and discussion as to where Ms Broad lives both substantively and when she is in Melbourne. They are legitimate points for debate, but they are not of themselves points of order.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I regard Ms Broad's raising this issue as a legitimate matter in terms of process, because she seeks my guidance on this matter from a process point of view and from the point of view of what is contained in the record. Some people in this place might consider that certain members might be fair game in terms of what is their principal place of residence and what are their arrangements in Melbourne that, as I said, are really quite important to them in pursuing their political responsibilities and representing their electorates. While some members might be seen as fair game, it cuts both ways, particularly for ministers, because ministers spend considerably more time at their residences in Melbourne than they do at their residences in country Victoria, which I dare say all of them would list as their principal place of residence. We need to be a little bit circumspect about this. I will look at the record.

Sitting suspended 1.03 p.m. until 2.07 p.m.

COMPANY TITLES (HOME UNITS) BILL 2013

Second reading

Debate resumed.

Mrs COOTE (Southern Metropolitan) — As I was saying prior to question time, this bill addresses an election commitment made by the coalition when in opposition, and now that we are in government the bill gives effect to that commitment to provide the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) with jurisdiction to hear company title home unit disputes relating to domestic issues in order to promote lower costs and speedier access to justice. As I said

earlier, I was pleased to hear both Mr Scheffer and Mr Barber acknowledge that the bill will achieve that. It will reduce costs significantly, and that is very important.

There have been some criticisms about VCAT, which is supposed to be a low-cost forum, and that the government's plans to increase VCAT fees mean that access to justice will be more expensive for some residents. I want to refute that and record exactly what is going to happen. It is expected that applications to VCAT to resolve a neighbourhood dispute will be heard in the owners corporations list. The current fee for an application to hear an owners corporation dispute in the list is \$38.80. VCAT is currently reviewing its fees and last December it released a regulatory impact statement outlining the proposed changes. The preferred approach is to progressively increase the recovery of costs associated with running VCAT over the next three years from its current level of an average 14 per cent to 45 per cent in 2015. Under the proposed changes fees will vary according to the monetary value sought by the applicant. The proposed fees for 2013 under the owners corporation list are as follows: \$116.50 where the amount sought is less than \$10 000 or where no monetary value is sought; \$364.60 where the amount sought is \$10 000 or more but less than \$100 000; \$371.80 where the amount sought is \$100 000 or more but less than \$1 million; and \$1462.30 where the amount sought is \$1 million or more.

The proposed changes will bring VCAT's cost recovery targets in line with the revised targets for Victorian civil courts where the cost recovery levels have fallen significantly since 2001. These changes are designed to distribute costs between the users of courts and taxpayers more equitably. They also reflect the general increase in the number of complex and resource-intensive cases that VCAT has been required to hear since the fees were last revised. Those details should alleviate some of the concerns that were raised in the earlier part of the day.

I want to speak at length about some of the issues raised by Mr Scheffer and by Mr Barber. Many of them were dealt with in the briefing that Ms D'Ambrosio, the member for Mill Park in the Assembly, had and also in the briefing that Ms Pennicuik had. I want to address some of the concerns, and I will deal with them as they arose.

The Law Institute of Victoria's submission noted an inconsistency regarding VCAT's jurisdiction in relation to specific exclusions of disputes under the bill, noting that VCAT's jurisdiction regarding an owners

corporation is not limited in such a way. This was a concern that both Mr Barber and Mr Scheffer raised. The response is that, unlike owners corporations, company title corporations and service companies are registered under the commonwealth Corporations Act 2001, and the government has chosen to limit VCAT's jurisdiction under the bill because it wants to minimise interference with the consistent operation of the Corporations Law throughout Australia in accordance with the state's obligation under the corporations agreement of 2002.

As noted by the member for Mill Park in her contribution to the debate in the lower house, the exclusions under the bill, which limit VCAT's jurisdiction relate to corporate governance matters. I am very pleased to see Mr Tee in the chamber, because I know he is across a lot of this, and I hope the answers I am able to give will help to clarify some of the issues. I would also like to thank him for his support for the bill.

On another issue of concern Strata Community Australia (Vic.) made reference to clause 11(c), which relates to a company title corporation or service company levying a contribution from another party to a neighbourhood dispute. This was something that Mr Scheffer referred to as well. Strata Community Australia submitted that the reference to another party to the dispute should be a reference to a shareholder who is a party to the neighbourhood dispute on the grounds that a company or corporation does not have the power to levy a contribution from any person who is not a shareholder. The response I have received in answer to this is that Strata Community Australia's submission does not take into account the fact that a company title corporation or service company may have the power to levy a contribution from a person who is not a shareholder — for example, a tenant in a unit owned by a shareholder. Clause 11(c) ensures that the protection the clause affords can extend to any party to the dispute against whom the company may have the right to levy a contribution.

Another issue raised was in relation to clause 4 of the schedule to the bill, which lists neighbourhood matters relating to units forming part of land owned by company title corporations. Strata Community Australia in its submission states that it is not clear why the matters listed in clause 4 of the schedule should be confined to company title properties and not also extend to properties with service companies. That matter was alluded to by Mr Barber in his contribution and I think it was also raised by Ms Pennicuk in the briefing. The response is that the bill's schedule takes into account the differences between company title and stratum title, and I outlined that at the beginning of my

contribution. It is also clarified by the bill under 'Definitions', as it was by the minister in his second-reading speech.

Clause 3 of the schedule deals with the external appearance of units and matters relating to units that affect the residential land or other units and applies to both company title and stratum title properties. By contrast, clause 4 deals with matters affecting the interior of the units. It applies to units in company title properties but not to units in stratum title properties. This is because under the stratum title a lot owner is the registered proprietor of his or her unit, and the service company only owns and controls the residual land. I am sure Mr Tee will get the details when we are able to give him this in writing, and obviously it will be in *Hansard*.

Another issue was raised in VCAT's submission — that is, that the bill does not provide a way for a unit owner or occupier to air a grievance about a manager or an office-bearer in the same comprehensive way that the Owners Corporations Act 2006 permits. I am advised that that act sets out what owners corporation managers do, so it is appropriate for VCAT to oversee disputes relating to those managerial functions.

There is already a mechanism for company title and stratum title unit owners and occupiers to air grievances against managers. Company title and stratum title properties are managed by either a board of directors or an external manager engaged to provide services on the company's behalf. Therefore a shareholder grievance against a manager's performance of these functions would be a grievance against the board, which the bill addresses.

Regarding grievances against office-bearers, the function of a company office-bearer will typically be dictated by the company's constitution, and a shareholder grievance about the performance of those functions would be considered a dispute relating to corporate governance. Such disputes are better left to the courts rather than to VCAT.

There are roughly three other areas of concern, and I will outline them to provide some clarification.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! The member's time has expired.

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Committed.

Committee

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I seek the committee's permission for Mrs Coote to sit at the table, given that she has done such a great job of providing explanations about some of the issues that have been raised.

Leave granted.

Clauses 1 to 5 agreed to.

Clause 6

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I thank Mrs Coote for some of the answers she has provided on this clause, which deals with the powers of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). I want to raise one aspect of that — that is, the expansion of the jurisdiction of VCAT to determine neighbourhood disputes, which the opposition supports. I wonder if the government has made any assessment of the numbers or indeed the impact that will have on the workload of VCAT and whether any additional resources will be provided to VCAT so that it can deal with these matters, bearing in mind that the VCAT list is a long one and it already takes a considerable amount of time for matters to be progressed.

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — In reply to the matter raised by Mr Tee — and it was raised also by Mr Barber — regarding an estimate of workload and available resources for VCAT, I refer the member to the explanatory memorandum which says that clause 19 amends section 75 of the Estate Agents Act 1980 to enable costs and expenses incurred in relation to the administration of the bill and the fulfilment of VCAT's functions and duties under the bill to be funded from the Victorian Property Fund. It goes on to list the purposes of that fund. I know the Law Institute of Victoria commented on whether the Victorian Property Fund had sufficient moneys to cover that. I am advised that the government has earmarked funding from the Victorian Property Fund to VCAT to cover the costs relating to neighbourhood disputes, and that this allocation is in line with the recommendations of the New South Wales Law Reform Commission. It is recognised and acknowledged that the workload will be increased, but there is also a commitment to ensure that the resources are made available, primarily through the Victorian Property Fund, so that VCAT is properly resourced to carry out this function.

Clause agreed to; clauses 7 to 12 agreed to.

Clause 13

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I have a couple of questions about this clause. In particular, it refers to the rule of a company and essentially provides that a company's rules cannot be inconsistent with the act or unfair. My first question is: in the context of this bill, what is the origin of the power to make or amend rules relating to buildings?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I have some advice; but I am not sure if it goes directly to the question Mr Tee asked, which was about how the rules themselves are generated and how somebody could seek to have a rule adjusted or changed in some regard.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — Perhaps I should be clearer. There are various model rules floating around but none of them deals with buildings or the sorts of issues that laws will pick up here in terms of entry to a property or the making of repairs. My question is: is there a vacuum in relation to the power to make these rules, or indeed a process for amending these rules?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — These rules, as I understand it, are made by members of a company at a general meeting, pursuant to the Corporations Act 2001. Therefore if somebody sought to challenge whether a rule was appropriate or wanted to change or generate a new rule, they would do so by seeking to convene a general meeting of the company as constituted under the Corporations Act.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I thank the minister for his response. Will a model clause or some guidance materials be provided to companies about the sorts of matters that should or should not be in these rules? I am concerned that we are essentially leaving it to individuals to try to muddle their way through.

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I am advised that following the proclamation of this act staff from Consumer Affairs Victoria will make themselves available to or communicate with those with an interest in this matter to provide some guidance about model rules and the like that companies might then use as a basis for constituting rules particular to them.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — That leads to the issue of the prohibition on making sure that an agreement does not unfairly discriminate against a shareholder or occupier of a unit. Again this is a term that is not defined; it is vague. Will the definition of

‘unfairly discriminates’ be a matter for each company to decide? Will some material be provided in relation to that? Will any assistance or support be provided?

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I am happy to stand corrected if I am wrong — I will take advice if my advisers indicate I need to on this particular matter — but it seems to me that clause 13, as Mr Tee rightly says, will mean somebody makes a judgement as to whether something fairly or unfairly discriminates against a person. In the first instance I would imagine it is the general members of the company itself who make a judgement as to whether these rules are fair or unfair, but I am sure they would structure them in a way that is fair.

If somebody thought the rules were unfair, they would have a right to challenge them, initially I would have thought through a general meeting of the corporation. If they were still dissatisfied at that particular point as I understand it this section makes VCAT available to them, through which they might pursue a matter which they consider to be unfair. Ultimately it is VCAT that would make that judgement, as courts do every day; they make decisions about what is fair or unfair, reasonable or unreasonable.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — Finally, clause 13 does not appear to include a term of a service agreement of a service company. I am wondering why that is the case.

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — Clause 13 says:

A rule of a company title corporation or service company or a term of a service agreement ...

So this particular clause does include matters concerning the terms of a service agreement.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I am looking at the explanatory memorandum clause notes for clause 13, where it says that a rule ‘does not include a term of a service agreement of a service company’.

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — Clause 13 applies, as it says in the terminology, to both a service company and a service agreement. The explanatory memorandum component of that, from which Mr Tee quoted, applies to a rule.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — Clause 13 starts off by saying:

A rule of a company title corporation or service company or a term of a service agreement ...

I am unclear on this.

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I appreciate that Mr Tee is seeking clarity on this. This is a technical issue. I would rather provide Mr Tee with a definitive written response to his exact question. If Mr Tee is happy for us to progress through the committee stage, I give him an assurance that I will provide him with a written response to this particular question, which I think is a matter of detail rather than principle.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I am happy to proceed on that basis. Just to be clear in terms of what I am asking for, it seems to me that the clause talks about a rule or a term of a service agreement. The explanatory memorandum says that:

... does not include a term of a service agreement of a service company.

I suppose I am teasing out that component of it and asking for an explanation of why that exclusion is there to the extent that it is. I am happy to proceed with the committee stage on the basis of the assurance I have received that I will get a written explanation dealing with those matters.

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I repeat that I understand Mr Tee’s dilemma. I do not think I am able to give him an adequate verbal explanation. That is why I am giving that commitment to give him a written explanation.

Clause agreed to; clauses 14 to 21 agreed to; schedule agreed to.

Reported to house without amendment.

Report adopted.

Third reading

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

That the bill be now read a third time.

In doing so, I want to thank those who participated in the committee and the second-reading debate for their contributions and assistance. As I said in committee, I will follow up one matter in writing with Mr Tee.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ondarchie) — Order! I am of the opinion that the third reading of this bill requires it to be passed by an absolute majority. I ask the Clerk to ring the bells.

Bells rung.**Members having assembled in the chamber:**

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Mr Ondarchie) — So that I am satisfied that an absolute majority exists, I ask members supporting the motion to rise in their places.

Required number of members having risen:**Motion agreed to by absolute majority.****Read third time.**

**CRIMES AMENDMENT (INTEGRITY IN
SPORTS) BILL 2013**

Second reading

**Debate resumed from 21 March; motion of
Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education
and Skills).**

Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I am pleased to rise to speak on the Crimes Amendment (Integrity in Sports) Bill 2013. From the outset I would like to say that the opposition does not oppose this bill. The only criticisms we have are that it was a long time coming considering that it was a national initiative. I would like to commend the federal Minister for Sport, Senator Kate Lundy, for her leadership in this area. It is disappointing that it has taken so long for it to come to this Parliament. It is not surprising, but it is disappointing that South Australia has already enacted similar legislation, which is a template. It is a sad day when Victoria follows South Australia.

As we would all agree, integrity in sport is very important and we all support that premise. In Victoria in particular, as a rule, we are all sports-minded people, sports fans and very passionate about the teams we follow. We would hate corruption involving betting on sporting events to affect our enjoyment of sport. This legislation not only covers corruption in sport and increases penalties for people who play a role in sports corruption, but it also covers events that can be bet on such as the Academy Awards and also elections, which is an interesting one. When you take into account —

Mrs Peulich — What are the Gillard odds?

Mr LEANE — It is an interesting concept. When it comes to elections in the political sphere members of this chamber would be very aware what the policies and actions of government might be able to affect; they can very much affect the outcome of an election. One

would have thought that soon after the 2010 Victorian election the new Baillieu-led coalition government would have been at very short odds — just about unbackable — as a one-term government to win the next election. But then as time went on the odds would have blown out quite considerably. The opposition's odds in terms of being able to actually win an election in 2014 would have decreased. The sort of scenario of government MPs at the time backing and putting a bet on the opposition winning is a possibility. Then government members could have gone out and tanked for two and a half years. I am not saying that is what has happened; I am just saying it is an interesting concept and could happen, and it is something to explore.

The shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation, Mr Eren, the member for Lara in the Assembly, did a forensic examination of the bill in his contribution to the debate on the bill in the other place, so there is no need for me to put on the record the opposition's position to that degree. There is no need for me to take up the hour allocated to me as lead speaker for the opposition. Even Mr Elasmar is looking at me in a certain way to tell me that maybe that would not be a good idea and is probably unnecessary.

There is obvious credit in what the bill aims to do. The government made an interesting announcement about it on 5 March, saying that it would act in this way and get tough on match fixers. A headline in one of the main papers, the *Age* of 5 March, was 'Baillieu gets tough on match fixers'. The then Premier was talking tough. Talking about cheats, he is reported as saying:

... they will be caught and punished under these tough new laws ...

But further on in the article the Minister for Racing — now the Premier, Dr Napthine — was quoted as saying he did not believe there was a problem with match-fixing or event fixing in Victoria. In that article the then Premier came out tough, saying there was a problem and that he was going to fix it up. In that same article Dr Napthine pretty much contradicted the then Premier and said that he did not necessarily agree with what Mr Baillieu said. That was on 5 March. We all know what happened on 6 March — Dr Napthine rolled Mr Baillieu. It was flagged the day before that Dr Napthine was undermining and white-anting the then Premier by contradicting him in a newspaper article, which would have been quite embarrassing for Mr Baillieu. No wonder Mr Baillieu pulled up stumps. He came out and said he was going to get tough on something, and then some bloke who was supposed to be in his cabinet, who all the while must have been

white-anting him and wanting to grab his job, came out and contradicted him.

I have to say it is lucky that this betting in politics is not extended to who is going to take over as leader at the state level, because I would have put my money on Mr Guy. I would have said Mr Guy was an easy favourite, or an unbackable favourite, but I would have easily done my dough. Who would have known that a rank outsider would come from nowhere and come over the top? Let us hope no-one puts a bet on anything — whether it be political, the Oscars, or a sporting event — that is affected and duded by systematic corruption. It is a sad state of affairs.

As I said from the outset, the government should be applauded for eventually getting this legislation to this place. We do not oppose it and will be happy to see it passed today.

Ms HARTLAND (Western Metropolitan) — It is interesting to follow Mr Leane. I do not think I will talk about odds in politics et cetera; I might actually talk a little about the bill. The Greens support this bill, but we have some concerns. It is interesting to read the Attorney-General's second-reading speech to see his claims that this bill is closely modelled on the New South Wales bill. We note that both the New South Wales and South Australian bills on match-fixing created an offence for the use of inside information, yet there is no reference to the use of inside information in the Victorian bill. We are not quite sure how this bill can be modelled on the New South Wales bill when it does not actually do what the New South Wales bill does.

While this is clearly a bill we will support, the Greens have grave concerns about betting in general. One of those issues is the fact that the bill does not address issues around how betting on all kinds of things, as Mr Leane said, is tending to take over. Having grown up in Australia, I do not mind a bet every now and again myself — Australians are well known for wanting to bet on two flies going up a wall — but when you hear children talking about betting odds on football games rather than how good someone was or how much fun it was, you have got to start getting a bit concerned.

Quite recently an Australian Crime Commission report made it clear that there is a real concern about sport and the involvement of organised crime, especially when drugs are involved. I think we can presume that some athletes — I hasten to say I think it would be quite a small group of athletes — are being influenced by organised crime and possibly being blackmailed

because of their use of drugs in sport. I think there are issues in this bill that have not been addressed at all.

I take up a bit further the issue of the way gambling is being directed at children. Recently Senator Richard Di Natale released an exposure draft of a bill to ban the broadcasting of betting odds during sports and sports-related programming. He has also written what I think is an extremely good opinion piece which appears in today's *Age*. In the article he makes a few points, some of which I will refer to. Richard has been campaigning around this issue, and he is particularly concerned about the appearance of Tom Waterhouse as an announcer and commentator when quite clearly Mr Waterhouse is a bookmaker. It seems that these lines have been crossed in the media.

In his article Richard said:

But these predictable criticisms have been dwarfed by the overwhelming number of positive responses from the public. The issue has clearly hit a nerve.

Some people argue that we don't face a real gambling problem and this is simply another moral panic. The statistics don't back that up. Turnover from online betting, of which sports betting is a major component, has risen from \$2.4 billion in 2007 to almost \$10 billion in 2012.

I do not think that is a statistic we want to encourage. The article also states:

In recent years the explosion in sports betting advertising means that it's become impossible to watch a game of footy without gambling odds and sports betting advertisements being rammed down our throats. The number of betting ads on free-to-air TV quadrupled in the last two years — in 2012 there were 528 individual ads, collectively broadcast more than 20 000 times.

Rather than children experiencing the enjoyment of sport — who is going to win and how well it is all going — they are being bombarded with betting odds. One of the problems with this for children especially — we all know that children take in a huge amount from television — is that they are absorbing the idea that it is normal to bet, that it is normal behaviour. The Greens do not think it is acceptable for children to be continually bombarded with betting odds, or adults for that matter either.

With those few words, I indicate that the Greens will support this bill, but we would very much like to see the government, together with the federal government, actively looking at what can be done around the issue of sports betting and its implications for our society, especially children.

Mr DRUM (Northern Victoria) — I have great pleasure in rising to speak on the Crimes Amendment (Integrity in Sports) Bill 2013. The Attorney-General,

in conjunction with the Minister for Sport and Recreation, has put together a good piece of legislation. We in the coalition are confident that this legislation will enable sport, which has such an integral place in the lives of so many Victorians, to go forward with the integrity it needs.

Much has been said about integrity in sport over recent months. There was the Lance Armstrong fiasco when upon retirement many of his former team mates started to give him up one by one by writing books about his abhorrent behaviour during the time he won all those Tours de France. Cycling is always going to be in the gun because of the relevance of enhancing performance or increasing physical capacity. With cycling, there is a direct performance result when compared to the use of drugs in other sports. A whole range of factors can determine the outcome of an event, but cycling, long-distance running and weightlifting are all sports where there is a direct correlation between the ability to improve physical condition and the ability to be successful in competitive events.

That said, this bill goes more to the integrity of sports in relation to betting and, more specifically, to people who are going to cheat in the pursuit of personal benefit. Recent months have seen the banning of Damien Oliver from horseracing for 12 months following revelations that he bet on a rival horse in a race in which he was riding. In recent years some cricketers have been found to have acted in a manner likely to result in personal gain, such as by bowling no-balls at particular points in games. We have all read about or seen these types of actions. These behaviours can have the consequence of bringing a sport into disrepute, and they have also widely been found to be giving many people personal benefit.

With wagering and betting on sports events now taking a more mainstream place in our sporting events, we are seeing an ever-increasing awareness of the economic impact of our sporting events — we are all becoming much more aware of that — therefore it has become necessary for the government to act in a way that will protect the integrity of all our sports as well as inspire confidence in the wagering public. We need to make sure that every event is participated in on its merits for the entirety of the event.

Many stories float around, and some might call them bush tales. I remember a story about an old Victorian Football Association team, which apparently was two games clear on top of the ladder going into the last game. It did not really matter whether the team won or lost the last game, and the rumour was that they had paid for their end-of-season trip by throwing the last

game and betting on the opposition. It is a nice little story, and we will never find out whether it is true; nevertheless a range of rumours continue to permeate through bush folklore.

There is also a story about the member for Gippsland East in the other house. Legend has it that Mr Bull once started himself in the ruck in a local grand final. At the opening bounce he charged the opposition ruckman and gave away a free kick. He promptly proceeded to badmouth the umpire and got a 50-metre penalty awarded against him. He then badmouthed the umpire again and got another 50-metre penalty. Legend has it that, before anyone knew, Mr Bull was standing on the goal line while the opposition ruckman kicked the first goal over his head. Obviously this went unnoticed for many weeks until, again as the story would have it, it was unearthed that a significant betting plunge had been put on the opposition ruckman kicking the first goal of the game. We know this story is totally impossible to believe, because the said member of Parliament would never have had the vertical leap to play in the ruck anyway, but this story shows that it is easy for any professional footballer to get in on the act of altering an outcome in a manner that will be illegal under this bill. I suppose that is what we are trying to work through.

As Mr Leane was saying, this goes to more than just sporting events. Political elections will be covered by this bill, as well as the Academy Awards and all the other awards that can be bet on with your local Sportsbet account. Last month I even found myself checking who was favourite to become our next Pope. I saw that Pope Francis started off at about 10 to 1 and firmed up to around 6 to 1 when, with the white smoke, he was finally given the job.

This legislation has been brought forward following a report by the Australian Crime Commission (ACC). As Ms Hartland pointed out, the report issued by the ACC highlighted the fact that organised crime is starting to have an unhealthy involvement in many of our professional sports, and this is causing serious concern to the ACC. The ACC mainly pushed on the issue of performance-enhancing drugs, which are not associated with this type of loss of integrity. However, the report is picked up on by this bill and is something that we need to be very aware of.

The ACC's report was able to highlight that there was one particular A-League game last year where there was a 40 per cent increase in the amount of money that had been bet compared to the average game. This caused serious concern. The ACC looked into it very carefully to find out why it was that that one particular

game, which seemed to be quite normal, which seemed to have a normal result, which did not have late changes of players in or out of the team and which was of no great consequence, had such an enormous betting plunge worldwide. The detailed investigation simply found that at on that particular Friday afternoon there was a void in the betting markets in world basketball, world soccer and American sport. For just a couple of hours there were very few contests around the globe for people to be able to bet on, and people found that an A-League soccer game in Australia could give them their weekly dose of wagering.

It is comforting to know that the authorities are looking into and checking where we are at with our respective sporting teams. I do have some concerns about some of the language that is used in the ACC report. To give an example of a sentence, the report says:

The level of suspected use of peptides —

we are talking about performance-enhancing drugs —

varies between some sporting codes —

so the language is quite loose and very broad in its target —

however officials from a club have been identified as administering, via injections and intravenous drips, a variety of substances, possibly including peptides.

I find that a lot of the language in this report uses words like ‘possibly’ and ‘continually’. It goes on to say:

Moreover, the substances were administered at levels which were possibly in breach of WADA antidoping rules.

I am very concerned that many people in sport have had their reputations questioned over a report that continually talks about ‘possible’ breaches and ‘possible’ products that ‘might’ be outside various codes. However, the report of the ACC has certainly given us impetus as a government to pass this legislation in a timely manner. Whilst we were well down the track of getting this legislation through anyway, it has turned out it is very timely.

I will provide some background. On 23 January this year the racing integrity commissioner, Sal Perna, released the report of his own-motion inquiry into race fixing. Significantly, Mr Perna found that there was no evidence of systematic race fixing in Victoria, but he made 11 recommendations to improve and strengthen racing integrity so that the racing industry is best equipped to deal with the new and emerging challenges. Recommendation 7 of his report states:

That the government expedite the introduction of ‘cheating at gambling’ legislation as a major priority.

That is what we have done.

On 7 February the Australian Crime Commission report on organised crime and drugs in sport was released, and I have already spoken about that report. Whilst the majority of that report goes to drugs in sport, it does mention some of the complications and some of the challenges facing all professional sports as a result of the level of betting that is now seen as mainstream behaviour.

I also need to mention that in 2011 there was a review of sports betting regulation undertaken by Des Gleeson, the former chief steward at Racing Victoria. His recommendation was that the Department of Justice liaise with Sport and Recreation Victoria in relation to the development of criminal provisions to deter and deal with match fixing.

On 18 November 2011 there was a meeting of the Standing Council on Law and Justice at which all the ministers agreed to pursue a comprehensive approach to criminal offences in relation to match fixing. With the online betting that is available to everybody now and the number of events that go across the various states, it is now quite common for a person from Victoria to be in New South Wales placing an online bet with bookmakers in the Northern Territory on events that are being held in Western Australia. We therefore need to ensure that to deal with the major issue of irregularities impacting on a result the legislation is consistent across the states. Apart from looking after the integrity of the sport for the sport’s sake, it is also critical that we maintain the ability of the wagering public to have confidence. We have already spoken about the social and economic importance of sporting events to Victoria, and we must make sure that that is never understated.

The New South Wales government has amended its Crimes Act 1900 to include provisions that prohibit certain conduct that can corrupt the betting outcomes of events on which it is lawful to place a bet. The South Australian Parliament is currently considering a bill, the Criminal Law Consolidation (Cheating at Gambling) Amendment Bill 2012, that includes provisions similar to those in the New South Wales legislation. The Victorian bill before the chamber today creates provisions which are based substantially on those in South Australia and New South Wales, which should give us that consistency that we are looking for across the states.

In relation to some of the content of the bill, the definition of 'bet' is very broad to make sure that it encompasses the wide variety of legal gambling that is now available, and we have talked about some of those events on which you can now bet. Conduct that corrupts or could corrupt the betting outcome of an event or even a contingency is a key concept in this legislation. The event contingency provisions apply where there is conduct that, if it were engaged in, would be likely to affect the outcome of any type of bet on any part of an event or event contingency.

There must be a direct connection between conduct which is likely to impact on the outcome of an event and the outcome of the betting, and this is another very important aspect of the bill. Where there is an event in which many people are making decisions which could be seen to be detrimental to someone's betting outcome, it is critical that everybody involved in the event is secure in the knowledge that they can make decisions and they can behave however they want because they are not affected by the betting outcome. This will be critical for the integrity of the sport.

I want to touch briefly on the point raised by Ms Hartland in relation to the New South Wales legislation. We have not gone down the path of including accessing inside information, which is an offence under the laws of South Australia and New South Wales, primarily because that is an offence already. If it can be proven that you have by deceptive means gained financial benefit, that is already an offence. This bill is primarily about conduct that would alter the outcome of an event; for example, match fixing or cheating at gambling. In the purest sense Ms Hartland is probably right — gaining inside information is possibly cheating — however, the bill does not include the knowledge of tactics or form or other issues which may give you an advantage. We have put that into a separate basket to make sure that we can look at the actions which are likely to change the betting outcome — that is, change the outcome of an event for a specific personal gain. That is the best way I can answer the question raised by Ms Hartland.

With those few words, I will conclude my contribution. I know there are few other members who would like to talk about this bill. We are delighted to be doing our bit. Sport is such an integral part of our social make-up and so much a part of our existence, and we need to make sure that the integrity of all our sports is maintained and that members of the wagering public are able to place bets on races or sporting events in the full knowledge that all those who are involved are going to be trying their very best to win.

Mr ELASMAR (Northern Metropolitan) — I rise to contribute to the debate in this house on the Crimes Amendment (Integrity in Sports) Bill 2013. Excellence in sport in ancient Greece was for the health of the body and the glory of winning. However, today we have professional sport which appears to be all about money and power, and where there is big money involved sport becomes just another profit-making industry. Match fixing at the racetrack and at other sporting events is so commonplace we often shrug our collective shoulders and say, 'What can we do?'.

Sporting heroes are often seen in the media apologising to their fans after being caught out by scientific medical tests for using performance-enhancing drugs. Today the use of steroids and other stamina-enhancing drugs is an almost daily occurrence in the sporting industry, and this mentality of winning at any cost is ruining not only the lives of our young sportsmen and women but also the very foundation of Australia's reputation for good sportsmanship here and overseas. We now have the prospect of increased international criminal activity due to internet gambling.

The bill inserts new offences into the Crimes Act 1958 and puts in place mechanisms to ensure honesty by providing heavy penalties for these offences. New South Wales and South Australia are also legislating to clean up their sporting industries. This will provide a uniform approach to a serious problem that crosses all boundaries. The Australian Crime Commission report released last month highlighted major concerns about the use of drugs and the involvement of organised crime in sport. Corruption in sport is not new. Victoria's racing integrity commissioner, Mr Sal Perna, recently conducted an inquiry which found there is no systemic rorting of race fixing in Victoria. Although that may well be the case, we need to be vigilant to ensure that racing is a trustworthy activity for the many punters in the racing community.

All major sporting codes support the addition to the legislation of criminal provisions, and Mr Perna's 11 recommendations to improve and strengthen racing integrity are worthy of cross-bench support. Put simply, cheating-at-gambling legislation is the only way to protect our future economy and establish consumer confidence in the racing and sporting industry in Victoria. The penalties for offences under the bill are set at a maximum of 10 years imprisonment. This is in line with the other states I have mentioned and is appropriate in order to protect the integrity of the state's multibillion-dollar sporting industry.

I would like to point out that not every sportsperson resorts to cheating or performing under the influence of

drugs when they are not doing well. My nephew won a gold medal for clay target shooting in the Commonwealth Games, but the next week he could not hit the target. He shot 125 out of 125 one week, and the next week he could not hit 117. It is about how you feel on that day; it is not about cheating or taking drugs. As Mr Leane said, the opposition is not opposing the bill.

Mr RAMSAY (Western Victoria) — I rise to speak in the debate on the Crimes Amendment (Integrity in Sports) Bill 2013. I do so because I love my sports, both as a participant and as an observer. Although I never achieved the lofty heights of my parliamentary colleague Mr Drum, I did play for the Birregurra Saints, albeit briefly. I have also been a lifelong supporter of the greatest football team in the AFL, the mighty Geelong Cats, who I point out to Mr Guy demonstrated their winning skills again last week. It was a very satisfactory win.

Regardless of the sport they prefer, Australians have always viewed sport and competition in sport as an important part of the social fabric of life. In fact Victoria is considered to be the state that embraces sport and supports its competitions more per capita than any other state in Australia. Sport in this country is critical to our social, cultural and economic life. The wide calendar of sporting events, whether it be for the Australian Football League, the Australian Rugby League, soccer, tennis, basketball, racing, the grand prix or shooting, to name just a few, is a vital contributor to our state economy and brings world-class competitors to our stadiums and into the homes of the Victorian public.

Above all Australians demand that sport and sporting competitions are run and participated in in a safe, fair and ethical manner. In fact we have an obligation as a society to encourage our children, friends and others to be active in sport as our bodies are designed to move, not sit, and unhealthy diets and a lack of exercise are contributing to a significant rise in obesity and diabetes. I remember that when I accompanied the Minister for Sport and Recreation, the Honourable Hugh Delahunty, to openings and events related to his portfolio he always used the line ‘Be active more often’.

Mr Drum — More people more active more often.

Mr RAMSAY — I thank Mr Drum: more people more active more often.

Australians always like a bet, or a punt, as Ms Hartland mentioned in her contribution. Sadly I believe we have moved from the spirit of the fun of betting on two-up, originally enjoyed mostly by our war veterans, to

technologically advanced betting fixtures. Our lives are now being saturated with betting opportunities, and it seems that there is little in life that you cannot have a bet on. Even visual mediums are now saturated with betting competitions, and the lines are being blurred as to what is story content and what is blatant marketing and promotion for a betting agency. Together with this near frenzy by promoters for people to have a bet and the high financial stakes involved in running professional sporting events comes the increased potential for Australian sports to attract betting interest and an increased potential for criminal involvement from around the world.

We have created a situation that recognises the importance of sport to the culture and identity of this country, and we expect participants as professionals to achieve and compete at the highest level because sport is now a business with high financial stakes. If we mix this in with a growing culture of betting in this country and all that brings, it is even more important to ensure the integrity of sporting events and ensure that public confidence is not undermined. The government is therefore introducing this bill to address the threat posed to the integrity of Australian sports by the possible fixing of matches, races and other sporting events. The government is committed to protecting sport lovers all over Australia by stamping out unethical behaviour in sport. On that basis the government is a strong supporter of the national policy on match fixing in sport, of which a key part is the creation of criminal provisions for cheating at sport — something which is supported by all jurisdictions.

The bill also applies to racing. On 23 January the Victorian racing integrity commissioner, Mr Sal Perna, released his *2012 Own Motion Inquiry into Race Fixing* report. As Mr Drum said, Mr Perna found no systemic race fixing in Victoria, but he did make 11 recommendations to improve and strengthen racing integrity assurance so that racing is better equipped to address new and emerging challenges.

The bill will also deliver on a recommendation from the *2011 Review of Sports Betting Regulation* by Des Gleeson that encourages a closer relationship between the Department of Justice and Sport and Recreation Victoria. The bill is closely modelled on legislation introduced recently in New South Wales and presently before the South Australian Parliament.

The bill creates new offences in the Crimes Act 1958 to tackle anyone who corruptly seeks to manipulate the outcome of a sporting event for betting purposes. The offences in the bill apply to conduct that corrupts or would corrupt a betting outcome and/or compromise

standards of integrity. The bill also creates in specified circumstances an offence of a person encouraging another person to conceal from a relevant authority conduct or an agreement in relation to conduct that corrupts or would corrupt a betting outcome. The penalties for offences under this bill are set at a maximum of 10 years imprisonment.

The purpose of this bill is to send a very clear message that the fixing of sporting matches and other events will not be tolerated in Victoria. It is in line with the government's legislative framework to protect the integrity of sports in Victoria, which is vital to provide confidence in the passion of our sports-loving nation. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms TIERNEY (Western Victoria) — I also rise to speak on the Crimes Amendment (Integrity in Sports) Bill 2013, which deals with integrity in sport. I indicate to the house that the Labor opposition will not be opposing this bill. In summary, the bill seeks to amend the Crimes Act 1958 as a response to match fixing and cheating by introducing offences in relation to corrupting the betting outcomes of a sporting event. This bill implements a key objective of the national policy on match fixing in sport agreed to by commonwealth and state sports ministers to tackle match fixing in a consistent way.

It is unfortunate that we find ourselves in a situation where many cases have become public and have been featured in the media, which has described how match fixing has been undertaken in a range of different sports. That has led us to respond today in a legislative sense. This bill is designed to protect the integrity of sport now and into the future. I am a little bit perplexed, though, as to why it has taken nearly two years for this important bill to be brought before the house.

As we have heard from previous speakers, sport, whether we watch it or play it or do a combination of both, plays a major role in Australian culture and in the wellbeing of individuals as well as communities. Love of sport is synonymous with sporting success. Everyone likes a winner, and we are always pleased to have someone amongst us who has performed incredibly well in whatever sport they are playing. Last Monday morning many Australians would have been glued to their television screens or, as in my case, driving and listening to radio programs which were giving their listeners newswatches as to where we were up to in terms of the play-off in the golf championship. It was fantastic to see Adam Scott win the US Masters Golf Championship, the first Australian to do so. Not only that but we had Warrnambool's Marc Leishman, a proud resident of western Victoria, in the play-off,

together with Queensland's Jason Day. We saw three of our own in the top five at the tournament, and I think any country would be incredibly proud of that situation at any time.

It is from wonderful achievements like that that we see spin-offs of the benefits from sport, whether it be at a professional level or in encouraging the young ones amongst us to take up sport and be active. However, it is frightening that something as healthy and as pure as sport, which is accessible to most regardless of social or economic standing or physical or mental capabilities and is a very democratic activity, can be afflicted by bad behaviour — in fact criminal behaviour — that then threatens integrity in sport.

In terms of the particulars of this bill, it creates five new indictable offences. The first one alters the existing crime of obtaining a financial advantage by deception to include where it is connected with a betting event. The second is that a person must not engage in conduct that corrupts a betting outcome on an event. The third is that a person must not offer to engage in or encourage another to engage in conduct that corrupts or would corrupt an event. The fourth offence is that a person must not encourage another person to conceal from a relevant authority corrupt conduct. Finally, a person must not use corrupt conduct information for betting purposes.

The racing industry has had its fair share of issues in respect of this. On 23 January this year the Office of the Racing Integrity Commissioner released its report entitled *2012 Own Motion Inquiry into Race Fixing*. It contains three recommendations. The bill we have before us today implements just one of those recommendations. In the report the commissioner regularly mentions the importance of public trust and integrity in sport. As I mentioned earlier, damage and potential damage to integrity in sport and the outcomes of sporting events are the biggest threat to its existence. On a number of occasions in the report the commissioner mentions the number of times race fixing was mentioned in media stories leading up to last year's Spring Racing Carnival. In a 10-day period from 6 August to 16 August 2012 there were 153 mentions of race fixing in media reports, reaching a recorded circulation of around 14 million people. Understandably it was of concern that this cloud hung over what is traditionally a wonderful event for Victoria each and every year.

In view of the public interest and concern, on 16 August last year the Office of the Racing Integrity Commissioner announced publicly that it would conduct its own investigation into race fixing across the

three codes of racing. Unfortunately the same vigorous concern cannot be claimed by the Minister for Racing. In an article in the *Australian* of 21 November 2012 sports journalist Patrick Smith said:

The politician in charge of racing in Victoria sadly acts more like the sport's mascot than its leader.

He goes on to say:

The problem for Napthine and the men under him who run racing is that they appear to have placed Melbourne Cup carnival success as a more important objective than maintaining people's confidence that the sport is run uncompromised and without taint.

The racing industry is an incredibly important industry in this state. It requires the continued support of government and, most importantly, support from the people who watch and are involved in it. Western Victoria claims to be a significant home for the racing industry, which employs a lot of people in a range of different occupations. It provides great tourism events for us, and what flows from that is a boost to our local economies. It is also part and parcel of the social culture in western Victoria, from the very small racing tracks to the regional tracks.

The support of the public comes with a very important proviso to which we all need to adhere — that is, to ensure that everything that can possibly be done is done to protect the integrity of all sports. The now Premier of this state, in his role as Minister for Racing, failed the people of Victoria spectacularly during the Spring Racing Carnival last year by failing to step in when news of the Damien Oliver saga broke. The lack of action from the minister during last year's Spring Racing Carnival was regrettable and has undoubtedly damaged the reputation of the Victorian racing industry.

Labor is confident that very few people are involved in committing the acts that are described in the legislation. We believe that by far those who participate in sport do so in a proper way. But there are people who try to manipulate situations and gain financially from corrupt procedures when it comes to sport. We believe the bill, although it has been tardy in coming to us, should be supported. We look forward to a bipartisan approach to ensure that integrity in sport, in all of its facets and in all of its behaviours, is maintained in this state. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr ONDARCHIE (Northern Metropolitan) — I rise to speak on the Crimes Amendment (Integrity in Sports) Bill 2013. Given Ms Tierney's contribution in support of the bill, it is nice to follow her down the fairway today.

The bill seeks to address the threat posed to the integrity of Australian sports by the possible fixing of matches, races or other sporting events. The bill creates five new offences, and members here have already addressed those, so I choose not to revisit them in my contribution. Some of the not-so-young members of the chamber remember the Fine Cotton affair in Queensland, and I am certain my colleague Ms Crozier will refer to that in her contribution.

The bill deals with racing in any legislation aimed at addressing corruption in sport. Sport is vital in terms of its social, cultural and economic impacts on communities. We want to make sure it is squeaky clean. Given the importance of sport to our community, it is really important that we maintain its integrity to ensure that public confidence is duly maintained.

During my cricket career I was given out LBW on a couple of occasions when I had clearly nicked the ball. To me that is a crime in sport, but I will let that one ride for the purpose of our discussion today. Match fixing not only undermines the confidence of fans but also defrauds honest punters and takes away the confidence of players and other people who are involved in sport. Sporting heroes should not be tainted by the potential of guilt by association. The Napthine coalition government strongly supports the national policy on match fixing in sport. We think it should include the creation of criminal provisions for people who are cheats.

Sal Perna, the Victorian racing integrity commissioner, launched an inquiry into race fixing and found no evidence of systemic race fixing; however, he made 11 recommendations to improve and strengthen the integrity of racing. The government has agreed in principle to each recommendation and is working towards achieving them. This bill further builds on and strengthens the world-class integrity assurance model in Victorian racing. It demonstrates a strong policy framework to protect the integrity of sport and highlights that match fixing will not be tolerated in this state.

I have been a player of sport, an administrator, a spectator, a coach and, of course, a parent of children who play sport, and for me it is all about fair play. It is all about making sure that people can embark on their sporting endeavours knowing that the playing field is level. Sport is an iconic part of our culture in Australia, and each of us in this place should make sure that it is never tarnished by corruption. Lance Armstrong has been mentioned today, and I choose not to revisit that matter. But what a tragedy it turned out to be — a

sporting hero who was admired by many but who right now has lost favour with people all over the globe.

I have a passion for cricket, and I recall the impact that match fixing has had on Pakistani cricket. Not only has Pakistan's reputation suffered but its team was decimated, and its performances have reflected that since. Match fixing impacts on everyone, as it did in Pakistan, from teammates, coaches and officials to spectators and children growing up and deciding which sports they want to play. Match fixing can turn them around, and corruption in sport can lead them away from the games they love.

Players in the recent match-fixing scandal included Salman Butt, who was a former captain and opening batsman for the Pakistan team, and 18-year-old Mohammed Amir, who was an up and coming and talented bowler and who was likened to Wasim Akram. There was also Mohammed Asif who was Pakistan's opening bowler. Everybody suffers when there is corruption in sport, and in this particular case teammates suffered, cricket in general suffered and the kids who saw their sporting heroes as role models have been deflated. I like Pakistan as a country; I like the people of Pakistan, but the match fixing that occurred there has had a dramatic result on the sport.

Our coalition government is introducing this tough new match-fixing legislation to Parliament to protect the integrity of the state's multibillion-dollar sporting industry. We love our sport here in Victoria, and there is no doubt that the sporting capital of the world, which Victoria really is, is doing its very best to make sure we protect our very vital industry. Anybody who attempts to manipulate professional sport for betting outcomes is a cheat, and they will be caught and punished, because these tough new laws will deal with them.

The bill will outlaw four key offences: engaging in conduct that corrupts or would corrupt a betting outcome; facilitating conduct that corrupts or would corrupt a betting outcome; concealing such conduct, agreements or arrangements; and the use of corrupt information for betting purposes. We do not want people inadvertently telling their friends and family that they might be playing up in the forward line. We do not want betting outcomes that affect the good nature of sport in this country.

I am privileged to barrack for one of the best AFL teams in the competition — the mighty Geelong Football Club. It survives on integrity, honesty and hard work, and we are delighted that at this stage of the season it is three and zip. In saying that, I wish Travis

Varcoe all the very best for his recovery after a shoulder injury.

We are about sport in this state; we love sport. I am blessed to be involved in the world game — in soccer — in AFL and in cricket, and I follow my very clever and talented son in his life of hockey. I want my children to play sport — if you will pardon the pun, in the hockey term — on a level playing field. They get the best opportunity to do what they have to do. This is a very important bill, and I am glad it has bipartisan support. I encourage its fast passage through the house.

Mrs PEULICH (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I am delighted to record some remarks in support of the Crimes Amendment (Integrity in Sport) Bill 2013, which is a commitment that was made by the government in opposition to enact match-fixing legislation. I am aware the legislation has bipartisan support, and that similar legislation has been enacted in New South Wales and South Australia to address match and race-fixing behaviours that undermine the integrity of sporting codes. I am also aware that the reputation of our capital city, as the sports capital of Australia, rests on protecting integrity in sport.

As a mother I believe this begins at the grassroots level in the formative years when our children engage in various sporting activities. Like the children of any other Australian mum, at the age of five my child signed up to three different sporting codes: Little Athletics, tennis and what I think might have been Auskick, or a version of football. I cannot recall exactly, as it was some time ago. I was fortunate to live in a community where sporting involvement and participation was encouraged. My child was fairly uncoordinated, but he was encouraged and he managed to compete in international sporting events, including the junior Olympics in 2000. He also represented Australia at the world youth and the world juniors competitions in track and field. Even in that age group, it was a well-known fact that in track and field, where I attended regular training sessions — they were probably held five to seven times a week, week in, week out — that certain athletes used performance-enhancing drugs and that they had been used to set certain records.

Some of the records set in the 1970s and 1980s — some of the world records in particular, especially in the 1980s — are unparalleled, and regrettably in the case of many of them it is as a result of the use of performance-enhancing drugs by elite athletes, some of whom are sporting icons. Competition can bring to bear significant pressure on young athletes to dabble in and begin using performance-enhancing drugs. This is the foundation of a culture that is tolerant of match-fixing

behaviours, including the use of performance-enhancing and image-enhancing drugs, as was disclosed in the recent federal report *Organised Crime and Drugs in Sport*.

Let me say as a former schoolteacher that my son's greatest ambition was to wear the yellow and gold and represent his nation. As I said, he had the privilege of doing that as a junior and youth athlete, but never in the senior sporting competitions. I made it quite clear to him, as his mother, that I would take the greatest pride in him qualifying to represent his nation as a clean athlete and that there are far too many serious consequences, both in terms of attitude and in terms of his own health and wellbeing, to go down the path of using performance-enhancing drugs.

The way we shape attitudes about this important issue that impacts on the health and wellbeing of athletes — amateurs as well as professionals — begins with the attitudes that young people engaged in various sports are exposed to. It is important that key office-bearers, coaches and organisers of sporting codes retain and protect an antidoping and anti-drug culture. Although many of the people who are now in these key positions were probably involved in their sporting codes when drug use was prolific and commonplace — for example, in the 1980s when many of those track and field records were set — it is possible and necessary for them to adopt a different attitude. This piece of legislation is very important in terms of not only protecting Melbourne's reputation as a sporting capital of the world but also protecting our sports-loving nation, our community and our family members who are great lovers of all sporting codes.

Our city is like no other city in the world. With sporting infrastructure and transport options from the CBD, so many events are conducted within a short radius of the CBD. There is a plethora of sporting choices for people to engage in, both as participants and as observers. Melbourne hosts a range of world-class sporting events which demand worldwide attention. They include the Melbourne Cup carnival at Flemington, the Australian Open Tennis Championships at the National Tennis Centre, the Australian Formula One Grand Prix around Albert Park Lake — as a child I used to row a boat across that lake as a pastime on a Sunday afternoon — various cricket tests at the MCG, events conducted within the Melbourne Park and Olympic Park precinct at venues such as the new stadium established at AAMI Park and the athletic events that were formerly conducted at Olympic Park, our icon, which was regrettably given away by the former government in return for its relocation to a new track at the former home of the South Melbourne Football Club. Tournaments are held on sand-belt golf courses such as

Royal Melbourne and Kingston Heath, which are part of my electorate. Melbourne also hosts triathlons of world standard along its coastline, such as the Ironman Asia-Pacific World Championship Melbourne much of which is held in my electorate. Yachting and boating events are held in Port Phillip Bay and a range of other elite events have been convened in this state.

We have much to protect. It is not only about protecting revenue-generating activities or our worldwide reputation. This legislation is the right thing to do. It is sending a strong message to everyone involved in all sorts of sporting codes, in all sorts of professional sports as well as amateurs and young participants — that is, game fixing and performance-enhancing drugs are just not on. This is not what Australia stands for and this is not what fair play and good sportsmanship is about. The bill protects our reputation. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms CROZIER (Southern Metropolitan) — I am pleased to rise to speak on the Crimes Amendment (Integrity in Sports) Bill 2013. Other members have outlined the technical aspects of the bill. It is an important bill and I am glad that those opposite are also in support of it.

I grew up in country Victoria playing competition sports such as tennis and netball from the age of six and then went on to pursue other sporting activities, so I know how important sport is for children who grow up in both country Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne; it is part of our culture and psyche. It is very important that we encourage as many young people as possible to be involved in sport at all levels.

Nevertheless, this bill goes to the heart of maintaining integrity in sport. I commend the minister and those involved in bringing this bill forward to ensure that the coalition government's commitment to introduce tough new match-fixing legislation is fulfilled. Sport is a multimillion-dollar industry in Australia. Victoria prides itself on being the sports capital of Australia. With both Melbourne and regional Victoria home to many magnificent sporting facilities, it is little wonder we have that reputation. We need to hold onto that reputation by ensuring that we uphold that integrity.

I was surprised to find when conducting some research into this issue that at an international level the illegal betting industry runs to tens of billions of dollars. It is no wonder that organised crime syndicates want to be a part of that. That is why this bill is particularly important.

The bill also targets aspects of racing. Mr Ondarchie, in his contribution, spoke about the Fine Cotton affair. That prompted me to recall the Royal School ring-in

event, which occurred in Casterton, the country town in which I grew up in western Victoria. I am sure Mr Koch will also recall this incident.

Mr Koch — It was Regal Vista, wasn't it?

Ms CROZIER — It was Regal Vista; that is quite right. I quote from an article from the *Age* of 31 October 2004 that relates to this incident. I was a young girl at the time, and I remember it put Casterton on the map. I found this article on the internet when I was conducting my research. It states:

While the Fine Cotton affair was low-tech, the Royal School scandal at Casterton, western Victoria, in May 1972, was meticulously planned. Owner Rick Renzella, a former used-car salesman, bought the gelding for \$350 with a view to a ring-in. The main problem was that the horse that ran in his place at Casterton won with ridiculous ease. An inquiry revealed the winner to be Regal Vista, who had won the 1970 Liston Stakes at Caulfield. Renzella was jailed for two years.

I remember it because I think the horse's nose was painted.

This practice has been going on for a long time. It was certainly an enormous issue then. However, illegal betting and match fixing is much more substantial these days with the introduction of technology. That is why we need to be increasingly vigilant about match fixing. In recent times the media has highlighted many instances where this has become an enormous issue. We need to protect the sporting industry. This bill will enable that to be achieved. We need to protect fans and participants across sporting codes so that they also maintain their integrity.

With those few words, I say again that sport is very important to the cultural fabric of Victoria and any attempt to undermine the integrity of any of our sporting institutions should be firmly and speedily dealt with. This bill accomplishes that motive. I commend the bill to the house.

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Assistant Treasurer) — By leave, I move:

That the bill be now read a third time.

In doing so, I thank all members for their contributions.

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

The PRESIDENT — Order! I have two items that I want to address very quickly. The first is that it is Mr Jennings's birthday, so if members see him at some stage during the day, they might like to wish him all the best.

The second item I wish to address is a matter that was raised with me at question time by Ms Broad in respect of an answer Ms Lovell gave yesterday. I have now had the opportunity to read *Hansard*, and it confirmed my opinion that the actual words used by Ms Lovell in no way represent any assertion of a principal place of residence for Ms Broad. In fact the remarks I made at question time stand on the basis of the record that I have now read.

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT AMENDMENT (GROWTH AREAS AUTHORITY AND MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2013

Second reading

Debate resumed from 16 April; motion of Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills).

Mr RAMSAY (Western Victoria) — I am pleased to rise to contribute to the debate on the Planning and Environment Amendment (Growth Areas Authority and Miscellaneous) Bill 2013. In my contribution I will be referring to the Growth Areas Authority as the GAA. The GAA is an independent statutory body reporting directly to the minister. This bill will enable the Minister for Planning to apply the GAA and its skill set more broadly. It will enable the minister to declare any area in Victoria to be a growth area and approve the giving of advice by the GAA to the minister or any municipal council on any matter relating to land in Victoria.

In essence this bill supports a planning policy that provides for flexible land use to cater for Victoria's population growth for the long term. The bill also offers strategic planning for growth in regional areas by using the skills and experience of the GAA anywhere in Victoria. At the same time it gives the minister the flexibility to support councils with the resources, skills and expertise they need for strategic planning. It is important to note that the bill does not remove or change the planning powers and responsibilities of municipal councils; rather, it enables the GAA to work in partnership with councils to provide them with advice.

The second part of the bill relates to permit applications referred to a minister. This clarifies that the responsible authority specified in the planning scheme will be responsible for administering and enforcing permits issued by the minister in called-in planning proceedings under division 6 of part 4 of the act. If the person or body specified as the responsible authority in the planning scheme changes, the new responsible authority will become responsible for administering and enforcing those permits. Having said that, the minister will remain responsible for certain matters relating to those permits, particularly in relation to time extension for developments.

In 2010 we made a commitment to reinstate local government as the responsible authority for wind farm applications — with good reason, given the debacle of the previous Labor government and the then Minister for Planning, now the member for Essendon in the Assembly, Justin Madden, issuing wind farm permits like confetti, with little consultation with local councils or appreciation of the longer term regional population growth corridors.

The bill will ensure that the responsible authority designated in the planning scheme will be responsible for administering and enforcing permits issued by the minister for called-in applications, including permits for wind farms.

I must say that some councils are not overjoyed at the prospect of taking on the responsibility of the enforcement of and compliance with wind farm permits that were issued under the previous government, given that there was little due diligence in the conditions that were applied to the permits for those applicants. I believe support should be provided to those councils that must now take on this new responsibility, given their previous lack of involvement with the issue.

The bill also makes amendments relating to directors liability. It reforms the existing directors liability provision in the Planning and Environment Act consistent with the principles and guidelines of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). The bill is consistent with the reforms to the directors liability provisions in the Statute Law Amendment (Director's Liability) Bill 2012 which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly in December 2012 and passed on 5 March 2013. The new directors liability provisions will only apply to six offences under the act, and it reverses the legal onus of proof from the accused to the prosecution. These changes are supported by the Municipal Association of Victoria.

There are some other minor amendments, but in essence this bill provides for long-term strategic planning by the GAA in regional areas outside the seven growth areas within Melbourne's boundaries, drawing on its skills and expertise to support local councils. It is important that we preserve the ambience and lifestyle benefits of our regional cities and towns so that they appeal to new population growth and that we plan for the provision of infrastructure that will be needed as land supply and affordability are offered to the marketplace.

On that basis, and with those cautionary notes regarding councils and their responsibilities as relevant authorities for wind farm permits, I commend the bill to the house.

Mr VINEY (Eastern Victoria) — I am pleased to make a few brief remarks on this legislation. Essentially it has three divisions: one relating to the Growth Areas Authority, or the GAA; one which deals with the administration of permits; and a third division that changes the provisions in relation to the liability of directors and officers of bodies corporate. I will keep my remarks to the first division, relating to changes in the role of the GAA and the expansion of its functions, which I think are the substantive changes in the bill.

Unlike the Leader of the Government, who I have accused of this many times, I am not a conspiracy theorist, but I do have some suspicions about this legislation that have unnerved and disturbed me. The way the bill approaches solving the apparent problem in this division is rather convoluted. As you look deeply into that section of the bill and understand what it says in detail you discover that there is a considerable expansion of the powers of the minister, a considerable potential expansion of growth areas in this state and a number of consequences that could potentially flow from that, intended or unintended.

Mr Barber — We could be here for a while in committee.

Mr VINEY — Are you saying that if I keep going, this might take a bit longer than I thought?

Mr Barber — In committee.

Mr VINEY — I see. Unfortunately I will be chairing the committee stage and I will not be able to contribute, so I will try to make my points as briefly as I can now. Essentially my concerns with the bill are that what it purports to do is enact a simple proposition that the Growth Areas Authority should be invited where necessary to use its skills and capacities to assist municipal councils that are experiencing some degree of residential and presumably commercial growth to

plan for that future and for that growth. However, it achieves this in a fairly convoluted way. Essentially the legislation gives the minister the capacity to declare any place in Victoria a growth area, and that has a series of consequences.

It would have been a much simpler proposition to have amended section 46AS of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 in relation to the functions of growth areas. It says:

The functions of the Growth Areas Authority are ...

and then there are a series of functions listed including:

- (a) to make recommendations and report to the Minister on —
 - (i) the planning, use, development and protection of land in growth areas ...

All that was needed to achieve that simple objective — to give the Growth Areas Authority the capacity to use its resources to assist municipal councils in the management of growth areas — was to insert a new part of section 46AS in relation to the functions of the Growth Areas Authority allowing it to, for example, undertake the ‘planning, use, development and protection of land’ in any area where a municipality makes a request of the Growth Areas Authority and the minister agrees.

That would have been a fairly straightforward way — and I am sure there are others — of giving those powers to the Growth Areas Authority. But, no, instead we have legislation that gives the Minister for Planning the capacity to declare any area of Victoria or any place in Victoria a growth area. There are many things that go with that as once an area is declared a growth area there are many consequences of that decision. But interestingly what the legislation also does is go to quite extraordinary lengths to ensure that any such growth area declared by the minister in this way will not be subject to the growth areas infrastructure charge. The bill goes to considerable lengths to avoid that charge being applied.

What we now have under this legislation is a capacity for the minister to declare any area in Victoria a growth area and to effectively exempt that growth area from being subject to the charges that would otherwise apply for the provision of infrastructure in that growth area.

Mr Barber — Is it a growth area or isn't it?

Mr VINEY — Mr Barber is quite correct. Is it a growth area or not? If it is a growth area, why is the infrastructure charge not being applied to it? As I said

at the beginning, I am not like Mr Davis in terms of being a conspiracy theorist, and I have sat in this place listening to his speeches many times.

Mrs Peulich interjected.

Mr VINEY — Mrs Peulich does not seem to believe me. I never expect her to believe anything I say, just as I do not believe much of what she says. However, Mr Davis does have that history.

I am somewhat suspicious when confronted with such convoluted legislation. As Mr Tee said, we are not going to oppose the legislation because we have no difficulty with the proposition that the Growth Areas Authority should be able to apply its skills to assist municipalities that are under some degree of development pressure. We agree that is a reasonable motive. What I would say is that the test of whether or not that is truly what this is about will be seen in the future. If it is actually about the Minister for Planning being able to massively expand growth areas in this state without the applicable infrastructure charge, if that is in fact what it is really about, it will become apparent fairly quickly. The power for the minister to declare any area he wishes to be a growth area needs to be treated with a great deal of caution. Whilst we are not opposing the bill, it is my view that this legislation needs to be observed and monitored with a great deal of care.

Mrs PEULICH (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I am delighted to see the Planning and Environment Amendment (Growth Areas Authority and Miscellaneous) Bill 2013 introduced into Parliament. I am also pleased to hear that the opposition will not be opposing the bill, despite an attempt by the previous speaker, Mr Viney, and no doubt others to generate some conspiracies. Firstly, the bill amends the Planning and Environment Act 1987, focusing on the expansion of the Growth Areas Authority (GAA) to any other parts of the state under the direction of the Minister for Planning, obviously working with local government; secondly, there are amendments relating to directors liability; and thirdly, there are minor transitional provisions and so forth. Notwithstanding the fact that there are basically three parts to the bill, like Mr Viney I would like to limit my comments to only the first part.

Having been involved in a number of all-party inquiries through the upper house committee system, as well as through the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee, and also having read a number of other committee reports, a common theme that emerges is the need for strategic planning for the state. Some of the strategic planning identifies that land needs to be protected from various purposes or identified for

growth and development, but not to allow development to just happen willy-nilly. This was also a recommendation that emerged from the all-party committee, supported by all parties on the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee, which looked at greenfield mine exploration. It strongly supported a recommendation that called on the state to put in place forward thinking and strategic planning of land use. This particular amendment goes some way to achieving that. I commend the minister for deciding to use the existing system to achieve that objective, rather than just generating new structures.

The ability to use the experience and expertise of the Growth Areas Authority more broadly makes a lot of sense, in particular when we consider that not all councils have the expertise, and I can speak from personal experience with the Kingston City Council. Some of the work that was done in 2003 on land technically deemed to be part of the Kingston green wedge happened after legislation was introduced by a former minister, Mary Delahunty, without any consultation with the community. It locked in conflicting land uses which had a negative impact on amenity and which prevented the council from working toward more positive outcomes in dealing with that conflict. That council and its predecessor council on which I served, the former City of Moorabbin, probably generated about six or seven studies of the same land. It had never been able to progress sensible outcomes which would protect land of real environmental value or identify those areas where there were problems which needed to be addressed through expanding the range of land uses.

I commend the minister for putting in place a mechanism which can help support councils such as Kingston, amongst others, which have had to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars for consultants to generate reports, some of which have had limited benefit and failed to deliver any supportable outcomes. The mechanism in this bill will help with the work councils need to undertake for the benefit of our communities and future generations, as well as providing certainty to all stakeholders. This amendment allows the minister or any municipal council on any matter relating to land in Victoria or an objective of planning in Victoria to use the expertise of the GAA. The bill continues to run out that vision for Victoria's economic future, and we know that certainty is needed in terms of Victoria's strategic land use plans. We hear that wherever we go, whether it is the regional centres, the City of Greater Geelong, the City of Greater Dandenong or the Shire of Mansfield, because irrespective of where they are, they are all calling for the same work to be undertaken. This is an exciting

opportunity for the state to use this mechanism, the product of this amendment, to do the work that has been called for by everybody.

Planning policy needs to support the provision of flexible land use and economic adaptability in order to manage the population growth for the long term. That does not mean opening up all the land for development, but it does mean setting aside land for other purposes and other uses. For example, it might be the mining of sand for our construction industry and protecting that so construction can continue and valuable deposits can be reserved. It can also mean protecting areas of high environmental value or identifying prime agricultural land that needs to be protected. These are the sorts of tasks — strategic land use planning — that this authority could undertake on behalf of this state.

Mr Barber — I think you have given the game away.

Mrs PEULICH — No-one should be ashamed of the work that needs to be done. The Greens have been calling for this for a long time, so Mr Barber should be — —

Mr Barber — There must be something that is holding it up. I wonder what it is.

Mrs PEULICH — You should be supporting it, Mr Barber. Population growth occurring within 1 to 2 hours drive of Melbourne means that works need to be done and need to be done without delay, and I hope that local government will embrace the opportunity.

The Growth Areas Authority has built up considerable skill and expertise in preparing strategic land use plans and improving planning processes and this can reduce costs and inefficiencies for developers and local government. As I said before, the bill enables the minister to apply that skill to any area in Victoria. The bill also gives the minister the flexibility to support councils with the resources, skills and expertise they need to facilitate, coordinate and streamline strategic planning. I think any local council would be crazy not to avail itself of the depth of expertise that is available.

The bill does not remove or change the planning laws and the responsibilities of municipal councils, and I think the minister has struck the right balance. The aim is for the GAA to work in partnership with councils to provide advice requested by councils. This is something that could not be scoffed at, and that is reflected by the fact that the opposition is supporting the bill. I certainly hope the Greens support the bill; they have been calling for these reforms, and it would be hypocritical of them

to vote against it. With those few words, I commend the bill to the house.

Mr FINN (Western Metropolitan) — It gives me a great deal of pleasure to support the Planning and Environment Amendment (Growth Areas Authority and Miscellaneous) Bill 2013, and in doing so I commend the Minister for Planning who, in my experience going back some 21 years in this place, is the most outstanding planning minister we have had.

Mrs Peulich interjected.

Mr FINN — Outstanding indeed. As Mrs Peulich says, we covered that yesterday. There was a long list, and each one of those synonyms could be equally applied to Minister Guy, because he has shown a vision and an ability to get on with things that we have not seen in this state for a very long time. Coming to the role as he did after four years of Justin Madden, now the member for Essendon in the Assembly, the local government sector in particular and the development sector cannot believe their good fortune that we have somebody who wants to get on with the job. This bill will assist that task enormously. I warmly congratulate the minister on bringing this legislation before the house.

I will speak very briefly on this bill and in particular raise a matter that I have raised in this house before, but I think it is important enough to raise again — that is, what happened in Point Cook during its development phase under Justin Madden, which was very little in terms of planning. There was a situation where the then Labor government was very happy to take the land tax and stamp duty from new owners but was not prepared to put the money back into Point Cook to provide the roads, transport and other infrastructure necessary for modern living. If we ever needed to categorise how not to develop a suburb, Point Cook would be it.

Again I commend Minister Guy on the effort, time and work that he has put in to rectifying that situation. I was down in Point Cook on Monday announcing a new transport initiative in cooperation with the local council and with state government involvement. People were saying that they have noticed very much how the state government has taken a real interest in what is happening in Point Cook since the change of government. That is in no small way due to what Minister Guy has done. I would hate to think that we would ever have a situation in the foreseeable future when Labor would be returned to the government benches and we would again have a minister like Justin Madden, who was incompetent and indeed would be incompetent again. He would not have a clue about

what he should and should not do. He does not have a vision or a bone in his body which would tell him what he should or should not do.

We in the west have felt that very strongly. Anybody who travels to Point Cook and tries to get out of Point Cook will now find themselves waiting a very long time. For example, as they travel down Point Cook Road they will find a situation where a suburb has been built with a road from it which goes through a shopping centre to get onto the freeway — you go over the freeway and then through a shopping centre to get onto the freeway. It is just absolutely insane. Any reasonable planning body would tell you that that is not the way to go and not the way to do things, but that is what Labor did. I am delighted to say that it will not be happening again whilst this government is in a position to oversee the planning of new suburbs. I certainly look forward to the planning of Finn-land, the new suburb down near Werribee, that will be providing — for the people of Point Cook as well — a new road onto the freeway at Sneydes Road. I believe that is going to be of major benefit to the people of Werribee and surrounds.

I support this bill, I hope the Labor Party supports this bill, and I hope the Greens support this bill — I assume they are supporting this bill.

Mr Ramsay interjected.

Mr FINN — We can never be sure, can we, Mr Ramsay?

Mr Koch interjected.

Mr FINN — But we can hope and pray, Mr Koch. I commend the bill to the house, and I commend the minister for the job that he is doing and for bringing this legislation to the house, and I trust — —

Mrs Peulich — He is outstanding.

Mr FINN — He is. He is doing a brilliant job as minister. As Mrs Peulich says, he is doing a first-class and extraordinary job as planning minister. I hope members opposite will join me in congratulating the minister on the magnificent job he is doing. I trust that this bill will have a safe and speedy passage.

Mrs KRONBERG (Eastern Metropolitan) — Like Mr Finn, I am very pleased to be making a contribution to the debate on the Planning and Environment Amendment (Growth Areas Authority and Miscellaneous) Bill 2013. I think it is also timely for me to begin my contribution by singing the praises of the Minister for Planning and his initiative in this bill, because this is a true recognition of the skills that the

Growth Areas Authority has on board. I have to say that the head of the Growth Areas Authority, Peter Seamer, is someone I have known for about 20 years. I have seen him — —

Mr Finn — At Moonee Valley.

Mrs KRONBERG — That is so true. He was the CEO of the City of Essendon. He had a distinguished career in engineering through the Gulf States and is a globally experienced and globally educated practitioner in the fields of engineering and local government administration. Peter was also the CEO of the City of Greater Bendigo and continues to make his contribution. We know the Growth Areas Authority is in very good hands. If we augment that with the visionary approach of the Minister for Planning, the Honourable Matthew Guy, then the planets are truly in alignment, and we have fantastic potential.

It makes a lot of sense that these skills are made available and, where necessary, deployed, because local government areas in regional Victoria and regional cities can draw down upon those skills. It is common sense, because it would be difficult for local governments to justify to their ratepayer base spending money on this. Some of these issues may be of an ad hoc nature, and local government would have to pay a premium for consultants, people who charge rates of hundreds of dollars an hour.

This policy has wisdom and makes a lot of sense. It does not have anything to do with the notion of a central planning ethos. The Minister for Planning has proven over and over again how responsive he is to what people want locally, and he is on a quest to uphold local amenity, while simultaneously bringing better infrastructure, better services, a better outlook and economic development to those areas. This is a common-sense development along the trend line. As the Growth Areas Authority accrues skills it will be able to deploy them, and Victoria as a whole will benefit from that.

We also know how important it is to ease the population growth pressures on Melbourne's urban environment. I find it very discomfoting that people seeking affordable housing have to travel so far from their jobs, from the central business district and from where they can access a raft of services and have the opportunity for community engagement. This is a wonderful initiative. It is a signature initiative of the Napthine coalition government that will see a greater economic dividend in our regional cities and in the regions in general. This bill is a means to make sure that that happens and that there is not a second-class or

ad hoc approach to the planning of the regions and regional cities. Why should people outside of the Melbourne metropolitan area have anything less than the best? Why should their futures be compromised? A tremendous learning curve was gone through in order to acquire the skills base that the Growth Areas Authority now has on offer.

It is imperative that planning policy supports the release of land, so that we can have affordable housing. We do not want to default to the position that I personally witnessed in Canada in the fine city of Toronto, where the city no longer has the capacity to provide affordable housing, so young families are trying to start family life in studio apartments or two-bedroom apartments in 40-storey condos right throughout the length and breadth of metropolitan Toronto. These visionary moves by our Minister for Planning have to be seen in that light. This is global thinking. It is advanced thinking. It is thinking towards the destination of 2050 or 2060 when Melbourne's population, if it continues to follow its growth gradient, is going to be much larger.

I commend the bill to the house and encourage members on the other side of the chamber to support it wholeheartedly. If members opposite are true Victorians, they will see the rationale behind this bill is a common-sense approach to delivering good outcomes for regional Victoria.

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Ordered to be committed later this day.

ADOPTION AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time for Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing) on motion of Hon. M. J. Guy; by leave, ordered to be read second time forthwith.

Statement of compatibility

For Hon. W. A. LOVELL (Minister for Housing), Hon. M. J. Guy tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (charter act), I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the Adoption Amendment Bill 2013.

In my opinion, the Adoption Amendment Bill 2013, as introduced to the Legislative Council, is compatible with the human rights protected by the charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview of bill

The purpose of the bill is to amend the Adoption Act 1984:

- to remove the requirement for obtaining an adult adopted person's consent before giving identifying information to the adopted person's natural parent;
- to provide for adult adopted persons to make contact statements about their wishes for contact with their natural parents; and
- to enable a birth certificate to be issued for a person whose adoption occurred under the Hague convention in a convention country and is recognised in Victoria.

Human rights issues

1. Human rights protected by the charter act that are promoted by the bill.

The bill positively engages and promotes the right to recognition and equality before the law, as it will enable the issuing of a Victorian birth certificate to all children adopted from overseas as part of Victoria's intercountry adoption program.

Where an adoption is finalised in the County Court of Victoria, including an intercountry adoption under a bilateral agreement, the court is required to notify the registrar of births, deaths and marriages (registrar). The registrar registers the adoption, and the child can be issued with a Victorian birth certificate. However, there is no mechanism for notifying the registrar about an adoption under the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague convention), as the adoption is finalised in the convention country and automatically recognised in Victoria, without the need to apply to the court.

The bill corrects this anomaly by requiring the Secretary of the Department of Human Services, who is appointed the state central authority for Victoria for the purposes of the Hague convention, to notify the registrar about an adoption under the Hague convention. The registrar will be required to register the adoption, enabling a Victorian birth certificate to be issued in respect of the child.

2. Human rights protected by the charter act that are engaged but not limited by the bill.

The bill engages the right to privacy, by giving natural parents a right to be provided with identifying information about their adult adopted son or daughter, without the written agreement, or evidence of the death, of the adopted person. This could impact on an adult adopted person's right not to have their privacy, family or home unlawfully or arbitrarily interfered with.

The bill also engages the right to freedom of expression, by allowing an adult adopted person to regulate contact by lodging a contact statement specifying the type of contact, if any, they wish to have with a natural parent. These wishes about contact must be disclosed to a natural parent before

providing them with identifying information, and it is an offence to breach a current contact statement where no contact is specified. This could impact on a natural parent's freedom to seek, receive and impart information.

These rights have been balanced so that a natural parent has a right to identifying information about an adult adopted child, but the adopted person can regulate contact. Thus privacy is not unlawfully or arbitrarily interfered with by the bill, and the right to freedom of expression is only restricted as reasonably necessary to respect the rights of others.

The offence for contact in contravention of a contact statement contains an exception which places an evidential burden on an accused person who wishes to rely on the exception. Accordingly, the presumption of innocence under the charter act is engaged. In my view the provision is compatible with the right to be presumed innocent, as the issue of previous contact is within the knowledge of the natural parent and it is reasonable for them to provide evidence. The prosecution retains the legal burden of disproving the issue beyond reasonable doubt.

Conclusion

I consider that the bill is compatible with the charter act because the rights which are engaged by the bill are unlikely to be limited. If any rights are limited by the bill in individual circumstances, to the extent that those rights are limited, those limitations will be reasonable and demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

Hon. Wendy Lovell, MLC
Minister for Housing

Second reading

Ordered that second-reading speech be incorporated into *Hansard* on motion of Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning).

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

Incorporated speech as follows:

This bill makes amendments to the Adoption Act 1984 which will allow natural parents to access identifying information about their adopted adult child.

It also introduces the use of contact statements to allow adopted individuals to regulate or refuse contact if they wish.

On 25 October 2012, this Parliament formally apologised to the mothers, fathers, sons and daughters who were profoundly harmed by past adoption practices in this state.

We acknowledged that from early last century into the early 1980s but particularly between 1950 and 1975 at least 19 000 Victorian children were relinquished for adoption, the vast majority from young, unwed mothers.

In many cases the babies were forcibly removed and many mothers never saw nor held their child.

Adoptions which took place in the state of Victoria prior to 1984 were closed. This meant that no parties to the adoption were permitted to access information about the others.

The law was changed in 1984 and adoptions nowadays are open and transparent, with the child encouraged to understand their background and with a capacity to connect with their natural family.

The 1984 changes also allowed adopted persons full access to identifying information about their parents. It did not, however, extend the same rights to birth parents.

Birth parents currently require the explicit permission of the adopted person, or evidence of their death, to access identifying information. In practice, this means that some mothers and fathers, decades after an adoption took place, still do not know the name of their son or daughter.

This bill will change that and allow natural parents to access identifying information about their adopted adult sons and daughters.

In conjunction with this, and in line with the recommendations of the Senate Community Affairs References Committee inquiry into the commonwealth contribution to former forced adoption policies and practices, this legislation introduces a 'contact statement' which will allow adopted persons to regulate contact should they wish.

The contact statement will enable an adopted person to either regulate contact or refuse to allow another party to the adoption to make contact with them but it will not prevent the release of identifying information to birth parents.

Anyone registering a contact statement will be encouraged to leave a message to help the person affected by the statement better understand the reason for the statement should they seek information. They will also be encouraged to include some information about their current circumstances, for example, their health and general wellbeing.

The statement will need to be renewed every five years and breaching a contact statement will attract a penalty of 60 penalty units.

These changes will take effect from 1 July 2013.

This bill also implements a change to the act in relation to international adoptions.

Currently, section 70 of the act provides for the registration in Victoria of overseas adoption where an order to do so is issued by a Victorian court. However, adoptions finalised in countries that are signatories to the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and in Respect of Intercountry Adoption are automatically recognised in Victoria without the need for an order by a court. As a result, the Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages has been unable to issue a Victorian birth certificate for these children.

This legislation will correct this anomaly and allow these children to have their adoption registered and the opportunity to apply for a Victorian birth certificate.

On 25 October 2012, the Victorian Parliament apologised for the trauma, pain and loss that so many experienced, and continue to experience to this day, as a result of past adoption practices.

With this legislation, the government acknowledges that the current information restrictions have been a source of ongoing frustration and trauma for many mothers.

From 1 July 2013, mothers will have the right to know identifying information about their child and adopted persons will have the right to regulate contact for whatever personal reasons that may exist.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned for Ms MIKAKOS (Northern Metropolitan) on motion of Mr Tee.

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 2 May.

CORRECTIONS FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time on motion of Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning); by leave, ordered to be read second time forthwith.

Statement of compatibility

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (charter act), I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the Corrections Further Amendment Bill 2013.

In my opinion, the Corrections Further Amendment Bill 2013 (the bill), as introduced to the Legislative Council, is compatible with the human rights protected by the charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview of bill

The purpose of the bill is to amend the Corrections Act 1986 (the act) to validate certain actions and decisions. Specifically, the bill:

validates actions taken and decisions made by the director-general or the Secretary of the Department of Justice (or a delegate or purported delegate of either) in the purported exercise of a power or function under s 17 of the act as in force before that section was amended by the Corrections (Amendment) Act 1994 (as if s 17 as amended was in force at the relevant time);

validates actions taken before or after the commencement of the amendment to s 17 in reliance on or in relation to an action taken or decision made of the type outlined above; and

provides that a right or liability conferred or imposed in relation to an action taken or decision made of the type

outlined above is to be regarded as always having been exercisable and enforceable.

The bill also makes specific provision to validate any charge or additional charge imposed or purporting to be imposed by or on behalf of the director-general, the Secretary of the Department of Justice, or the governor of a prison between 24 March 1993 and 8 April 2004 for the purchase of tobacco products in prison.

Human rights issues

The effect of the bill is to validate certain actions and decisions retrospectively. This validation in and of itself does not limit human rights. It does, however, have the result that interferences with human rights that may have otherwise been unlawful (due to being based on actions or decisions that may have otherwise been unauthorised) are now lawful in retrospect.

Interferences with several of the human rights protected by the charter act only require justification in circumstances where the relevant interference is 'unlawful', 'arbitrary' or 'other than in accordance with law' (see, for example, the rights to privacy, property and liberty in ss 13, 20 and 21 of the charter act). Where no such definitional limits apply, interferences with human rights are permissible on the basis that the interference amounts to a reasonable and justifiable limit (under s 7(2) of the charter act). It is not possible to assess the permissibility of all potential human rights interferences that were based on actions or decisions that this bill validates. However, interferences with those rights containing definitional limits that rest on lawfulness are likely to be permissible as a result of this bill. Moreover, the obligation on public authorities to act compatibly with human rights, as set out in s 38 of the charter act, commenced on 1 January 2008. The charter act therefore does not apply to most, if not all, of the actions and decisions that this bill validates.

To the extent that the retrospective validation of certain actions and decisions may be said to deprive persons of 'property' (being potential causes of action in relation to those actions and decisions), I note as above that an interference with property rights only requires justification in circumstances where the interference is 'other than in accordance with law'. Laws seeking to deprive persons of property must be confined and structured rather than unclear, be accessible to the public, and be formulated precisely. This bill meets these requirements. The bill clearly specifies and confines the actions and decisions to be validated. Clarifying the validity of these actions and decisions provides administrative certainty to aid the proper administration of the correctional system.

Conclusion

For the reasons given in this statement, I consider that the bill is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

The Hon. Matthew Guy, MLC
Minister for Planning

Second reading

Ordered that second-reading speech be incorporated into *Hansard* on motion of Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning).

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

Incorporated speech as follows:

The bill amends the Corrections Act 1986 to provide that:

inclusion of a charge or additional charge in the price of cigarettes and tobacco sold in prisons between 24 March 1993 and 8 April 2004 was valid; and

any decision that the director-general or the Secretary to the Department of Justice (or delegates or purported delegates) made between 1 March 1988 (when section 17 of the act commenced) and 12 January 1995 (when amendments to section 17 commenced), that could have been made under section 17 after the commencement of the amendments on that date, is to be taken to have at all times been made in the valid exercise of power.

This legislation addresses a Supreme Court decision that calls into question the validity of certain decisions or actions taken in relation to prisons or prisoners, based on insufficient records.

In order to understand the reason for this bill, it is necessary to provide some background.

Prison authorities sell a range of products to prisoners, including cigarettes and tobacco.

Before 1993, cigarettes and tobacco were sold to prisoners at wholesale prices.

In 1993, in support of a smoke-free environment policy across correctional facilities, it was decided by the corrections executive that the price at which cigarettes and tobacco would be sold in prisons would be increased to 90 per cent of the recommended retail price.

The margin would be allocated to a fund to be used to promote smoking cessation and associated health-related purposes.

In 2004 the policy was updated and it was determined that the price of cigarettes and tobacco in prisons should be increased to the recommended retail price. The purpose to which the margin was put was unaltered.

In 2011 proceedings were commenced in the Supreme Court, testing the validity of both the 1993 decision and the 2004 decision.

The decisions relating to cigarette and tobacco pricing were found to be decisions with respect to the welfare of prisoners and the management of prisons, and were supported by sections 20 and 21 of the Corrections Act 1986.

The 2004 pricing decision, having been made by the acting commissioner of corrections pursuant to a delegation of the

secretary's powers under section 17 of the Corrections Act, was found to be valid.

However, the 1993 pricing decision was found to be invalid. This was for two reasons.

First, the records from the period show that the 1993 decision was made by the corrections executive, but no conclusive evidence of the actual decision-maker was able to be identified.

Secondly (and even if the evidence that suggested the decision had been made by the general manager, prison operations or the director of corrections services had been accepted), government archives did not contain a record of a delegation of the relevant powers to either of these positions under section 17 of the Corrections Act.

We certainly have no dispute with the court's findings — which of course included that the decisions in relation to cigarette and tobacco pricing in prisons were decisions with respect to the welfare of prisoners and the management of prisons, and were supported by the provisions of the Corrections Act.

Unfortunately though, the records of a relatively unexceptional administrative decision dating back over 20 years were not able to produce the information required by the court to find the 1993 pricing decision to have been validly made.

The finding that the sale of cigarettes and tobacco at a price higher than the wholesale purchase price between 1993 and 2004 was invalid has opened the way for prisoners or former prisoners to claim compensation for the additional moneys they paid for cigarettes during this period.

Although the amounts of money involved in any actual compensation claims would not be large and legal defences to any claim are available, the administrative and legal costs involved in resolving claims would be significant.

This bill therefore has the effect of validating the sale of cigarettes and tobacco products in accordance with the 1993 pricing policy decision.

The second element to this bill addresses a potential broader problem.

The court noted that the provisions of section 17 of the Corrections Act as they stood in 1993 only permitted the secretary to the department (at that time exercising the powers of the director-general) to exercise the powers of a prison governor in relation to the welfare of prisoners and the management of prisons, whilst actually at a prison and only where prison security or good order was threatened.

Section 17 was amended as of 12 January 1995 so that the secretary to the department is able to exercise all the functions of a governor of a prison — including the powers and duties in relation to welfare of prisoners and the management of prisons.

This observation suggests that the validity of any decision made by the then director-general or delegate (or secretary exercising such powers) in relation to prisons between 1 March 1988 (when section 17 commenced) and 12 January 1995 could potentially be challenged by a prisoner.

It is not possible to identify what decisions may have been made in relation to the welfare of prisoners or the management of prisons that could be impacted. However, they will include decisions relating to the separation and transfer of prisoners.

To avoid future litigation on this issue, the bill has the effect of validating the making of decisions by the director-general or the secretary between 1 March 1988 (when section 17 of the act commenced) and 12 January 1995 (when amendments to section 17 commenced), that could have been made under section 17 after the commencement of the amendments on that date.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 2 May.

GAMBLING REGULATION AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time on motion of Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning); by leave, ordered to be read second time forthwith.

Statement of compatibility

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (charter act), I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the Gambling Regulation Amendment Bill 2013.

In my opinion, the Gambling Regulation Amendment Bill 2013, as introduced to the Legislative Council, is compatible with the human rights protected by the charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview of bill

The Gambling Regulation Amendment Bill 2013 makes a number of amendments to the Gambling Regulation Act 2003 to better facilitate the transition to the new gambling industry licences that commenced on 15 April 2012 and 16 August 2012, including changes in relation to the conduct of keno and the conduct of wagering and betting.

The bill will also make amendments to extend for four more years the existing arrangement whereby, each year, \$45 million of gambling taxes that would otherwise be transferred to the Community Support Fund is retained in the Consolidated Fund to fund drug and alcohol treatment services.

Human rights protected by the charter act that are relevant to the bill

The Gambling Regulation Amendment Bill 2013 does not engage the charter act.

Consideration of reasonable limitations — section 7(2)

As the bill does not engage any of the rights under the charter act, it is not necessary to consider section 7(2) of the charter act.

Conclusion

I consider that the bill is compatible with the charter because it does not raise any human rights issues.

Hon. Matthew Guy, MLC
Minister for Planning

Second reading

Ordered that second-reading speech be incorporated into *Hansard* on motion of Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning).

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

Incorporated speech as follows:

In the lead-up to the 2010 election, this government released a comprehensive plan to restore integrity, probity and responsibility to the forefront of gambling regulation in Victoria.

Since the election, the government has demonstrated its commitment to these aims through a number of significant reforms to the regulation of gambling.

The government has established the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, an independent body, one of a kind in Australia, with a mandate to foster responsible gambling, and reduce the prevalence and severity of problem gambling across Victoria through prevention, early intervention and treatment programs.

The foundation has been funded with a record \$150 million over four years to undertake its role, demonstrating the government's clear commitment to its objectives.

Amongst other measures, the government has also overseen the removal of automatic teller machines from Victoria's gaming venues and banned the use of irresponsible technology such as earphones on gaming machines.

From August 2012, the Victorian gaming industry transitioned from the duopoly gaming operator system, to a new structure where venue operators have direct control over their gaming operations.

The government has worked closely with the industry to facilitate a smooth transition to the new gambling industry structure and the successful establishment of the combined gambling and liquor regulator. The issuing and commencement of new licences for the conduct of keno,

monitoring and wagering and betting has also been successful.

The main purpose of the bill is to resolve operational issues that have arisen with the commencement of the new licences and industry structure.

I now turn to the provisions of the bill before the house.

The wagering and betting licence, held by Tabcorp Wagering (Vic) Pty Ltd, successfully commenced on 16 August 2012. The wagering and betting licensee is authorised to conduct wagering, approved betting competitions such as sports betting, and approved simulated racing events, such as Trackside, in Victoria.

The issuing of the wagering and betting licence required a new legislative structure which was introduced into the Gambling Regulation Act 2003 (the act) over a number of years. The bill amends the act to address issues identified in relation to the ongoing operation of the wagering and betting licence.

The existing legislation prohibits the wagering and betting licensee from accepting bets and paying winnings on approved simulated racing events by betting vouchers. There is no restriction on the use of betting vouchers for other types of betting conducted under the wagering and betting licence. The bill amends the Gambling Regulation Act 2003 to remove this prohibition. This will provide consistency across all products offered by the wagering and betting licensee.

The act provides that it is a requirement to verify a registered player's identity in accordance with the conditions of the wagering and betting licence. The commonwealth's Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act 2006 requires the wagering and betting licensee to undertake particular identification procedures. The wagering and betting licensee's business rules provide that account verification procedures will be consistent with that legislation.

This bill will amend the act to make it clear that the identification requirements that apply to its business are in line with the commonwealth legislation.

The bill will also amend the act to provide the Treasurer with the power to grant an exemption from tax on fixed-odds approved betting competitions run by the wagering and betting licensee. The purpose of the exemption is to ensure that the wagering and betting licensee can provide fixed odds betting book management services for operators in other states without incurring a tax liability in both Victoria and the other jurisdiction.

This amendment will assist the wagering and betting licensee in offering fixed-odds betting book management services to wagering operators in other states and territories.

The conduct of fixed-odds betting book management services by the wagering and betting licensee will benefit the Victorian racing industry through sharing of the associated fees under the joint venture arrangements.

The new keno licence, which successfully commenced on 15 April 2012, allows the keno licensee to conduct a number of keno games in accordance with the Gambling Regulation Act 2003.

While linked jackpots are not currently permitted across jurisdictions for keno games, they are allowed for public lotteries. Linking jackpots across jurisdictions allows keno operators to offer a linked prize pool, increasing the growth of jackpot prize pools.

The bill will permit linked jackpot arrangements with keno operators in other Australian jurisdictions, subject to compliance with the keno licence and any other approvals required from the minister for gaming and the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation.

In approving linked jackpot arrangements, the state will ensure that keno tax revenue and agent commission rates are not negatively affected and that existing responsible gambling measures that apply to keno are not undermined.

It is an offence if a person listed on the roll of manufacturers, supplier and testers makes a payment to or confers a benefit on a venue operator. Persons listed on the roll undertake a range of functions including the sale of gaming machines to venue operators. It is a common commercial practice, permitted by the act, to provide a bulk purchase rate to customers. The bill will insert a provision to ensure that a person does not commit an offence merely by selling gaming machines in accordance with a bulk rate published in a price list, or by otherwise acting in accordance with the legislation.

Interaction between venue staff with responsible service of gaming training and patrons is an important measure to ensure a responsible gambling environment within gaming venues. However, an amendment to the act is required to ensure that the requirement does not apply to people who sometimes work in a gaming area but whose normal role does not include interaction with patrons.

The bill will therefore ensure that persons who work in a gaming venue who do not interact with gambling patrons as part of their usual employment are not required to undertake responsible service of gaming training. Employees such as cleaners and technicians should not be required to undertake this training before commencing work in a gaming venue.

The act currently provides that, every year, \$45 million of gaming machine taxes that would otherwise be paid to the Community Support Fund are to be retained in the Consolidated Fund. That money is used to fund drug and alcohol treatment services. This arrangement was put in place by the former government in 2004 for a period of five years. In 2007 the arrangement was extended for a further four years. The funding arrangement is due to expire at the end of this financial year. The bill will amend the act to extend the arrangement by four years to 30 June 2017.

These funds will be used towards the 2012–13 Victorian budget decision that ensured recurrent funding for alcohol and drug treatment across the state.

This will ensure continued certainty of funding for drug and alcohol treatment services.

Finally, the bill makes a number of technical amendments to the Gambling Regulation Act 2003, to resolve inconsistencies or anomalies between the legislation and current practice. This includes the repeal of provisions that are obsolete.

In summary, this bill further strengthens the legislative framework and resolves operational issues that have arisen

with the commencement of the new gambling industry structure.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned for Ms PULFORD (Western Victoria) on motion of Mr Leane.

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 2 May.

INTEGRITY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time for Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Assistant Treasurer) on motion of Hon. M. J. Guy; by leave, ordered to be read second time forthwith.

Statement of compatibility

For Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS (Assistant Treasurer), Hon. M. J. Guy tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (charter act), I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the Integrity Legislation Amendment Bill 2013.

In my opinion, the Integrity Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, as introduced to the Legislative Council, is compatible with the human rights protected by the charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

The bill will amend the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011 and the Victorian Inspectorate Act 2011 to confer pension entitlements on the Commissioner for the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission and the Inspector of the Victorian Inspectorate. The pension will restrict the ability of these officers to be appointed to public office when in receipt of a pension. This amendment is relevant to the right to have access to the Victorian public service and public office under section 18(2)(b) of the charter act.

The amendments conferring pension entitlements on the IBAC Commissioner and the Inspector incorporate the same post-retirement restrictions as apply to Supreme Court judges under section 83(4) of the Constitution Act 1975. These restrictions also apply to other officers in receipt of constitutionally protected pensions, such as judges of the County Court, the Chief Magistrate, the solicitor-general, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the chief Crown prosecutor and senior Crown prosecutors.

The bill provides that the pensions of retired IBAC commissioners and retired inspectors cease if they accept appointment to a judicial office, are diminished if they have an entitlement to a federal or interstate judicial pension, and are suspended if they hold an office for profit under the Crown or are engaged in legal practice, unless the Governor in Council determines otherwise.

The constitutionally protected pension scheme is intended to enhance the independence of and public confidence in senior office-holders. The amendments contained in the bill reflect the longstanding policy that retired judges and other officers in receipt of a constitutionally protected pension should not engage in post-retirement activities which are incompatible with the dignity of the office they had previously held, or which could compromise the independence of the office.

The limitations on the right contained in the bill are direct, proportionate and balanced with the need to ensure public confidence in the offices of the Commissioner and the Inspector, and the need to ensure the independence of those offices.

The limitations are reasonable, as they are not an absolute prohibition on accepting other offices or engaging in legal practice. There will be many circumstances where the Governor in Council could determine that a post-retirement activity is consistent with the dignity of the particular office, and would not diminish the independence of the office or public confidence in it.

The limitations are reasonable and demonstrably justifiable having regard to the nature of the offices and their central importance to the state's integrity system. I consider there are no less restrictive means reasonably available to achieve the intended purposes of maintaining the independence and integrity of the offices consistently with other constitutionally protected office-holders.

Gordon Rich-Phillips, MLC
Assistant Treasurer
Minister for Technology
Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry

Second reading

Ordered that second-reading speech be incorporated into *Hansard* on motion of Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning).

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

Incorporated speech as follows:

The Integrity Legislation Amendment Bill further enhances Victoria's integrity system by amending the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011 and the Victorian Inspectorate Act 2011 to provide a pension entitlement for the Commissioner of the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC Commissioner) and the Inspector of the Victorian Inspectorate (Inspector).

IBAC sits at the apex of the state's integrity system. The inspectorate has important powers to oversee IBAC's activities, including the assessment of material gained through covert and coercive methods. The bill confers a pension entitlement on the IBAC Commissioner and Inspector following their retirement.

The amendments establish a pension entitlement which reflects the seniority and standing of the offices of the IBAC Commissioner and Inspector, and which further entrenches their independence.

The bill also amends the Constitution Act 1975 and the County Court Act 1958 to recognise service in the offices of IBAC Commissioner and Inspector for pension purposes where those officers are subsequently appointed judges of either the Supreme Court or the County Court.

These amendments are consistent with section 83(6) of the Constitution Act 1975 and section 14(5) of the County Court Act 1958 which recognise prior service in other constitutionally protected offices for judicial pension purposes. Prior service recognised for pension purposes includes the offices of solicitor-general, Director of Public Prosecutions, chief Crown prosecutor and senior Crown prosecutors.

The bill takes an important step in further entrenching the independence of the offices of IBAC Commissioner and Inspector. The independence of these offices is integral to ensuring public confidence in the state's integrity system.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 2 May.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Introduction and first reading

Received from Assembly.

Read first time for Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health) on motion of Hon. M. J. Guy; by leave, ordered to be read second time forthwith.

Statement of compatibility

For Hon. D. M. DAVIS (Minister for Health), Hon. M. J. Guy tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (charter act), I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the Parliamentary Committees Amendment Bill 2013.

In my opinion, the Parliamentary Committees Amendment Bill 2013, as introduced to the Legislative Council, is compatible with the human rights protected by the charter act. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview of bill

The bill amends the Parliamentary Committees Act 2003 to merge four existing joint house committees into two new joint house committees.

Human rights issues

1. *Human rights protected by the charter act that are relevant to the bill*

This bill does not engage any of the rights under the charter act.

2. Consideration of reasonable limitations — section 7(2)

As the bill does not engage any of the rights under the charter act, it is not necessary to consider section 7(2) of the charter act.

Conclusion

I consider that the bill is compatible with the charter act because it does not engage any human rights issues.

Hon. David Davis, MP
Minister for Health

Second reading

Ordered that second-reading speech be incorporated into *Hansard* on motion of Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning).

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

Incorporated speech as follows:

The Parliamentary Committees Amendment Bill 2013 will amend the Parliamentary Committees Act 2003 by merging four existing joint house committees to form two new joint house committees.

The bill will merge the Law Reform Committee and the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee to form the Law Reform, Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee.

The bill will also merge the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee and the Outer Suburban/Interface Services and Development Committee to form the Economic Development, Infrastructure and Outer Suburban/Interface Services Committee.

The new committees will have the same functions as the existing committees, thereby preserving the coverage of the existing committee system. If this bill is passed by the Parliament, the number of joint house committees will be 12, the same number that existed in 2005.

The bill will commence on 1 August 2013. This will enable the existing committees to complete their current inquiries. The bill will deem the new committees to be the same body as the relevant existing committees. Accordingly, the new committees will be able to complete any unfinished work of the existing committees, if necessary.

Members of the existing committees will not automatically become members of the new committees. Rather, members of the new committees will be appointed in accordance with the Parliamentary Committees Act 2003.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr VINEY (Eastern Victoria).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 2 May.

**PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
AMENDMENT (GROWTH AREAS
AUTHORITY AND MISCELLANEOUS)
BILL 2013**

Committed.

Committee

Clause 1

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I depend on your guidance, Deputy President, as to which broader matters will be dealt with here, as opposed to the operation of individual clauses. I am interested in division 2 of part 2 of the bill.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! Mr Barber has asked me to make a determination. Can I just clarify that Mr Barber wants to pursue elements in division 2?

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — The clause-by-clause operation is not so much the issue, and therefore it may be better dealt with in clause 1.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! That is fine, and we will proceed on that basis.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I seek some clarity, because I have some amendments which flow up and down division 2 and my first amendment will test a number of them. I have a couple of questions about clause 3. Can we knock that off and then deal with division 2, which starts at clause 8? I am happy to deal with division 2 now, but I just want to know if I should deal with my matters as part of this discussion, including my amendments, or if we want to —

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! Mr Tee's amendments are related to the issue Mr Barber wants to raise, as I understand it. Given that Mr Barber is happy to deal with his concerns in clause 1, I would suggest that if Mr Tee wishes to he should enter the debate on clause 1 on the issues he wishes to raise. Then we can come to Mr Tee's formal amendments in clause 8 if he is interested. He does not have to do that — he can hold back and wait until clause 8 and deal with all of them then — but that would be my suggestion for the ease of the committee.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — In the second-reading speech there is a scant paragraph on this issue, which seems to be a rather large issue, and that is the movable feast of who the responsible authority is. Can the minister confirm that this whole set of clauses relating to division 2 of part 2 arises out of the decision

the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) made in *Woolsthorpe Wind Farm Pty Ltd v. Minister for Planning* [2012] and that the government is effectively seeking to change the state of affairs that that case uncovered?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — The answer is yes, and the government is seeking to provide clarity to what was a VCAT decision.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I thought the VCAT decision was pretty clear. I think the government is seeking its own form of clarity — that is, that from now on the responsible authority for a planning permit that was created as a result of ministerial intervention will be the responsible authority listed in the planning scheme today, or on any given day in the present tense, not the one that was the responsible authority at the time of the minister's intervention. Is that effectively the whole purpose of this set of clauses?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — The purpose of these clauses relates to the fact that the previous minister, Justin Madden, now the member for Essendon in the Assembly, called in a number of wind farm permits — from himself, I might add — and in doing so made himself the responsible authority for those permits. This is not something which applies to every wind farm permit; it applies to eight of them. As a consequence the government needs to very consistently, as part of its 2010 election commitments, return powers to local government when it comes to enforcement of permits and responsible authority status. What we are doing in this clause is absolutely consistent with what we said we would do from the very start — that is, return to local government powers in relation to wind farm permits and enforcement and responsible authority status.

Let us be very clear. I heard some second-reading debate contributions suggesting a whole range of things, such as that there would be troops marching up the street and that I was causing some kind of war with a whole range of other people, but let us be very clear about what we are doing: we are clarifying a mistake that was made by the previous minister, Justin Madden, and we are returning these powers to councils, where they belong.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — Is it not the case that wherever the same set of circumstances arises as a result of a call-in from the minister by the minister and where the responsible authority has since changed this provision would operate in the exact same way? For example, the minister at the table has called

in a number of matters over the last two years. Would this bill change the situation in relation to responsibility for any call-in he himself has done?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — No, this is only where the category of responsible authority changes, so that is a very specific permit. It is a very specific situation. These are being clarified, as you said, in response to what has come out of the *Woolsthorpe* decision in VCAT.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — In order to understand the impact of this bill on a whole range of planning permits, would I not need to go back and read every one of those planning permits and know who the responsible authority was at the time of the original call-in?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — Yes, that is correct. That is precisely what we have done.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — The minister says it is about eight particular wind farm permits, but in fact it could be a whole range of matters Mr Madden may have called in during his time where they fall into the same set of circumstances as Woolsthorpe did when it was put before VCAT.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I am a bit unclear what I am being asked here. I will just simply say, as Mr Barber asked me previously, that we have obviously gone away and checked a number of permits — not just wind farm permits but other permits — to see where there is an issue, and we have identified them. This bill will clarify them.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — How many other instances of ministerial call-ins has the minister discovered would have their status — that is, the status of who is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the permit — changed as a result of the bill that is before us today?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — This bill is designed to ensure ongoing consistency through responsibility authority status in permits going into the future. When we have dealt with the permits we have done today, and I think that is 8 of the 36 wind farm permits that have been issued in Victoria, this will provide clarity to those going forward.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — What about call-ins other than wind farms? Have you discovered any that meet the same set of circumstances that were uncovered during the *Woolsthorpe* VCAT case?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — Not that I am aware of. I just had that checked. It is key just to note again why this clause is being put forward in this bill, and that is because the permit approval process for those wind farms — which, I might add, the Greens were very supportive of — was a mess, and we have to now bring this back into this chamber to clarify the responsible authority status for the enforcement of those permits.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — Can the minister, to use the buzzword of the day, clarify the concerns Moyne Shire Council has raised? Its concern is that under this bill it and a number of other councils might now be referred responsibility for permits that have already been issued. The question really is: is the bill retrospective for permits that have already been issued?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — The simple answer is yes, the bill is retrospective for those permits that were issued by Justin Madden.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — To clarify the point Mr Barber made, you are aware of at least 8 out of 36 permits that are affected by this bill.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — No, there are 36 wind permits that have been issued in Victoria, and I am aware that 8 of them have an issue which needs to be clarified.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — Referring to this so-called mess that the minister describes, the government solicitor as I understand it went into the *Woolsthorpe* case arguing that the council was wrong — in other words, that there was no lack of clarity over who was responsible. The government solicitor did not prevail at VCAT, and VCAT argued that in the instance where the minister called in a permit from himself and where the responsible authority status had since changed — that is the change Mr Guy referred to — and despite what everybody had assumed, which was that the council had become the responsible authority, the minister in fact still was the responsible authority. The minister no longer wants to be the responsible authority for the overall enforcement of the administration of these permits, and so he is bringing in this legislative provision that says that it does not matter who was the responsible authority at the time; what matters is what this law now says.

I am trying to get to the bottom of whether there may have been other instances that fell into the same category back in the history of ministerial interventions, which is very long — and there are a reasonable

number of them that the minister himself has done in his two years — and whether a subset of those permits might fall into the same category.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I want to say again that the point of this amendment is to ensure consistency, but I also want to make just an observation, because I know that Mr Barber said that I want to excuse myself from permit enforcement. As is the case now, I would continue to be responsible for enforcing aspects of matters in those permits that are specifically designated to be enforced by me as minister to my satisfaction, and some of those may be noise, extending the times within which the development must be started or completed, corrections to permits and amendments to permits. So in respect of what Mr Barber was referring to earlier, which is the *Woolsthorpe* decision, the effect of this bill will be that the Moyne Shire Council will be responsible for the ongoing administration and enforcement of the planning permit except for those matters which I am specifically designated to be responsible for.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I have not read all eight permits, so I do not know which bits of each permit were originally written up as having to meet the satisfaction of the minister versus the satisfaction of the responsible authority, because what the bill does is change who is the responsible authority. For example, if we go to the former Department of Planning and Community Development website, there is a set of model permit conditions for wind farms which include things such as micro-siting of turbines, post-construction noise monitoring and the creation of a complaints register. Generally speaking this set of model permit conditions has been drafted using the words ‘the responsible authority’, but along the way it is entirely possible that versions of the permits were issued that say ‘the minister’ as opposed to ‘the responsible authority’. Depending on which condition in which permit we are talking about, some parts of it will be changed and they will go back to the council; other parts of it will stay with the minister.

The only real way to know the impact of this bill on those permits, since we are not getting anywhere speculating about other permits from earlier years, is for me to actually stand here and ask the minister. I could ask the minister, for example, in relation to the Waubra wind farm: does the condition requiring a post-construction noise monitoring plan say ‘to the satisfaction of the responsible authority’ or ‘to the satisfaction of the minister’?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — In relation to noise it is usually the minister; however,

Mr Barber might find in other instances, often traffic management, that it is usually the local government which enforces that permit. I point out when you are talking about calling-in powers that it is worthwhile to note while we are looking at section 97 of the bill that I have never used section 97 for calling in, as opposed to former Minister for Planning Justin Madden.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — In terms of the cost of councils implementing these permit conditions, a number of councils are concerned about this impost. I think the mayor of the Moorabool shire has said that there will be a 1 per cent rate increase per annum. I am wondering: is that something you have considered, and would you compensate councils for the expense they incur as a result of this bill?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I think the advice is that if there are any enforcement issues, they will be minimal. Any 1 per cent rate increases that are being discussed by some councils are an overreaction. Councils could use differential rates on wind energy facilities if they desired; there are a whole range of mechanisms that councils have. It is not all about money; it is sometimes about principle, and the principle of giving these powers back to local governments we believe is important.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — The other principle of course is that if local governments do not want the power, it should not be forced on them. My question really relates to the issue of differential rates. Is the minister suggesting that once a permit has been issued and that responsibility is transferred on to councils, councils can then increase the rates for those wind farms in order to recoup the costs they have incurred as a result of having to implement those permits?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — Mr Tee asked me about councils that may not want them. I would say: what about councils that did not want wind farms imposed on them in the first place? And Moorabool, which he just mentioned, is indeed one of those councils. Importantly, Moorabool is one of those councils dealing with a permit which we are now dealing with in this chamber and which the Labor government approved, I might add, at the stroke of midnight just before the government went into caretaker mode prior to the last election. It forced a wind farm permit upon a council that did not want the wind farm in the first instance and which became the responsible authority while having no ability to give any feedback on that permit whatsoever.

There should not be any crocodile tears about councils having wind farms in their backyards that they did not want in the first instance. What this government has done is give the responsible authority powers back to those councils. Importantly, and I will say it again, we are dealing with eight wind farm permits; we are not dealing with every permit. The scaremongering and this idea that some have expressed that all councils that have wind farms will need to increase rates to deal with them is rubbish.

I will say it again: we are dealing with eight permits. They are eight permits which were issued by Justin Madden as planning minister. They are here in this chamber having to be clarified today due to a VCAT decision which has provided some ambiguity about the previous minister making himself the responsible authority, calling the proposals in and then approving them despite every single council we are dealing with not wanting them. We should also remember that we are not even dealing with every condition on each of those eight permits. It is a specific number of conditions in a specific number of permits by a specific minister at a specific point of time which we are here to clarify. Anyone trying to make it any more than that is, frankly, misleading people.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I want to understand the rationale behind the minister forcing these councils to have responsibility for permits when they do not want to have that responsibility.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — You are asking me why I would force something on a council. Why did you force on a community a wind farm it did not want? Why did you force all these permits — here they are here: Waubra called in, one in the Moyne planning scheme called in by the minister, one in the Pyrenees planning scheme called in by the minister — on councils that did not want them at all? Former Minister Madden called them in, and some of them were the last items considered by the Governor in Council before the government went into caretaker mode, to pass them through in the dead of night. Now there are crocodile tears and opposition members are asking why we are giving councils back responsible authority status for the enforcement of permits they did not want but which Labor forced on them. Unlike Mr Tee, we on this side of the house believe that councils should have a role in determining and enforcing these permits.

Mr Tee — Give them a choice.

Hon. M. J. GUY — We have given them a choice, Mr Tee. They can now reject a permit, they can now

give a permit over to me or they can now seek advice. You, Mr Tee, behaved disgracefully in government when it came to wind farm permits, and we are here to fix your mess up!

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! It would enable the committee to get through consideration of the legislation in detail a little more quickly if the minister did not provoke interjections and responses.

Hon. M. J. GUY — Or was not provoked.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! I was coming to that. I do not need the minister's advice. I would prefer that, despite the provocation, Mr Tee take the interjections down a notch. It will all work much more smoothly if the minister addresses his remarks through the Chair rather than directly to a member in the chamber.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — There is no ambiguity, as the minister says. In relation to these eight wind farms, permit responsibility for administration and enforcement is currently in his lap, and the purpose of this bill is to take it out of his lap and put it to the councils. I ask the minister to name which eight wind farms these are and which local government areas they are in.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — It is worthwhile noting while I answer this, Deputy President, that Mr Barber was in the media asking me to call in the Dundonald wind farm without an environmental impact statement. Mr Barber, you are asking me now to repeat with another wind farm the same kind of problem that former Minister Madden caused and which this bill will fix up.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! I ask the minister to address his remarks through the Chair. When he directly addresses a member in the chamber in the way that he just has he provokes a response. If he goes through the Chair, it will work more smoothly.

Hon. M. J. GUY — They are Woolsthorpe in the Moyne local government area, Lal Lal in Moorabool, Crowlands in Pyrenees, Stockyard Hill in Pyrenees, Berrybank in Golden Plains, Mortlake in South Moyne, Ararat in Northern Grampians, Moorabool in Moorabool.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I would not want there to be any confusion between myself and the minister, so let me just say that I never asked him to call in that particular wind farm he referred to for the yellow-bellied sheath-tailed bat sanctuary that he wants to establish out there. What I said was that the matter

was before him under the Environment Effects Act 1978 for a referral, and my view was that it did not need an environment effects statement. Of course it would still have needed a planning permit, and it would have had to get that from the responsible authority.

In relation to the wind farms the minister has just named, a number of them have not been constructed and, depending on how the permits are written, issues such as the micro-siting of the turbines, noise, compliance, the maintenance of a complaints register, audio monitoring and all the rest of it may or may not become the responsibility of each of those councils he named. I noticed the minister waving some pieces of paper around quite theatrically, and I wonder if they are in fact the permits for each of the eight wind farms he has named, because if he has the permits at hand, then he can answer my particular question: which bits of the permit responsibility will be returned to the council and which will stay with the minister?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — They are approved permits that are on the website, Mr Barber, through you, Deputy President. If Mr Barber had sought a briefing, I would have given them to you. Can I just say that you are quite right, some of them are not built. That is why the passage of this bill is so important, because some of them are not built and that provides a good opportunity to have this discussion around an unbuilt facility now as opposed to post construction for those which have been built, when it obviously becomes more difficult for a council.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — It is my understanding the minister has established a wind turbine unit within the planning department. He has a group of people working for him who are specialising in the area of dealing with these permits and the various responsibilities that he currently has and may continue to have. Can the minister tell us how it is going?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — Terrific!

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — Terrific? In relation to Waubra the minister seems to be confirming that the post-construction noise monitoring plan is a condition that attaches to the minister, not the responsible authority notwithstanding this bill or any other similar bill, it will still be his responsibility to ensure that they are complying and that they have made a satisfactory post-construction noise monitoring plan. As the minister knows, because I have asked him about it a number of times, there has been a lot of speculation that Waubra is non-compliant. In fact a motion was passed through the Senate which every coalition senator

voted for. Contained within the substance of the motion was the statement that Waubra was non-compliant. Following on from that logic, the senators up there — coalition and Democratic Labor Party — took the view that Waubra should have had its revenues through the form of renewable energy certificates taken off it. Would the minister like to tell us now, today, whether Waubra is compliant with the conditions of its permit?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I am advised that Waubra has not had its compliance signed off. A very complex permit issue is being worked through.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — It is a very complex issue. I agree with that statement. It is complex in the sense that it involves noise meters and decibels and A-weightings and that kind of thing, which costs money for the company to monitor and requires a certain amount of technical expertise to interpret the outputs of. In relation to all of the eight permits the minister has in front of him, can he tell us whether, once the bill passes, he or the local council will have the responsibility for ensuring compliance with that section of those eight wind farm permits?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — It is nice of Mr Barber to do the bidding of an external company on noise compliance in the chamber of the Victorian Legislative Council. That aside, I note first of all when referring to the Waubra wind farm that Waubra is not one of the eight wind farms that would be impacted by the bill. I take it we are dealing with issues of wind farms in general rather than in relation to this bill.

Secondly, if Waubra had been approved under what this government brought forward in VC78 and VC82, we might not have the issues with the acceptance of the Waubra wind farm by the many local people who live around it. The local council would have been the responsible authority for the wind farm permit in the first instance. If it had not wished to be, it could have asked for me to be the responsible authority, or it could have used the flying squad, for instance, that this government established to assist it as being part of the responsible authority. The council would have had three choices; under the previous government it would have had no choices and the wind farm would have simply been approved.

Mr Tee interjected.

Hon. M. J. GUY — I simply say to Mr Tee again that we have put in place a system that I think is very

good for local councils, which now have three choices. Previously they had no choice.

Mr Tee — That is not what they say.

Hon. M. J. GUY — Mr Tee needs to get his head out of the sand and actually read the bill.

Mr Tee — You have got their letter; they sent it to you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! I will call Mr Tee when Mr Barber and the minister have completed this component.

Hon. M. J. GUY — As I said early on in my presentation to the committee, the minister is more often than not responsible for compliance for noise. Some of those permits are approved and the minister remains the responsible authority for enforcing the permit when it comes to noise, I think, in just about all those permits.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I understand that Waubra is not amongst the eight, but I asked the minister how his dedicated wind farm compliance unit was going, and he said, 'Terrific'. Then I asked him why in two years he had not been able to sign off on Waubra's post-construction noise monitoring plan, and he said, 'It's terribly, terribly complicated'. Can the minister give us any more indication as to what the issue is at Waubra that has prevented him from signing off on a post-construction noise monitoring plan that he has had on his desk for the entire time that he has been the minister, which the company says, notwithstanding a couple of early requests for further information, is essentially, as far as it is concerned, completed. What exactly is the problem in that instance?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — If Mr Barber wants to lead a delegation with Acciona and come and discuss the Waubra permit, I am happy to have that conversation with him. However, I will say it again. As Mr Barber correctly says, Waubra is not one of the eight wind farm permits that is impacted by the bill, and thus it is not relevant to discuss a condition of a wind farm permit that is not impacted by the bill. Therefore, I find the question not relevant to the bill.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — The minister does not need me to lead a delegation from Acciona. It has been dealing with a revolving door of different planning officers in the minister's department in the two years that this minister has been in charge.

The question is very relevant to the purpose of the bill, which is to take some of these incredibly complicated responsibilities off the minister, who is bogged down with just Waubra, and give them over to councils. There is a further set of responsibilities, and I am just going off the model permit conditions — for example, a noise complaint evaluation. In the model conditions it states that for the purposes of complaints evaluation the following requirements apply:

Post installation sound levels shall, where practical, be measured at the same locations where the background sound levels were determined —

and so on and so forth. Also:

If the complaint is not resolved through the processes outlined above, the responsible authority may request an independent peer review at the cost of the permit-holder and on/off shutdown testing to resolve uncertainty.

This is under another section of the model permit conditions, a section headed ‘Noise complaints evaluation’. Can the minister tell me in relation to the eight permits whether it is he or the councils who will be responsible for the noise complaint evaluation process, including the ordering of extra monitoring?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — With great respect, I think I have answered this now three times. In relation to those eight permits, when it comes to noise conditions those issues predominantly remain with the minister.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — How about blade shadow flicker?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — On a number of those permits, when it comes to blade shadow flicker, that will relate to some of the environmental standards that need to be enforced, and most — although I do not think all — of those environmental standards on some of those permits issued remain with the minister.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — I presume that would apply to the ‘blade shadow flicker complaint evaluation and response plan’, which has to be prepared ‘to the satisfaction of the responsible authority’. Remember these are wind farms that are not built yet. These are all hoops that these wind farms will have to go through during and after construction. Is it the case that the minister will continue to be responsible for that; for blade glint, for electromagnetic radiation, for television and radio reception and interference, and for lighting, including aviation obstacle lighting? The minister has referred to traffic management as

something the local council will likely be responsible for.

There is also a whole range of environment management plans: a construction and work site management plan, to be approved presumably before the thing has been started; the sediment, erosion and water quality management plan; the hydrocarbon and hazardous substances plan; the wildfire prevention and emergency response plan; the blasting management plan; the vegetation management plan; the biosecurity management plan; the environmental management plan training program; the implementation timetable; the review of the environmental management program; and the bat and avifauna management plan. Operators of wind farms are required to go around and pick up any dead birds they find in the vicinity. If only coal-fired power stations were required to do a report on all the humans they killed as a result of the dreadful air quality in some coalmining areas!

In relation to the eight permits, can the minister tell me which of these different areas of responsibility will become the burden — given all these mad urban myths that get thrown around about wind farms — of the local council and how many he would like to keep in his lap so that he can continue to be the subject of controversy? I notice he is on the hate list of the Waubra Foundation, along with Christine Milne and Cam Walker, and I congratulate him on that at least. In relation to the eight wind farms, how many of these areas will the minister continue to hold responsibility for — including decommissioning, by the way, because there is a requirement to knock over your wind farm when you have finished using it — and how many will he now be handing over to the local council?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! I appreciate that Mr Barber at the end of that contribution drew it back to the eight permits which are the subject of the provisions in this bill, but I am increasingly struggling with the connection between a number of broad debate issues he is discussing and the actual legislation before the committee, so I ask him to bear that in mind.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — It is an interesting revelation that the Greens have realised that wind farm permits are very complex. I am glad they have. In response to all the issues Mr Barber raised, without reading out the entire Waubra wind farm permit — Mr Barber might want me to do that, but I am sure the committee does not have the time — I simply point out that new section 97H of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 says I will remain the responsible authority where the permit explicitly states it. It is as simple and clear as that.

Clause agreed to; clause 2 agreed to.**Clause 3**

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — This clause gives the minister almost unfettered power to declare via the *Government Gazette* any land in Victoria to be a growth area and therefore land where the Growth Areas Authority can work. Will there be any criteria on which the minister will base his decision in each particular case?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — Yes.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — Will he make those criteria public?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — When it is released, yes.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — Will that be before this bill comes into effect?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — No.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — Is the minister able to be any more specific? I suppose the concern is that what the minister is saying is the bill will come into operation but he will not release the criteria he will use to give effect to the bill prior to its coming into operation.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I am a very forthright person. If people ask me a yes or no question, I will give them a yes or no answer. It is very simple. Common-sense provisions would certainly prevail. We will draw up a list of common-sense criteria, there will be a discussion involving the Growth Areas Authority and the metropolitan planning authority and there will be briefings from the department to councils as to what areas might be determined to be growth areas. It might be the Leneva Valley in Wodonga; it might be Armstrong Creek in the southern part of Geelong; it might be areas in Ballarat West. That will provide those councils with a great level of support in terms of getting those growth areas to market.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — The minister is saying there will be consultation with councils. I want to be clear that the yes or no answers suggested that there would be criteria on which the minister would base his decision and that those criteria will be made public.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — Mr Tee would be great with bureaucracy! It is very clear what

is a growth area and what is not. Nobody in this chamber has difficulty in believing that the Leneva Valley, south of Wodonga, is obviously a growth area, given that it is going to house 30 000 people in the future, as opposed to half a dozen lots on the north side of Nhill. It is very clear which of those two is a growth area and which is not. However, in order to address any ambiguity we will put forward the criteria which the Growth Areas Authority — which it will develop, I might point out — will use when dealing with councils.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — Will they be publicly available?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — I think I answered this with a yes or a no. I am not sure how clear I need to be. The answer was yes, they will be publicly available.

Clause agreed to; clauses 4 to 7 agreed to.**Clause 8**

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! Mr Tee, to move his amendment 1, which is a test for his further amendments 2 to 13 to various clauses in the bill. I point out, however, that this is actually a consequential amendment in its nature, but it is the first one to be tested, and therefore I invite Mr Tee to address the substantive matters in relation to this proposed amendment even though the first one we are calling is actually a consequential amendment.

Mr TEE (Eastern Metropolitan) — I move:

1. Clause 8, lines 6 to 8, omit all words and expressions on these lines.

I will make some brief remarks because I think the issues have been canvassed in both the second-reading debate and as part of the discussion around the provisions of clause 1, and as I indicated, we believe councils ought to have a choice. These are very considerable expenses over compliance that come with the enforcement of permits, and it is not something that should be forced onto councils by the government. We note that councils have indicated that they do not have the relevant expertise and resources, and that these costs will have to be carried by ratepayers, who will see an annual 1 per cent increase in their rates. What the amendments do, collectively, is maintain the structure of what the minister wants to do but give councils an opt-out option in the sense that if the minister wants to force councils to enforce these permits, he cannot do so, but if he wants to ask them, and they agree, then my amendments will enable that outcome.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — On the presumption that the minister is not going to accept the amendment, if we are talking about rates — which is part of Mr Tee's argument — we should at least note that wind farms are significant ratepayers. My understanding is that under the generally agreed formula a wind farm will pay \$40 000 just for being in the municipality and around \$900 a megawatt thereon. That is a significantly large amount of money, every year, particularly in those council areas that do not have large urban centres or large amounts of development going on.

The development of wind farms — not to mention the permanent jobs created or the revenues for those who have turbines on their land — and the subsequent payment to ratepayers from those wind farms, which is in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, reduces everybody else's rate burden in an area where most people probably pay a significant rate bill. So that is important. My question for the minister is this: the minister has introduced a possibility for a council to decide that when considering a planning permit for a wind farm it can refer the decision as to whether or not a permit should be issued to the minister. What is wrong with Mr Tee's proposition that when it comes to ongoing enforcement and administration, it should also be able to refer that responsibility to the minister?

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — For Mr Barber's benefit — although he should know this — the enforcement and approval of a permit are two very different things; they are two exceedingly different things. I am astounded that that proposition would even be put. I find it very interesting that Mr Barber has accepted that wind farms can have an enormous community cost. Roads might be one part of that. But that is a very interesting admission.

I would simply say that we will not be supporting the amendment. I find Labor's hypocrisy on this issue to be absolutely breathtaking. I am not the only one. A number of councils at a Municipal Association of Victoria meeting found exactly the same thing. If the opposition believes that councils should have a choice in relation to the enforcement of a permit, maybe it should have voted with the government on VC78 and VC82. We gave the councils a choice on the approval of a permit. The approval is much more important than the enforcement of a permit, so that issue should have been dealt with when the opposition voted against VC78 and VC82 and accepted donations from wind farm proprietors and companies before the last election. That might explain why it opposed those amendments.

I also take issue with the astounding throwaway line made by a mayor that we may see an annual 1 per cent increase in rates. Apparently it is now a fact that 1 per cent rate increases will occur across every municipality in regional Victoria because of wind farms that were approved by Justin Madden. I find that quite interesting. Frankly it is a complete load of rubbish. It again goes to the credibility of the opposition that it would make such ridiculous and laughable claims. We will not be supporting the amendment.

Mr Tee interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT — Order! I will call Mr Tee if he wishes, but Mr Barber has the call.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — The minister is quite right. The issue of a permit and its administration and enforcement are two different things. But of course the minister could wake up tomorrow morning and change who is responsible for either or both simply by designating a responsible authority under the act via the planning scheme, so it is not as big a distinction as he has made out.

At the same time the minister will continue to be able to call in wind farms, as he did in relation to Chepstowe. He may not have called in wind farms for himself, but he called them in from the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Hon. M. J. GUY — What was the result of that?

Mr BARBER — It was a very good result, I would have to say. The minister approved that wind farm, as he has continued to extend permits for a number of wind farms. I have given him credit for that. There were also a number of wind farm permits that the minister neglected to extend by delaying the very permit conditions we are discussing here today. In Bald Hills there were significant delays to the meeting of the conditions on its permit — I think it might have been in relation to the micro-siting of turbines — in order to get it up and running. It was VCAT that called it in for the minister in that instance.

But what the minister is really pointing to is the moral hazard of giving a minister call-in powers to issue a permit with all these fancy conditions that those members of the community who would believe almost anything they are told about wind farms are all crying out for. As I said, there is the example of someone running around and picking up dead birds in a paddock near a wind farm, while other major developments in the fossil fuel area continue to roll on through. Nobody seems to be worried about the planetary scale of

biodiversity destruction that will come as a result of some of the things the minister will soon be approving.

The question is very much about the moral hazard of having a minister who can make a decision about a permit and add all sorts of long-tail responsibilities, if you like, as long as that particular operation is in place. It could be an abattoir, it could be a railway line, it could be a lot of things, and yet it is the council that will be under pressure for a long time to deliver those outcomes through enforcement. That was the purpose of my question: why is it not okay for a council to have the option as to whether it becomes the responsible authority for enforcement and administration, which is of course the substance of Mr Tee's amendment?

I will vote for Mr Tee's amendment, but if it is unsuccessful, then I will go on and vote against the clause as a test of the set of clauses in this group, because I think the minister is actually worsening the situation in some ways in regard to that moral hazard to which I referred.

Hon. M. J. GUY (Minister for Planning) — The concocted rage is quite astounding. I simply say, as I said before, section 97H of the act shows very clearly that permit conditions will be specified to me, and therefore it will be very clear what I am responsible for in enforcement and what others are responsible for in enforcement. It is purely comical for Mr Barber to start raising the subject of railways and me having permits for a wind farm which include railways — conceivably that is what he is referring to — and then making a council the enforcement authority. To insult local communities by saying that they have no intelligence about managing a wind farm permit beggars belief. I should not be amazed that the Greens would have that view of regional councils and regional people. I would simply say that this government believes not in the enforcement of eight permits issued by Justin Madden, but in the ability for all permits to be considered by local government as at first instance. That stands as a hell of a lot more democratic than what either the opposition or the Greens voted for when they came into this chamber and opposed VC78 and VC82.

Mr BARBER (Northern Metropolitan) — For the benefit of the readers of *Hansard*, I am not expressing any kind of rage whatsoever. I have been discussing these matters with the minister in a conversational tone. The minister says the idea is comical in relation to railways or other kinds of major developments — it could be freeways next — but it is entirely possible that the minister makes himself the responsible authority long enough to issue the permit with whatever conditions he wants to add. They might be

common-sense conditions or conditions that are farcical or impossible to understand, much less enforce. I am not suggesting this minister would do that, but any future minister might. Then, of course, he might change the responsible authority status back and hand the whole mess back to the council. It is not just a matter of what happened in the past; it is also a matter of what could happen in the future.

The reason this particular question about the bill is so important is that there is a whole movement of people, not to mention MPs from Mr Guy's own party, who are very much involved in the worst kind of rabble-rousing. As soon as this bill passes and councils take on responsibility for a range of matters, you can bet your bottom dollar that that movement will turn its attention to the local council in relation to wind farms that have not yet been finalised or on which construction has not yet been commenced, and they will mount every kind of political attack they can on those local councils.

Mr Ramsay interjected.

Mr BARBER — It has nothing to do with the intelligence or the ability of local council officers. It has nothing to do with the intelligence of local communities or the ability of local councils. It is to do with the cost burden, which Mr Tee is attempting to quantify, and the kind of political attack that is going to be unleashed. Mr Guy would know, if he has looked around, that one of the anti-wind farm websites lists Cam Walker from Friends of the Earth, Christine Milne, the leader of the Australian Greens, and Mr Guy himself as public enemy nos 1, 2 and 3. That is because in relation to the Waubra wind farm Mr Guy has not yet done what these people would like him to do, and that is, in effect, shut down the wind farm. I believe very strongly that this is part of a concerted campaign to widen the number of political targets that this group of anti-wind farm activists — a globally organised movement, I have to say — can get a glove on. That is in relation to eight wind farms, a number of which Mr Guy has told us have not yet even passed the threshold they will need to pass in order for construction to commence.

That is my rationale for voting for Mr Tee's amendment. I believe it is the least worst option and in fact that it is the best option in that it does not let this section of the bill go ahead. That is why we are voting against the clause.

Committee divided on amendment:

Third reading

Ayes, 13

Barber, Mr (<i>Teller</i>)	Scheffer, Mr
Broad, Ms	Somyurek, Mr
Elasmar, Mr	Tarlamis, Mr
Jennings, Mr	Tee, Mr
Leane, Mr	Tierney, Ms
Lenders, Mr	Viney, Mr
Pulford, Ms (<i>Teller</i>)	

Noes, 16

Atkinson, Mr	Koch, Mr
Coote, Mrs	Kronberg, Mrs
Crozier, Ms	Lovell, Ms
Davis, Mr D.	O'Brien, Mr (<i>Teller</i>)
Davis, Mr P.	Ondarchie, Mr
Drum, Mr (<i>Teller</i>)	Petrovich, Mrs
Guy, Mr	Peulich, Mrs
Hall, Mr	Rich-Phillips, Mr

Pairs

Eideh, Mr	Dalla-Riva, Mr
Hartland, Ms	Ramsay, Mr
Mikakos, Ms	Elsbury, Mr
Pennicuik, Ms	Finn, Mr
ALP vacancy	O'Donohue, Mr

Amendment negated.

Committee divided on clause:

Ayes, 16

Atkinson, Mr	Koch, Mr (<i>Teller</i>)
Coote, Mrs	Kronberg, Mrs
Crozier, Ms	Lovell, Ms
Davis, Mr D.	O'Brien, Mr
Davis, Mr P.	Ondarchie, Mr
Drum, Mr	Petrovich, Mrs
Guy, Mr	Ramsay, Mr (<i>Teller</i>)
Hall, Mr	Rich-Phillips, Mr

Noes, 13

Barber, Mr	Scheffer, Mr (<i>Teller</i>)
Broad, Ms	Somyurek, Mr
Elasmar, Mr (<i>Teller</i>)	Tarlamis, Mr
Jennings, Mr	Tee, Mr
Leane, Mr	Tierney, Ms
Lenders, Mr	Viney, Mr
Pulford, Ms	

Pairs

Dalla-Riva, Mr	Eideh, Mr
Elsbury, Mr	Darveniza, Ms
Finn, Mr	Hartland, Ms
O'Donohue, Mr	Pennicuik, Ms

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 9 to 23 agreed to.

Reported to house without amendment.

Report adopted.

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the house do now adjourn.

Social housing advocacy and support program: funding

Mr LENDERS (Southern Metropolitan) — The matter I raise tonight is for the attention of the Minister for Housing, and it concerns the social housing advocacy and support program (SHASP) run by HomeGround Services in St Kilda in my electorate, and there are also offices in Preston and Collingwood. The aim of the program is to end and prevent homelessness by supporting public housing tenants and residents to establish and sustain their housing. The program focuses on providing case-managed support to work with individuals on issues that may place their tenancy at risk of breakdown.

It is an important program, one that has operated for six years or so now, and it has delivered great service to vulnerable tenants in my electorate and other places in the state. Last year the coalition government cut this organisation's funding by 30 per cent, and workers in St Kilda are now being warned to expect a further cut of 10 per cent or more in this year's budget. As a result of the funding cuts to date key components of the services provided — in advocacy and assistance with complex administrative tasks — have ended. Members should not forget we are often dealing with the most vulnerable people here, and these advocacy services are very important. This means there is a service gap, as certainly in my area no other organisation fills this need.

SHASP used to be able to assist people with tenancy needs experienced before problems got to crisis levels, but now it is focusing on dealing only with people once situations have reached crisis level. As many of us know, that is too late and prevention is better than cure. As a result of this service being cut there are significant problems through the electorate.

What I am seeking from the Minister for Housing is that she guarantee funding to the organisation going forward, either by reprioritising within her own substantial portfolio or by convincing the Treasurer not

to make the expected cuts in the forthcoming May budget.

Regional and rural Victoria: mobile communications

Mr RAMSAY (Western Victoria) — My adjournment matter is for the Premier, the Honourable Denis Napthine, and it concerns a matter that was highlighted again during the recent Dereel fires in my electorate of Western Victoria Region. I accompanied the Premier and Country Fire Authority (CFA) regional personnel on an inspection of the impact of that fire at Dereel, which burnt 1300 hectares and destroyed nine houses, along with a lot of shedding, fences and a number of livestock.

I firstly would like to congratulate the many organisations and people who pitched in to help, from the CFA, police, Salvation Army, Department of Health and Golden Plains Shire Council — which did good work, including that of the Golden Plains mayor, Jenny Blake — down to the field officers and many, many others. I would also like to thank the Honourable Andrew McIntosh, the former Minister for Corrections, who when I requested the services of the Landmate program quickly organised through the Department of Justice prisoners to help with the clean-up.

Whilst the losses were devastating for the small Dereel community, made all the worse by the fact that the fire was started by an arsonist, the longer term issue is the lack of basic mobile communications in this mobile network black spot area, which creates greater risk in this community in terms of the ability to get vital information and to communicate via mobiles to seek assistance. This is not an isolated incident; there are large areas across my region that have mobile connection black spots which render mobile phones useless. This is a serious problem that should be rectified in regional Victoria, as the size and population is such that there is no excuse, given modern technology, for us to continue to have a lack of communication via mobiles in country areas.

I am concerned that much of the national debate on communication is about the national broadband network rollout when there is a real urgency in regional Victoria to have a basic quality mobile network. The Gillard federal government took the \$2 billion Communications Fund moneys away. That was a fund set up with the National Farmers Federation and the Howard federal government to provide specific funds to provide quality and competitive pricing in mobile networks in regional areas upon the privatisation of

Telstra. It was a protection buffer for rural areas that the Gillard government trashed.

I raise this matter knowing that it sits under the federal jurisdiction, but the Premier indicated on that day that he would discuss with his federal colleagues, including the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Stephen Conroy, and Telstra how we can reduce the mobile black spots in Victoria so communities like Dereel are not put in danger by the lack of basic mobile communications. My request is for the Premier to update the Golden Plains shire and me on how these discussions are progressing.

Carrum to Warburton shared-use track: completion

Mr LEANE (Eastern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is directed to the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Mr Delahunty, and it concerns a commitment his government made to fund and carry out the completion of a bike and walking track between Carrum and Warburton. This was a commitment from the coalition. I will read from a coalition document which says the coalition government would be:

... committed to taking responsibility and demonstrating leadership in planning and constructing the completion of the Carrum to Warburton shared use bike/walking track, with focus on the missing link of approximately 7.1 kilometres between Bayswater North and Mount Evelyn.

This has not happened since the election, and cyclists are very angry that this election commitment has not been fulfilled. I call on Mr Delahunty to ensure that in the upcoming budget there is funding for this particular project, which was promised, so that the missing part of this bike link can be completed as soon as possible.

Wallan-Kilmore bypass: route

Mrs PETROVICH (Northern Victoria) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Planning, the Honourable Matthew Guy, and relates to the Monument Hill precinct in Kilmore. Monument Hill is located directly behind the equestrian racing precinct in Kilmore and is of significance to the community of Kilmore because of its bushland and natural beauty. It contains significant vegetation and flora and fauna. The area is a place of beauty, is used by many people for passive recreation and is loved by the community of Kilmore. The area adjacent to Monument Hill is a much-used recreational facility for this community. It contains the Kilmore and District Pony Club and the Kilmore racing facility, which includes facilities for both harness racing and thoroughbred racing.

I am raising this issue as concerns have been raised with me about the preservation of this area given the proposed Kilmore-Wallan bypass. VicRoads is currently undertaking an extensive process around options for the much-needed bypass. This government is committed to the delivery of this bypass as it is part of the government's election commitment to this area. I personally fought hard to ensure that this project would be delivered for these towns, and this work has been taken up and continued by Cindy McLeish, the member for Seymour in the Assembly.

Monument Hill has been proposed as one of the options for consideration. My concern about this option is that Monument Hill has significant landscape character and cultural and heritage significance for this area. There is a precedent for my proposal. I liken the needs of this area to the controls introduced around the Yarra River on the basis of landscape character. I ask the minister to consider the introduction of interim controls, which should be considered as part of the environment effects statement process.

National broadband network: federal opposition policy

Mr SOMYUREK (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Technology, the Honourable Gordon Rich-Phillips. The federal shadow minister for communications and broadband, Malcolm Turnbull, has invited state governments and regional councils to co-invest in the federal opposition's broadband program rollout. Furthermore, Mr Turnbull was quoted by Fairfax Media on 10 April as having said:

At least one state government has offered their extensive fibre network for its use.

Obviously he was speaking about the coalition's national broadband network proposal. My adjournment request is that the minister inform the house whether it was Victoria that made that offer.

Creswick Bowling Club: flood relief funding

Mr O'BRIEN (Western Victoria) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. I ask the minister to assist the Creswick Bowling Club and the Shire of Hepburn in responding to a decision made under the natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements in relation to an application for flood relief funding by that club.

The Creswick Bowling Club is, or was, in the main street of Creswick but was badly damaged in three successive floods between September 2010 and

February 2011, and the bowling greens have been unplayable since that time. The state government has put significant funding on the table to relocate the Creswick Bowling Club, made up of \$300 000 from Sport and Recreation Victoria and \$600 000 from Rural Development Victoria. However, an application to the federal government for \$886 000 for these major works was initially rejected by the federal Minister for Emergency Management. The detail of the decision, conveyed by letter, leaves some scope for details of special circumstances to be presented by the state for renewed consideration at the federal level. Obviously this would be done in consultation with the bowling club and Hepburn shire.

This 150-year-old club is a vital community asset which Mr Koch, Mr Ramsay and I have all been to see and continue to try to support. It is located in an area with an ageing population. The damaged facilities prevent community members from meeting and socialising at the club. Playing members can no longer practise or hold competitions at their home ground, and the damaged club is a reminder of the floods that went right through the middle of Creswick. Incidentally, I commend Minister Walsh in relation to the work that was undertaken to clean out the debris in Creswick Creek and to assist in reducing further flooding risks, but damage from the floods remains, particularly in relation to the bowling club.

There is anecdotal evidence of a shift of members to clubs in other towns, which removes economic benefit from the local community. Creswick, Clunes and surrounding areas are progressing well in their rebuilding efforts from 2010–11, and I commend the flood recovery teams in Creswick and those other towns — and indeed all over western Victoria — for the efforts that have been made by the whole community to recover.

I emphasise the need for bipartisan and multigovernment responses at local, state and federal levels to these important emergency events. I note that a joint media statement has been made by the federal Attorney-General, the Honourable Mark Dreyfus, QC, and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Honourable Kim Wells, in relation to other natural disasters affecting the alpine areas and the Benalla bushfires et cetera, but I also ask for funding for this bowling club. Federal funding also would mean that the club could proceed with its relocation to the Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve in Creswick.

I also congratulate the minister on his new portfolio and a new start to his ministerial responsibilities.

National broadband network: rollout

Ms PULFORD (Western Victoria) — This evening I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Public Transport, Mr Mulder. By way of background, regional Victorians have watched with great interest the debate around competing broadband proposals in the federal political arena. As Mr Rich-Phillips has indicated in answer to questions asked during the course of this week, there is an important role for the Victorian government in supporting the transition to a broadband-enabled society. As state legislators we obviously have a keen interest in the application of new technologies in health care, in the provision of education services and in the transition that is occurring in our economy, and everyone wants to be in on the action sooner rather than later.

In Colac construction is scheduled to start on the current federal government's proposal in around three years, but there is an innovative proposition under which this could be dramatically sped up by the installation of the NBN (national broadband network) from Geelong through to Warrnambool through an arrangement that could be entered into through VicTrack. This would involve potentially sharing signal tubes beside the railway lines and would support a faster installation.

I seek by way of action from the minister that he direct VicTrack to work in conjunction with NBN Co to fast-track the delivery of the NBN throughout Western Victoria Region through the use of shared signal tubes beside the existing railway lines where possible.

Responses

Hon. P. R. HALL (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I have written responses to adjournment debate matters raised by Mr Leane on 28 November 2012 and on 7 February, Mr Lenders on 5 February and on 7 February, Mr Tee on 5 February, Mrs Peulich on 5 March, Mr Elsbury on 21 March and Ms Tierney on 21 March.

Tonight there were seven matters raised. Mr Lenders raised a matter for the Minister for Housing regarding the social housing advocacy and support program, or SHASP. I will ask the Minister for Housing to respond to that.

Mr Ramsay raised a matter for the attention of the Premier regarding mobile phone coverage in parts of western Victoria, which was particularly important in the recent Dereel bushfires. I will ask the Premier to respond to that matter.

Mr Leane raised a matter for the Minister for Sport and Recreation regarding the bike and walking track between Carrum and Warburton — a fair distance for a regular morning walk. Nevertheless, I will ask Mr Delahunty to look into that.

Mrs Petrovich raised a matter for the Minister for Planning regarding planning around the Monument Hill precinct in Kilmore. I will convey that request to the Minister for Planning.

Mr Somyurek raised a matter for Mr Rich-Phillips in his capacity as Minister for Technology and requested an answer to a question regarding whether Victoria had made an offer to the federal shadow communications minister, Mr Turnbull, regarding fibre use in Victoria. I will pass that request on.

Mr O'Brien raised a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services regarding Creswick Bowling Club and funds to reconstitute the facilities there following flood damage. I will pass that request on. I will also mention to Mr O'Brien that I will be in Creswick tomorrow, and I will endeavour to have a look at that problem myself. Tomorrow I am opening a training facility for a sawmill in Creswick. If any members are available and would like to come along, such as Mr Ramsay or indeed Ms Pulford, they will be more than welcome.

Ms Pulford raised a matter for the Minister for Public Transport and requested that he work with VicTrack to facilitate the rollout of the national broadband network in western Victoria. I will also pass on that request to the minister.

The PRESIDENT — Order! The house now stands adjourned.

House adjourned 6.05 p.m. until Tuesday, 7 May.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Tuesday, 16 April 2013

Port of Hastings: development

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 13 September 2012

REPLY:

The government is accelerating planning for the Port of Hastings in order to have it available when the Port of Melbourne reaches its capacity in mid-2020s.

Planning has already commenced for both road and rail access which will be critical to the success of the port.

The need for grade separations will be driven by increased numbers of passenger services in the first instance although grade separations will make provision for freight needs.

Later in 2013, the government will release a Victorian Freight and Logistics Plan which will address these and other strategic freight issues for the state.

Rail: Altona loop service

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Hartland

Raised on: 11 October 2012

REPLY:

Metro has delivered over 90 per cent of services on time for the last 12 months, and in the 12 months to February 2013, Altona loop punctuality is well above network average (92.7 per cent compared to 91.6 per cent).

Service delivery still remains a concern, and Metro is working to address this. In February 2013, 10 services bypassed the Altona loop.

The current timetable maximises the capacity of the available infrastructure and promotes reliability. There will be capacity for more trains when the Regional Rail Link is completed because Geelong trains will be removed from the Werribee line.

Following the introduction of a new train timetable in November 2012, connection times at Newport for Altona shuttle services have been reduced from seven minutes to four minutes, improving the transfer times for passengers.

The coalition government has no current plans to duplicate the Altona Loop.

Planning: wind farms**Raised with: Minister for Planning****Raised by: Mr Barber****Raised on: 28 November 2012****REPLY:**

1. Fire risks from individual wind energy facilities are currently dealt with through planning permit processes rather than overlays, with the Country Fire Authority providing referral advice.
2. There are standard conditions that can be applied to new permits and a design response to fire risks must be provided as part of a planning permit application.

Western Highway: Beaufort bypass**Raised with: Minister for Roads****Raised by: Mr O'Brien****Raised on: 29 November 2012****REPLY:**

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

Planning for the possible bypasses of Beaufort and Ararat has progressed to the point where four alignments have been identified for each town.

These alignments were identified to inform the start and end points of the Western Highway duplication either side of each town as part of the project to upgrade the Western Highway from Ballarat to Stawell to a four lane divided highway and were funded from that project.

That duplication project does not include the town bypasses of Beaufort or Ararat.

Both the Pyrenees Shire Council and the Ararat Rural City Council are aware that funding is not available as part of the duplication project to progress the planning any further.

The alignments identified for both Beaufort and Ararat do not preclude development opportunities occurring in those towns, however, I recently met with the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer of the Pyrenees Shire Council to discuss the status of the current planning work for Beaufort.

VicRoads, the Council and the Department of Planning and Community Development are exploring ways to reduce the number of alignments and how to incorporate the outcomes into the municipalities' future growth plans. If there are funding implications for this work, in the form of further detailed planning studies, this will be considered in the context of discussions with the federal government about future funding for the duplication of the Western Highway.

Western Victoria Region: crystal methamphetamine use**Raised with: Minister for Mental Health****Raised by: Ms Tierney****Raised on: 11 December 2012****REPLY:**

On 25 January 2013 the Victorian government released a new whole-of-government alcohol and drug strategy Reducing the alcohol and drug toll: Victoria's plan 2013–2017 which sets out how the Victorian government will work with the community to reduce the impact of alcohol and drug abuse.

The Plan sets out a comprehensive approach to reducing the use and harms of all illegal drugs, including methamphetamines, which in a crystalline form is commonly known as 'ice'. It also recognises the importance of disrupting the supply and distribution of ice and other illegal drugs in the Victorian community.

Recognising the increasing number of people presenting to emergency departments affected by alcohol and drugs, the Victorian coalition government is investing \$12 million over four years to support 21 emergency departments. This new funding will support better identification, management and treatment of drug and alcohol-affected patients that present at emergency departments. This new funding will enable the employment of specialist staff in 21 emergency departments that experience high volumes of alcohol and drug-related presentations. The Geelong Emergency Department will receive an additional funding allocation of \$500 000 as part of this investment.

In addition, over \$2 million in new funding over four years has been allocated for additional counselling, consultancy and continuing care services in the Barwon South West region. These services will provide a range of supports appropriate to the needs of clients who have alcohol and drug use problems, including assessment, treatment and consultancy, referral and ongoing case management.

In Western Victoria, specifically the Barwon South West region, the Victorian government funds 14 alcohol and drug treatment agencies, who each year see over two thousand clients, many of whom are affected by methamphetamines.

The government is working closely with a range of alcohol and drug information and treatment services to respond to the prevalence of methamphetamines in the Victorian community. This includes training alcohol and drug treatment workers to better manage the challenges associated with ice use. Additional funding is being provided for training of these and other key staff this financial year, and will take place throughout Victoria.

For the broader community, information and fact sheets on the harms and dangers of ice use is available through the Australian Drug Foundation website.

The Department of Health and Victoria Police have also developed the Protocol for Mental Health, which outlines the police and health response to people displaying erratic behaviours, such as those associated with the use of ice.

The Victorian government will continue to measure and monitor the use and associated harms from methamphetamines in the community.

Alpha Autism: funding

Raised with: Minister for Disability Services and Reform

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 19 February 2013

REPLY:

I am informed that Alpha Autism was unsuccessful in their bid to continue providing commonwealth-funded Disability Employment Services. The funding decision was made at the commonwealth level and funding ceased on 1 March 2013.

The Victorian Department of Human Services has recently been in contact with the organisation and offered assistance. I understand Alpha Autism made independent representations to the commonwealth government and did not request further assistance from my department in that regard.

I am informed the commonwealth government has put in place transitional arrangements for people currently supported by the organisation's employment service and that no participants will be disadvantaged in the process.

Alpha Autism provides disability support services on behalf of my department across the Melbourne metropolitan area.

Alpha Autism will continue to provide valuable support for people with a disability.

Tourism: eastern Victoria

Raised with: Minister for Tourism and Major Events

Raised by: Mr O'Donohue

Raised on: 20 February 2013

REPLY:

I refer to the matter raised by Mr Edward O'Donohue, member for Eastern Victoria on 20 February 2013 on advancing the tourism industry between the Gulf, India and Victoria.

The Victorian government is committed to building the tourism industry and driving growth from the Indian and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets, including encouraging tourism to regional Victoria.

The recent Trade Mission to India included a range of initiatives to further develop and promote Victoria as a tourist destination including the official opening of a Melbourne Photographic Exhibition by leading Indian photographer Atul Kasbekar, the launch of Phase 2 of the Melbourne NOW! campaign, an integrated trade and consumer tourism campaign for India, and meetings between members of the tourism delegation and the Indian travel trade.

Further, the Victorian government has long seen the potential of the Indian market. Tourism Victoria has had a dedicated representative office in Mumbai since 2007, and has developed integrated and cooperative marketing campaigns with major airline, wholesale and online travel partners in India.

In respect to the GCC markets, Tourism Victoria has actively been working in the GCC market for more than 10 years, conducting annual sales missions, participating in major tourism trade shows and conducting targeted marketing activities with key stakeholders. In 2012, the government launched a new consumer brochure for the Middle East market. The Arabic-English brochure introduces Victoria's key tourism experiences, including the Mornington Peninsula, whilst also providing practical information for visitors travelling to Victoria and information on the location of halal restaurants, mosques, major tourist attractions and visitor services.

I am confident that in partnership with the industry, we can grow tourism from both these markets which will of course bring benefits to the Mornington Peninsula and regional Victoria.

Local government: Sunbury

Raised with: Minister for Local Government

Raised by: Mrs Petrovich

Raised on: 21 February 2013

REPLY:

I thank the member for Northern Victoria Mrs Donna Petrovich for her adjournment debate regarding whether Sunbury will remain within the Hume City Council.

I note the member's passionate and ongoing interest in this matter.

The coalition government is gathering the evidence residents need in order to decide whether or not Sunbury would benefit from the establishment of its own shire council.

I joined the member for Northern Victoria in Sunbury for the release of the first stage of this process — a report undertaken by KPMG and entitled *Hume City Council's Service Provision in Sunbury 2012*.

As per the member's request that I continue to work though this issue I have announced that KPMG has also been commissioned to undertake a feasibility study into the impact and costs of establishing a separate Sunbury shire. This work is now under way.

Following completion of this study, the findings will be released to enable the community to vote on the future municipal structure.

National Centre for Farmer Health: partnerships

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 21 February 2013

REPLY:

I am informed that the Life! program is a state-wide diabetes and cardiovascular disease prevention program delivered by Diabetes Australia — Victoria.

The Life! program aims to support Victorians who are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease to make lifestyle changes to prevent the onset of these diseases.

To identify and engage with people that are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, Diabetes Australia — Victoria establishes links with organisations to improve the reach of the program and support the identification and engagement of people associated with those organisations.

Diabetes Australia — Victoria has linked with the National Centre for Farmer Health to improve the reach of the program into Victorian farming communities. While this is not a formal partnership, the relationship brings staff from both organisations together to share expertise and work collaboratively to identify opportunities to provide type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease prevention support to farmers. These links have resulted in the promotion of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease prevention to farmers at rural exhibitions and events, and the promotion of the Life! telephone health coaching service as an accessible support program for farmers at risk of developing these serious diseases.

WorkSafe Victoria: Country Fire Authority Fiskville facility

Raised with: Assistant Treasurer

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 21 February 2013

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I refer to the adjournment debate matter you raised question in Parliament on 21 February 2013 about the Victorian WorkCover Authority's (VWA) investigation of alleged risks to the health and safety at the Country Fire Authority's (CFA's) Fiskville Training Facility.

I am advised that the VWA wrote to the United Firefighters Union — Victorian Branch (UFU) on 20 February 2013 to indicate that, while it had commenced its investigation, it was not in a position to make a decision regarding prosecution within the three month time frame given by section 131 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (the Act) due to the potential breadth and complexity of the matters raised by the UFU.

I understand that these matters include a request for consideration of risks to health and safety of employees at the Fiskville facility extending over a period of more than 10 years, and a non-exhaustive list of 16 safety complaints.

I am further advised that subsequent to that letter, the VWA met with the UFU, and that the VWA has agreed to provide monthly updates regarding the progress of its investigation.

The VWA investigation is continuing and I am informed the VWA is employing a number of strategies, to ensure a comprehensive analysis of all matters of relevance to alleged breaches of the Act.

I also note that the UFU's section 131 request included a request that the VWA investigate alleged offences occurring at Fiskville against the Environmental Protection Act 1970 and the Pollution of Waters by Oil and Noxious Substances Act 1986.

The VWA does not administer either of these Acts, and does not have the statutory mandate to investigate or prosecute offences against this legislation. I am advised that the VWA will seek advice from the UFU's legal representatives as to whether they would like their request to be forwarded to the Environmental Protection Authority, as the regulatory authority responsible for administering the abovementioned legislation.

The VWA is satisfied that the CFA is currently adequately controlling risk associated with fuels, chemicals and water utilised in training activities at its Fiskville training facility.

The VWA continues to work with the CFA to ensure it understands its OHS obligations.

Victorian Honour Roll of Women: website

Raised with: Minister for Women's Affairs

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 5 March 2013

REPLY:

Thank you for raising the adjournment matter about records relating to women who have been previously inducted to the Honour Roll being password protected on the Department of Human Services website, preventing public access to these records.

I am advised by the department that this information was inadvertently blocked in December 2012. Access to the information has been rectified and was made publicly available on 18 March 2013.

The Victorian Honour Roll of Women recognises women whose lives and careers have significantly shaped our communities for the benefit of all Victorians.

Each year, community members, peak organisations and key stakeholders are invited to nominate women for induction onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

Essendon North Primary School: toilet block

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Hartland

Raised on: 5 March 2013

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian government is committed to upgrading government primary and secondary schools across the state. The government must responsibly balance and prioritise the capital needs of over 1500 government schools in Victoria.

The Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Plan for Education identifies a number of priority capital projects to be funded and commenced in the first term of government. Additional schools identified for capital funding are announced in the Victorian Budget.

The Victorian government is spending an additional \$100 million over four years in school maintenance funding to address the \$420 million maintenance backlog left by the previous government.

The Victorian government has recently completed a state-wide maintenance audit of all Victorian government schools, and will be spending \$51.5 million to address the urgent school maintenance needs, as identified in the audit.

Schools will soon receive their condition assessment reports to enable them to make better informed decisions about funding and resource allocation to address maintenance needs at their school.

Apollo Bay P-12 College: redevelopment

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 5 March 2013

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian coalition government is committed to upgrading government primary and secondary schools across the state. The government must responsibly balance and prioritise the capital needs of over 1500 government schools in Victoria.

The Victorian Liberal-Nationals Coalition Plan for Education identifies a number of priority capital projects to be funded and commenced in the first term of government. Additional schools identified for capital funding are announced in the Victorian budget.

In a challenging financial climate, the government is still on track to deliver its school infrastructure election commitments during this term of government. This will include the final stage of redevelopment of the Apollo Bay P-12 College.

Beaumaris: secondary college

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 6 March 2013

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

In August 2012 the Sandringham College Council voted to recommend that the Minister for Education:

- endorses in principle the disaggregation of the current Sandringham College into two new schools; and
- agrees in principle to the establishment of two separate, stand-alone schools.

The recommendation also included that the College become two separate schools no later than the beginning of 2014.

Given the unique nature of the requests the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development engaged Spatial Vision to conduct a demographic study and Cube Consulting to further conduct a feasibility study and community survey.

I commend the work of Howard Kelly and Graham Marshall in supporting the Sandringham College community in the earlier stages of consultation, and recognise the work of RTK Consulting in its review of curriculum provision.

The Victorian coalition government is committed to the future of Sandringham College and is on track to deliver on its \$6 million capital investment election commitment in this term of government.

National Youth Week

Raised with: Minister for Youth Affairs

Raised by: Mrs Petrovich

Raised on: 6 March 2013

REPLY:

The Victorian coalition government is committed to providing opportunities for young Victorians to be engaged in employment, education, and positive relationships; involved in their community and decision making; and in creating cultural activities, festivals, art, music and enterprise.

In 2012–13, the coalition government committed more than \$2.2 million for programs that encourage community and economic participation by young people in Northern Victoria.

This funding includes support to popular programs such as the Advance volunteering initiative, Be Heard! rural and regional community radio grants, Engage! grants, FReeZA drug, alcohol and smoke free events, National Youth Week and the Rural and Regional Youth Inclusion Grants.

Royal Melbourne Show: poultry exhibition

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture and Food Security

Raised by: Mr Eideh

Raised on: 6 March 2013

REPLY:

I refer to the matter you raised during the Adjournment Debate in the Legislative Council on 6 March 2013, regarding the poultry display at the Royal Melbourne Show.

The Royal Melbourne Showgrounds were redeveloped by the previous government under a joint venture arrangement with the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria (RASV). Under this arrangement, the RASV is responsible for delivering the Show and attracting commercial events, such as MasterChef, to the Showgrounds.

I understand that the RASV is working closely with its Poultry Committee to ensure promotion of the poultry industry. A special Royal Melbourne Poultry Show will be held during the Queen's Birthday long weekend in June and the RASV has developed a new approach to poultry presentation at the Royal Melbourne Show in September/October focused on public education and interaction.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Exford Primary School: car park

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 7 March 2013

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's South-Western Victoria regional office is aware of the concerns regarding car parking at Exford Primary School caused by the growth in enrolments which has resulted in increased traffic and parking pressures at the school.

The matter is also being investigated by the Shire of Melton.

I am advised that a number of options are being considered to resolve the issue, including leasing a portion of neighbouring farmland for use as a car-parking space.

Rosamond Special School: Braybrook facilities

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Elsbury

Raised on: 7 March 2013

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I am advised that the development of the Rosamond Special School is progressing well. Construction at the school is well advanced, with external walls and roofing completed on all buildings.

The school will include state of the art facilities, including 14 learning areas with adjacent library alcoves, art, library and multi-purpose areas as well as administration and staff facilities. Additional landscaping has been developed with a central 'town square' courtyard and larger bus garaging and shelter facilities have been included in the project.

The school is scheduled for completion in June 2013, ready for students at the beginning of term 3.

This important project will benefit students and parents of children with a disability and on completion, the new school will cater for over 130 students. It will provide important services to students with special needs and I look forward to the completion of this exciting project.

Public transport: timetables

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Pennicuik

Raised on: 7 March 2013

REPLY:

Melbourne Bus Link operated a Saturday timetable on Australia Day, Saturday 26 January 2013. This was listed on the Public Transport Victoria website in the weeks leading up to Australia Day and in a notice displayed on the bus.

The Public Transport Victoria public timetable booklet states that all public holidays, except Labour Day and Melbourne Cup Day, will run to a Sunday timetable. Melbourne Bus Link operated bus routes to a Sunday timetable on Monday 28 January 2013, the day in lieu of the Australia Day public holiday.

Stop specific timetables display the master schedule at the time of printing. This means that any temporary scheduled alterations or changes at a particular time will not be shown in the timetable case at stops. The 'Service Information' section of the timetable states: 'A reduced frequency timetable operates from Christmas Eve to late January every year'.

Timetable information is also provided through the Public Transport Victoria Customer Services free call number from 6.00 a.m.–midnight daily.

The retendering of bus routes in 2013 provides an opportunity to improve customer services on Melbourne's bus network. Further announcements about the Metropolitan Bus Franchise tender will be made in due course.

Electoral Commissioner: appointment

Raised with: Attorney-General

Raised by: Mr Somyurek

Raised on: 7 March 2013

REPLY:

As you may be aware, I recently announced the appointment of Mr Warwick Gately, AM, to the position of Victorian Electoral Commissioner.

Mr Gately has been the Western Australian Electoral Commissioner since 2004 and will commence as the Victorian Electoral Commissioner on 29 April 2013. Mr Gately is ideally qualified for the role, with a strong record of leadership, operations management and overseeing elections.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Acting Commissioner, Ms Liz Williams. The Acting Commissioner has overseen a by-election, municipal elections, preparations for the forthcoming electoral

boundaries redistribution as well as a range of educational and community engagement activities aimed at increasing participation in the electoral process.

Schools: Bannockburn

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 19 March 2013

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian government plans for new schools through the regular monitoring of residential growth, demographic change and enrolment trends. This ensures that current and future demand for schools are properly planned.

The Victorian government acquired a suitable site for future school development in Bannockburn in August 2011. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has identified the need for a prep to year 9 school at Bannockburn.

I am advised the recently completed Western Heights College in North Geelong has the capacity to accommodate current and future year 10–12 enrolments from the Bannockburn area.

Nunawading Primary School site: safety

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 21 March 2013

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The former Nunawading Primary School has closed recently and the site is currently empty.

I am advised that the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is considering options for the future of the site, including whether it is required for future educational use or should be included in the department's disposal program.

School sites are disposed of in accordance with the government Land Monitor's guidelines. A site which is declared surplus is initially offered to other government departments. If the site is not sold at this stage, it is then offered to the local Council for purchase at a price determined by the Valuer-General. If the site remains unsold it is offered for sale through public tender or auction following rezoning if necessary.

I am advised that the Department is aware of safety concerns at the site, including high levels of vandalism. The Department, through its North-Eastern Victoria Regional office, has taken every effort to secure the site, including padlocking the gates and boarding up windows. Intruders have been apprehended by Victoria Police, and the site is resecured after each incident.

The Department will continue to monitor, maintain, and secure the site until a decision is made on its future use.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 18 April 2013

Taxis: industry inquiry

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 28 November 2012

REPLY:

The coalition government received the Taxi Industry Inquiry's Final Report *Customers First: Service, Safety, Choice* in September 2012.

I have received feedback from Mr Idel and other interested parties on the Taxi Industry Inquiry's recommendations, and this feedback will be considered in the formulation of the government's response.

The government's response to the Final Report will follow in due course.

Stormwater: management

Raised with: Minister for Water

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 5 February 2013

REPLY:

I have on numerous occasions made reference to the fact that approximately 450 gigalitres of stormwater runs off Melbourne each year into our creeks, rivers and the bay, taking pollutants with it.

The coalition government is committed to making better use of this water. There are two key benefits of using this water more efficiently, firstly it is a good alternative source of water; and reducing storm and wastewater run-off reduces the impact of this on waterways in the Melbourne catchment.

It remains of paramount importance that the Living Victoria Policy is implemented in a way that does not impose a burden on water customers.

Each of Melbourne's water authorities have recently submitted their Water Plans for the next five-year regulatory period to the Essential Services Commission (ESC). These plans include varying levels of stormwater and recycling according to local conditions. The ESC is currently reviewing these plans for prudence and efficiency and is due to release its draft price determination in March-April and final price determination in June 2013.

I trust the ESC to do its job as the independent economic regulator of Victoria's water authorities and as a consequence, it is not appropriate for me to comment further on the Water Plan 3 process.

Healesville freeway reservation: future**Raised with: Minister for Roads****Raised by: Mr Tee****Raised on: 5 February 2013****REPLY:**

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

The Victorian government is committed to working with the community to develop a plan for the future use of the Healesville Freeway Reservation, which demonstrates an appropriate balance of the priorities of all key stakeholder groups.

There are a number of complex issues to be considered in this project, such as the balance between development and open space, the protection of native flora and fauna, the protection of cultural heritage, the future of Nadrasca Farm and the community gardens. It is important that issues such as these are resolved in an appropriate manner and this takes time.

Considerable progress has been made in the development of the Structure Plan including:

- conducting a Flora and Fauna survey of the reservation;
- appointment of a strategic land-use planning consultant to work on the structure plan;
- interviews with all major stakeholders to understand the range of interests involved in the project;
- consultation with the broad community to understand its perspective on the best use of this state owned asset; and
- local community workshops to understand how the local community currently use the reservation and its priorities for its future use.

In relation to correspondence dated March 2011 from the City of Whitehorse, I provided a response dated 12 April 2011. Following recent advice from Council indicating that it had not received a response, I forwarded a copy of that response along with a brief update on the status of the project.

VicRoads advises me that it will continue to interact with the City of Whitehorse on a regular basis to ensure the Council is kept informed of progress and that the Council can provide comments directly to VicRoads.

VicRoads' project timeline indicates that the structure plan and associated documentation will be completed by the end of 2013.

Public transport: Ringwood station precinct**Raised with: Minister for Public Transport****Raised by: Mr Leane****Raised on: 7 February 2013****REPLY:**

The government has committed to start an upgrade of Ringwood railway station and bus interchange in its first term. The upgraded transport interchange will include works to the station, the bus interchange and to the Maroondah Highway. The works will not affect Clocktower Park and will integrate with the redevelopment plans for Eastland Shopping Centre.

The government allocated an initial \$2 million to engage with the community and develop a concept design. An extensive program of engagement with the local community began in July 2011. A proposed concept design was released for public comment during October 2011.

Water: Korumburra supply

Raised with: Minister for Water

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 7 February 2013

REPLY:

Korumburra as well as Leongatha, Koonwarra, Poowong, Loch and Nyora are a part of South Gippsland Water's (SGW) northern system. These towns are currently supplied by small water storages that are dependent upon annual filling.

The Lance Creek Reservoir has existing capacity to supply water to towns on SGW's northern supply system. However, it is not currently connected to this system.

The proposal to connect Lance Creek to the northern system will be considered by the government as part of the 2014–15 budget process.

The Lance Creek Reservoir supplies water to SGW's southern towns. It provided potable water to the Victorian Desalination Project during construction. The connecting pipeline used for this supply is still in place and can transfer water back to Lance Creek if required.

The Desalination Plant would not need to operate for SGW to utilise the Lance Creek Reservoir and the Melbourne supply system.

Lynbrook: wetlands management

Raised with: Minister for Water

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 5 March 2013

REPLY:

In response to community concerns, Melbourne Water (MW) has been working with the City of Casey on issues relating to maintenance of the park, waterway and wetland at the Banjo Paterson Reserve since mid-2012.

MW advises that the bulk of the litter in the wetland seems to come from the park itself rather than being carried with the stormwater. It should also be noted that, although some residents may think vegetation in the wetland and open drain is a problem, MW advises that it encourages certain vegetation types as this is an important part of the stormwater filtering system.

MW has increased the frequency of its regular waterway maintenance regime which includes litter collection, clearing weeds and clearing outlet pipes. It has also developed a targeted litter action plan focussing on reducing the amount of litter dropped by individuals in the reserve through community awareness and education. MW is currently waiting for feedback from City of Casey on this plan.

MW is also discussing the feasibility of providing additional litter bins and educational signage at key sites in the reserve with City of Casey.

B-24 Liberator Memorial Restoration Fund: Werribee land

Raised with: Minister for Environment and Climate Change

Raised by: Mr Elsbury

Raised on: 21 March 2013

REPLY:

The B-24 Liberator Memorial Restoration Fund is restoring a World War 2 Liberator Bomber in Hangar No. 2, Farm Road, Werribee.

The land is owned in freehold title by Melbourne Water.

Melbourne Water, in partnership with Places Victoria, is selling all its land holdings between the Maltby Bypass and the Princes Highway to consolidate its operations at the Western Treatment Plant in Cocoroc.

Places Victoria is developing the land surrounding the B-24 Hangar as a residential development.

Melbourne Water has no further interest in the land on which the B-24 Hangar sits and wishes to surrender the land to the Crown.

Whilst I do not support the reservation of the land and appointment of the fund as a committee of management under the provisions of the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978, I support the fund's ongoing occupation at its current site. It is the means by which the fund continue to occupy the site that requires further discussion.

I would be pleased to ask officers of the Department of Environment and Primary Industries to contact the secretary of the fund to arrange a suitable time to meet to further discuss the options raised in my letter.

Rail: Diggers Rest station toilets

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 21 March 2013

REPLY:

Public Transport Victoria advises that Diggers Rest railway station was primarily upgraded as part of the Sunbury Electrification Project to enable it to accommodate future growth. Station patronage is currently low; however the Government expects the provision of electrified trains to encourage more passengers to use the station.

The station upgrade, including the refurbishment of existing waiting rooms and toilet facilities, allows the option of staffing Diggers Rest when patronage increases.

Station toilets are closed when unattended. It is unlikely that this will change due to the difficulty in keeping toilets at unstaffed stations clean, safe and free of graffiti and vandalism for passengers to use. It is unfortunate that this is the case; however the safety of commuters is paramount.

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 Council.
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.*

Wednesday, 17 April 2013

Finance: fees, charges, taxes, levies and other costs

- 2268. MS PULFORD** — To ask the Assistant Treasurer (for the Minister for Finance): In relation to each fee, charge, tax and levy, or any other costs payable by members of the public or incorporated association in the Finance portfolio —
- (a) what is the name of the fee, charge, tax, levy or other cost;
 - (b) what is the current schedule or rate of charge;
 - (c) are any increases scheduled in the next 12 months;
 - (d) how are any changes reviewed or decided upon and determined by government or its departments or agencies; and
 - (e) what was the total revenue for each charge for the 2010–11 financial year.

ANSWER:

The details of state taxes and charges are set out in the relevant legislation or subordinate legislation or subordinate legislation, which is subject to approval or disallowance by either house of the Parliament. This has been the practice of successive governments.

More information can be found in 2012–13 Budget Paper No. 5 — Statement of Finances, which details the revised estimates of state revenue and the public account.

The value of a penalty or fee unit is determined under the Monetary Units Act 2004. Other state fees and charges are periodically gazetted and published on the websites of administering departments and agencies.

Water: Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project — Goulburn-Murray Water

- 8164. MR LENDERS** — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills (for the Minister for Water): under the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP) or any other works, policies or projects proposed, in development or currently being undertaken by or in partnership with Goulburn-Murray Water, is Goulburn-Murray Water —
- (a) obligated to provide irrigation services to a property linked to delivery shares within the same geographical proximity to the property as currently exists; and
 - (b) satisfying any obligations for water delivery by supplying irrigation services only to the extent of delivering water to a backbone.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (a) Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) remains obligated as per Part VII of the Constitution Act 1975, to have a system to deliver water within its irrigation districts.
- (b) G-MW will undertake modernisation and reconfiguration works in accordance with its requirements to supply water under Part VII of the Constitution Act 1975.

Ageing: home and community care — local government areas

8587. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: in relation to the Victorian government’s funding for Home and Community Care (HACC) Services:

- (1) What was the funding contribution to each local government area in the 2011–12 financial year, and how much of this HACC funding was growth funding.
- (2) What will be the funding contribution to each local government area in the 2012–13 financial year, and how much of this HACC funding was growth funding.
- (3) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services —
 - (a) across Victoria, and if so, what are those projections; and
 - (b) in each local government area, and if so, what are those projections.
- (4) Does the Department of Health have data on current waiting lists for HACC services —
 - (a) across Victoria, and if so, what is that number; and
 - (b) in each local government area, and if so, what is the number in each local government area.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding including growth to each local government area for 2011–12 is listed below.
- (2) Base funding as at 1 July 2012 including indexation to each local government area is listed below.
* Additional growth funding will be allocated to all local government areas in early 2013 pending Commonwealth Government approval

Local government area	(1) Total HACC funding to each local government area for 2011–12	(1) HACC growth funding by local government area for 2011–12 (Note this is already included in Total HACC funding to each local government area for 2011–12)	(2) Base HACC funding as at 1 July 2012 including indexation to each local government area*
Alpine (S)	\$2 103 239	\$-	\$2 123 801
Ararat (RC)	\$1 874 855	\$12 276	\$1 902 391
Ballarat (C)	\$11 040 676	\$156 263	\$11 241 090
Banyule (C)	\$11 347 227	\$120 445	\$11 628 362
Bass Coast (S)	\$4 945 361	\$68 727	\$5 068 378
Baw Baw (S)	\$4 909 181	\$152 633	\$5 119 768
Bayside (C)	\$11 179 680	\$74 746	\$11 239 273
Benalla (RC)	\$2 225 688	\$13 829	\$2 263 265
Boroondara (C)	\$14 571 463	\$72 968	\$14 799 012
Brimbank (C)	\$15 773 185	\$374 120	\$16 746 477
Buloke (S)	\$2 034 238	\$5559	\$2 056 798
Campaspe (S)	\$5 442 685	\$79 654	\$5 580 699
Cardinia (S)	\$5 688 145	\$256 603	\$6 075 377
Casey (C)	\$15 964 142	\$800 606	\$16 984 363
Central Goldfields (S)	\$2 358 175	\$26 448	\$2 404 294
Colac-Otway (S)	\$2 774 723	\$10 157	\$2 829 151

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Wednesday, 17 April 2013

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Local government area	(1) Total HACC funding to each local government area for 2011–12	(1) HACC growth funding by local government area for 2011–12 (Note this is already included in Total HACC funding to each local government area for 2011–12)	(2) Base HACC funding as at 1 July 2012 including indexation to each local government area*
Corangamite (S)	\$2 639 002	\$20 281	\$2 686 411
Darebin (C)	\$16 173 269	\$31 664	\$16 492 488
East Gippsland (S)	\$8 045 354	\$119 311	\$8 270 078
Frankston (C)	\$11 515 536	\$272 703	\$11 933 244
Gannawarra (S)	\$2 224 296	\$14 658	\$2 258 984
Glen Eira (C)	\$13 111 877	\$60 709	\$13 411 567
Glenelg (S)	\$3 033 412	\$29 825	\$3 099 289
Golden Plains (S)	\$1 627 195	\$46 997	\$1 692 583
Greater Bendigo (C)	\$11 599 231	\$155 085	\$11 872 889
Greater Dandenong (C)	\$15 136 582	\$330 554	\$15 778 274
Greater Geelong (C)	\$23 214 771	\$278 812	\$23 747 642
Greater Shepparton (C)	\$7 227 418	\$192 463	\$7 491 030
Hepburn (S)	\$2 367 052	\$22 435	\$2 414 692
Hindmarsh (S)	\$1 429 171	\$-	\$1 444 623
Hobsons Bay (C)	\$9 133 161	\$44 959	\$9 588 519
Horsham (RC)	\$3 238 261	\$21 649	\$3 292 216
Hume (C)	\$12 537 951	\$375 529	\$13 450 572
Indigo (S)	\$2 140 134	\$-	\$2 161 387
Kingston (C)	\$15 694 329	\$150 517	\$16 051 158
Knox (C)	\$12 049 268	\$395 607	\$12 743 853
Latrobe (C)	\$8 672 263	\$99 659	\$8 826 522
Loddon (S)	\$1 980 883	\$4036	\$1 997 949
Macedon Ranges (S)	\$3 870 009	\$86 307	\$3 988 974
Manningham (C)	\$11 587 833	\$341 927	\$12 091 058
Mansfield (S)	\$889 567	\$38 108	\$938 262
Maribymong (C)	\$7 612 252	\$34 591	\$7 831 512
Maroondah (C)	\$9 904 173	\$248 448	\$10 279 493
Melbourne (C)	\$5 252 410	\$108 491	\$5 506 887
Melton (S)	\$6 046 563	\$531 826	\$6 757 593
Mildura (RC)	\$7 132 808	\$71 231	\$7 282 784
Mitchell (S)	\$3 050 708	\$29 179	\$3 115 064
Moira (S)	\$4 393 445	\$41 866	\$4 490 428
Monash (C)	\$15 736 325	\$223 849	\$16 250 309
Moonee Valley (C)	\$11 704 462	\$75 353	\$12 125 069
Moorabool (S)	\$2 795 892	\$56 960	\$2 887 840
Moreland (C)	\$17 616 524	\$15 022	\$17 939 244
Mornington Peninsula (S)	\$17 197 462	\$330 916	\$17 677 060

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Local government area	(1) Total HACC funding to each local government area for 2011–12	(1) HACC growth funding by local government area for 2011–12 (Note this is already included in Total HACC funding to each local government area for 2011–12)	(2) Base HACC funding as at 1 July 2012 including indexation to each local government area*
Mount Alexander (S)	\$2 588 094	\$20 397	\$2 637 267
Moyne (S)	\$2 262 622	\$17 917	\$2 309 067
Murrindindi (S)	\$1 606 097	\$-	\$1 627 126
Nillumbik (S)	\$3 483 236	\$117 686	\$3 688 787
Northern Grampians (S)	\$2 075 435	\$14 113	\$2 117 809
Port Phillip (C)	\$8 421 347	\$86 163	\$8 704 586
Pyrenees (S)	\$1 171 423	\$16 896	\$1 203 773
Queenscliffe (B)	\$812 938	\$3328	\$830 128
South Gippsland (S)	\$3 704 455	\$22 143	\$3 766 661
Southern Grampians (S)	\$3 727 386	\$12 432	\$3 779 645
Stonnington (C)	\$8 488 494	\$65 091	\$8 691 143
Strathbogie (S)	\$1 548 913	\$16 588	\$1 584 248
Surf Coast (S)	\$2 712 023	\$16 375	\$2 814 872
Swan Hill (RC)	\$3 157 582	\$24 360	\$3 217 075
Towong (S)	\$1 466 515	\$13 979	\$1 498 717
Wangaratta (RC)	\$3 449 606	\$47 542	\$3 525 900
Warrnambool (C)	\$4 589 603	\$29 720	\$4 686 152
Wellington (S)	\$5 224 991	\$36 495	\$5 325 441
West Wimmera (S)	\$1 445 437	\$-	\$1 461 696
Whitehorse (C)	\$14 803 689	\$113 426	\$15 136 074
Whittlesea (C)	\$11 571 380	\$468 938	\$12 548 812
Wodonga (RC)	\$3 426 538	\$29 179	\$3 494 443
Wyndham (C)	\$8 515 552	\$349 048	\$9 398 541
Yarra (C)	\$7 005 146	\$26 104	\$7 223 484
Yarra Ranges (S)	\$13 457 263	\$167 137	\$13 853 787
Yarriambiack (S)	\$1 926 877		\$1 952 205

(3) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

(4) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.

Ageing: home and community care

8602. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services:

- (1) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services state-wide as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;

- (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (2) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services:
- (a) across Victoria, and if so, what are those projections; and
 - (b) in each local government area, and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The department does not keep data on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (2) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Alpine

8603. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Alpine Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Alpine Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$569 081. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 17 107. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Alpine Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$573 477. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Rural City of Ararat

8604. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Ararat Rural City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Ararat Rural City Council, for 2011–12 was \$432 129. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 10 843. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Ararat Rural City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$435 707. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Ballarat

8605. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Ballarat City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.

- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Ballarat City Council, for 2011–12 was \$3 910 765. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 96 589. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Ballarat City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$3 989 427. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Banyule

8606. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Banyule City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Banyule City Council, for 2011–12 was \$3 874 287. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 109 873. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Banyule City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$3 943 291. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.

- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Bass Coast

8607. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Bass Coast Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Bass Coast Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 749 392. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 46 577. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Bass Coast Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 801 589. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Baw Baw

8608. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Baw Baw Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:

- (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Baw Baw Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$2 291 007. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 70 873. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Baw Baw Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$2 310 427. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Bayside

8609. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Bayside City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Bayside City Council, for 2011–12 was \$4 253 237. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 118 440. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.

- (3) Total HACC funding for the Bayside City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$4 670 345. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Rural City of Benalla

8610. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Benalla Rural City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Benalla Rural City Council, for 2011–12 was \$889 562. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 26 564. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Benalla Rural City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$897 332. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Boroondara

8611. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Boroondara City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.

- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Boroondara City Council, for 2011–12 was \$5 546 112. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 150 336. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Boroondara City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$5 645 077. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Brimbank

8612. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Brimbank City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Brimbank City Council, for 2011–12 was \$4 192 687. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)

- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 121 336. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Brimbank City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$4 398 849. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Buloke

8613. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Buloke Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Buloke Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$677 250.
(The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 13 355. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Buloke Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$681 482. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Campaspe

8614. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Campaspe Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Campaspe Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 956 016. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 56 644. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Campaspe Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 982 680. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Cardinia

8615. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Cardinia Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Cardina Shire Council does not receive HACC funding. HACC services in this shire are provided by a range of health services and other non-governmental organisations.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Casey

8616. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Casey City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Casey City Council, for 2011–12 was \$8 067 299. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 199 576. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Casey City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$8 651 944. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Central Goldfields

8617. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Central Goldfields Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and

- (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Central Goldfields Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 093 214. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 29 211. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Central Goldfields Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 103 641. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Colac Otway

8618. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Colac Otway Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Colac Otway Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 048 107. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 22 968. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Colac Otway Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 072 520. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.

- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Corangamite

8619. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Corangamite Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Corangamite Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$871 831. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 22 307. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Corangamite Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$880 779. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Darebin

8620. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Darebin City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:

- (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Darebin City Council, for 2011–12 was \$5 718 409. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 151 887. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Darebin City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$5 939 720. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of East Gippsland

8621. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the East Gippsland Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the East Gippsland Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$37 034. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) East Gippsland Shire Council only receives HACC funding to support Senior Citizens Centres for which service hours are not required to be reported.

- (3) Total HACC funding for the East Gippsland Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$37 793. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) East Gippsland Shire Council only receives HACC funding to support Senior Citizens Centres for which service hours are not required to be reported.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Frankston

8622. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Frankston City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Frankston City Council, for 2011–12 was \$4 097 082. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 107 574. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Frankston City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$4 259 608. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Gannawarra

8623. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Gannawarra Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.

- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Gannawarra Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$963 998. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 21 748. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Gannawarra Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$969 974. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Glen Eira

8624. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Glen Eira City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Glen Eira City Council, for 2011–12 was \$5 606 911. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 154 599. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Glen Eira City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$5 678 201. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Glenelg

8625. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Glenelg Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Glenelg Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 267 302. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 37 476. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Glenelg Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 294 975. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Golden Plains

8626. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Golden Plains Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Golden Plains Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$896 261. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 27 825. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Golden Plains Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$931 243. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Greater Bendigo

8627. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Greater Bendigo City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.

- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Greater Bendigo City Council, for 2011–12 was \$5 781 978. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 156 806. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Greater Bendigo City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$5 867 337. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Greater Dandenong

8628. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Greater Dandenong City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Greater Dandenong City Council, for 2011–12 was \$7 109 809. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 192 942. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Greater Dandenong City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$7 301 551. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.

- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Greater Geelong

8629. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Greater Geelong City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Greater Geelong City Council, for 2011–12 was \$9 658 327. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 242 468. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Greater Geelong City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$9 888 445. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Greater Shepparton

8630. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Greater Shepparton City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:

- (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Greater Shepparton City Council, for 2011–12 was \$2 794 909. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 81 895. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Greater Shepparton City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$2 819 133. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Hepburn

8631. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Hepburn Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Hepburn Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 073 297. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 31 829. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.

- (3) Total HACC funding for the Hepburn Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 090 076. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Hindmarsh

8632. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Hindmarsh Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Hindmarsh Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$472 574. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 10 880. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Hindmarsh Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$476 511. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Hobsons Bay

8633. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Hobsons Bay City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.

- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Hobsons Bay City Council, for 2011–12 was \$3 516 949. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 102 096. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Hobsons Bay City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$3 703 581. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Rural City of Horsham

8634. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Horsham Rural City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Horsham Rural City Council, for 2011–12 was \$806 374. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)

- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 19 766. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Horsham Rural City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$822 478. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Hume

8635. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Hume City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Hume City Council, for 2011–12 was \$5 031 728.
(The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 128 615. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Hume City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$5 208 780. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Indigo

8636. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Indigo Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Indigo Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$623 168. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 14 715. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Indigo Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$628 000. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Kingston

8637. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Kingston City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Kingston City Council, for 2011–12 was \$11 719 670. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 161 255. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Kingston City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$11 932 116. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Knox

8638. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Knox City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Knox City Council, for 2011–12 was \$4 617 167. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 111 692. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Knox City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$4 838 345. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Latrobe

8639. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Latrobe City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Latrobe City Council, for 2011–12 was \$3 570 616. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 93 005. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Latrobe City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$3 607 333. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Loddon

8640. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Loddon Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.

- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Loddon Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$753 057. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 18 360. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Loddon Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$762 173. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Macedon Ranges

8641. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 676 924. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 34 414. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 688 613. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.

- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Manningham

8642. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Manningham City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Manningham City Council, for 2011–12 was \$5 387 065. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 156 519. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Manningham City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$5 609 071. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Mansfield

8643. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Mansfield Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:

- (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Mansfield Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$421 571. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 14 375. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Mansfield Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$425 007. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Maribyrnong

8644. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Maribyrnong City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Maribyrnong City Council, for 2011–12 was \$2 563 482. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 67 371. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.

- (3) Total HACC funding for the Maribyrnong City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$2 612 210. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Maroondah

8645. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Maroondah City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Maroondah City Council, for 2011–12 was \$4 117 356. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 109 890. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Maroondah City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$4 269 919. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Melbourne

8646. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Melbourne City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.

- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Melbourne City Council, for 2011–12 was \$2 315 577. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 64 767. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Melbourne City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$2 368 737. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Melton

8647. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Melton Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Melton Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$2 861 997. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)

- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 83 327. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Melton Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$3 107 971. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Rural City of Mildura

8648. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Mildura Rural City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Mildura Rural City Council, for 2011–12 was \$2 237 001. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 55 670. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Mildura Rural City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$2 279 014. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Mitchell

8649. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Mitchell Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Mitchell Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$41 968. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) Mitchell Shire Council only receives HACC funding to support Senior Citizens Centres and a community service officer position for which service hours are not required to be reported.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Mitchell Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$42 829. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) Mitchell Shire Council only receives HACC funding to support Senior Citizens Centres and a community service officer position for which service hours are not required to be reported
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Moira

8650. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Moira Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Moira Shire Council does not receive HACC funding. HACC services in this Shire are provided by a range of health services and other non-governmental organisations.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Monash

8651. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Monash City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Monash City Council, for 2011–12 was \$7 454 369. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 197 352. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Monash City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$7 645 230. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Moonee Valley

8652. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Moonee Valley City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:

- (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Moonee Valley City Council, for 2011–12 was \$3 981 558. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 107 560. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Moonee Valley City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$4 116 088. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Moorabool

8653. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Moorabool City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Moorabool Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 404 741. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 41 468. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.

- (3) Total HACC funding for the Moorabool Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 428 431. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Moreland

8654. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Moreland City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Moreland City Council, for 2011–12 was \$5 426 895. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 144 943. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Moreland City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$5 482 420. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Mornington Peninsula

8655. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.

- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$7 091 298. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 176 633. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$7 266 926. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Mount Alexander

8656. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Mount Alexander Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Mount Alexander Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 169 476. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)

- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 27 241. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Mount Alexander Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 189 397. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Moyne

8657. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Moyne Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Moyne Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$841 285.
(The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 23 671. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Moyne Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$849 907. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Murrindindi

8658. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Murrindindi Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Murrindindi Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$857 622. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 25 610. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Murrindindi Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$864 737. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Nillumbik

8659. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Nillumbik Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Nillumbik Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 167 671. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 29 390. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Nillumbik Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 217 583. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Northern Grampians

8660. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Northern Grampians Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Northern Grampians Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$589 805. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 13 680. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Northern Grampians Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$594 409. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Port Phillip

8661. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Port Phillip City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Port Phillip City Council, for 2011–12 was \$3 386 955. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 88 355. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Port Phillip City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$3 456 056. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Pyrenees

8662. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Pyrenees Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.

- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Pyrenees Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$552 632. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 16 620. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Pyrenees Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$573 869. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Borough of Queenscliffe

8663. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Borough of Queenscliffe:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Borough of Queenscliffe, for 2011–12 was \$284 976. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 6558. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Borough of Queenscliffe as at 1 July 2012 was \$290 652. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.

- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of South Gippsland

8664. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the South Gippsland Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the South Gippsland Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 211 515. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 26 648. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the South Gippsland Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 221 509. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Southern Grampians

8665. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Southern Grampians Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:

- (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Southern Grampians Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 175 298. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 29 933. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Southern Grampians Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 196 822. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Stonnington

8666. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Stonnington City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Stonnington City Council, for 2011–12 was \$3 450 139. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 95 603. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.

- (3) Total HACC funding for the Stonnington City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$3 505 425. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Strathbogie

8667. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Strathbogie Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Strathbogie Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$885 788. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 20 719. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Strathbogie Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$893 300. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Surf Coast

8668. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Surf Coast Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.

- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Surf Coast Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$993 093. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 23 343. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Surf Coast Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 008 809. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Rural City of Swan Hill

8669. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Swan Hill Rural City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Swan Hill Rural City Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 152 128. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)

- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 29 874. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Swan Hill Rural City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 165 262. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Towong

8670. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Towong Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Towong Shire Council does not receive HACC funding. HACC services in this municipality are provided by a range of health services and other non-governmental organisations.

Ageing: home and community care — Rural City of Wangaratta

8671. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Wangaratta Rural City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.

- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Wangaratta Rural City Council, for 2011–12 was \$2 586 556. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 27 620. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Wangaratta Rural City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$2 606 885. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Warrnambool

8672. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Warrnambool City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Warrnambool City Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 530 709. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 46 108. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Warrnambool City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 592 821. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.

- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Wellington

8673. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Wellington Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Wellington Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$49 958. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) Wellington Shire Council only receives HACC funding to support Senior Citizens Centres for which service hours are not required to be reported.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Wellington Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$50 982. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) Wellington Shire Council only receives HACC funding to support Senior Citizens Centres for which service hours are not required to be reported.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of West Wimmera

8674. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government's funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the West Wimmera Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:

- (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the West Wimmera Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$330 152. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 8196. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the West Wimmera Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$332 740. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Whitehorse

8675. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Whitehorse City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Whitehorse City Council, for 2011–12 was \$6 877 439. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 194 736. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.

- (3) Total HACC funding for the Whitehorse City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$6 985 740. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Whittlesea

8676. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Whittlesea City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Whittlesea City Council, for 2011–12 was \$4 500 292.
(The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 118 046. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Whittlesea City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$4 832 971. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Wodonga

8677. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Wodonga City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.

- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Wodonga City Council, for 2011–12 was \$1 417 554. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 42 861. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Wodonga City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$1 429 362. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Wyndham

8678. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Wyndham City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Wyndham City Council, for 2011–12 was \$4 393 937. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)

- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 128 825. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Wyndham City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$4 691 552. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — City of Yarra

8679. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Yarra City Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Yarra City Council, for 2011–12 was \$2 963 607.
(The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 74 176. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Yarra City Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$3 005 605. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Yarra Ranges

8680. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Yarra Ranges Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Shire of Yarra Ranges, for 2011–12 was \$5 675 247. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 144 635. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Shire of Yarra Ranges as at 1 July 2012 was \$5 787 233. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Ageing: home and community care — Shire of Yarriambiack

8681. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Victorian government’s funding for home and community care (HACC) services for the Yarriambiack Shire Council:

- (1) What was the funding contribution in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (2) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2011-12 financial year.
- (3) What will be the funding contribution in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (4) What was the total number of HACC service hours funded in the 2012-13 financial year.
- (5) What was the total number of individuals waiting for HACC services as at:
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (6) Does the Department of Health have data on waiting lists in respect of projected growth in demand for HACC services and if so, what are those projections.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Total HACC funding to the Yarriambiack Shire Council, for 2011–12 was \$607 977. (The HACC program is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments.)
- (2) The total number of service hours funded in 2011–12 was 14 270. Not all HACC funds are used for activities that are recorded as service hours.
- (3) Total HACC funding for the Yarriambiack Shire Council as at 1 July 2012 was \$612 222. The total funding for 2012–13 will not be known until the end of the financial year.
- (4) The total number of service hours funded will not be known until the end of the 2012–13 financial year.
- (5) No data is kept by the department on individuals waiting for HACC services.
- (6) No data is provided to the department on individuals waiting for HACC services. However the HACC planning model does look at growth in the target population by LGA and resources are allocated to reflect growth as distributed across Victoria.

Environment and Climate Change: Parks Victoria — Braeside Park

- 8734.** **MR TARLAMIS** — To ask Minister for Health (for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change): Given the *Herald Sun* reported on 21 September 2012 that up to 140 jobs would be lost from Parks Victoria: in relation to Braeside Park, is the Minister able to —
- (a) provide an unequivocal guarantee that all services will continue as they did prior to this announcement;
 - (b) provide an unequivocal guarantee that no activities will be outsourced to private providers that were previously undertaken by Parks Victoria staff;
 - (c) confirm that no advice has been sought by the Minister or given to the Minister regarding outsourcing at this location; and
 - (d) provide an unequivocal guarantee that the Minister will not close or limit the community’s access to this community asset.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Parks Victoria will continue to determine the allocation of resources to manage the park based on priorities and sourcing of external initiative funding, as has been the case to date. Parks Victoria has no plans or intent to reduce park management services to Braeside Park.

Parks Victoria has no current plans to outsource current park management activities to private providers that are currently being undertaken by Parks Victoria staff.

Parks Victoria has not sought advice from, or provided advice to, the minister regarding outsourcing of any park management activities in the park.

Parks Victoria will continue to provide appropriate access to the park and has no plans to reduce access. Any future changes to how the park is accessed or used by the visitors will involve appropriate community consultation.

Environment and Climate Change: Parks Victoria — Patterson River

- 8735.** **MR TARLAMIS** — To ask Minister for Health (for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change): Given the *Herald Sun* reported on 21 September 2012 that up to 140 jobs would be lost from Parks Victoria, in relation to Patterson River, is the Minister able to —
- (a) provide an unequivocal guarantee that all services will continue as they did prior to this announcement;

- (b) provide an unequivocal guarantee that no activities will be outsourced to private providers that were previously undertaken by Parks Victoria staff;
- (c) confirm that no advice has been sought by the Minister or given to the Minister regarding outsourcing at this location; and
- (d) provide an unequivocal guarantee that the Minister will not close or limit the community's access to this community asset.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Melbourne Water has recently re-negotiated and executed a new lease and licence for the management of the Patterson River Launching Way boat launching facility and associated services by Launching Way Pty Ltd.

There has been no change in the delivery method or service offer for this site and the current lease and licence will be in place for the next five years.

The current arrangement is a continuance of the previous service offer.

Environment and Climate Change: Parks Victoria — Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve

8736. MR TARLAMIS — To ask Minister for Health (for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change): Given the *Herald Sun* reported on 21 September 2012 that up to 140 jobs would be lost from Parks Victoria, in relation to The Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve, is the Minister able to —

- (a) provide an unequivocal guarantee that all services will continue as they did prior to this announcement;
- (b) provide an unequivocal guarantee that no activities will be outsourced to private providers that were previously undertaken by Parks Victoria staff;
- (c) confirm that no advice has been sought by the Minister or given to the Minister regarding outsourcing at this location; and
- (d) provide an unequivocal guarantee that the Minister will not close or limit the community's access to this community asset.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Parks Victoria will continue to determine the allocation of resources to manage the reserve based on priorities and sourcing of external initiative funding, as has been the case to date. Parks Victoria has no plans or intent to reduce park management services to The Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve.

Parks Victoria has no plans to outsource current park management activities to private providers that are being undertaken by Parks Victoria staff.

Parks Victoria has not sought advice from, or provided advice to, me regarding outsourcing of any park management activities at the reserve.

Parks Victoria will continue to provide appropriate access to the reserve and has no plans to reduce access. Any future changes to how the reserve is accessed or used by the visitors will involve appropriate community consultation.

Assistant Treasurer: WorkSafe Victoria — staff

8752. MS PENNICUIK — To ask the Assistant Treasurer: In relation to WorkSafe Victoria's Report for 2011–12 which states that the number of claims by employees in 2009–10 was 10, in 2010–11 was 10

and in 2011–12 it was 13, what is the breakdown of the types of claims and the number of each type for each reporting period stated above.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Victorian WorkCover Authority takes its obligations to provide a safe workplace for its employees very seriously.

The VWA has a strong focus on the health, safety and wellbeing of its people and runs a number of training and development programs focused on these areas, in addition to its highly regarded employee health and wellbeing program, “Feelingood@work”.

Musculoskeletal and stress related injuries are a challenge for employers across Victoria. The VWA has a strong focus on eliminating risk and preventing these types of injuries from occurring. This reflects the VWA’s strongly held view that prevention is critical to workplace health and safety.

The breakdown of the Victorian WorkCover Authority’s (VWA) accepted injury claims for the previous three financial years is as follows:

- 2011–12: 13 claims
- Musculoskeletal injuries — 7
- Stress related — 6

- 2010–11: 10 claims
- Musculoskeletal injuries — 7
- Stress related — 2
- Vehicle accident — 1

- 2009–10: 10 claims
- Musculoskeletal injuries — 5
- Stress related — 4
- Hearing loss — 1

Community Services: youth justice — program funding

8769. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Community Services: In relation to youth justice programs in your portfolio, what are the programs in your portfolio and how much funding did they receive in the —

- (a) 2011–12 budget; and
- (b) 2012–13 budget.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- The Youth Justice program comprises two distinct output groups: community based services and custodial services.
- Programs within the Youth Justice portfolio include programs for serious and violent offenders, violence prevention, motor vehicle offending, the Community Support Service (intensive support and supervision post release), the Group Conferencing program, education and training programs in custody, and primary and mental health services for young people in detention.
- (a) The total budget for youth justice programs for 2011–12 is \$126.4 million.

- (b) The total budget for 2012–13 is \$130.5 million.
- The 2011–12 state budget dedicated \$26.2 million over four years to improving youth justice outcomes and included:
 - 23 new youth justice workers to supervise young offenders and to oversee a state-wide community service program
 - expansion of the Youth Justice Group Conferencing program
 - \$1.1 million for intensive bail supervision of young people at risk of being remanded, to be released on bail and case managed effectively in the community
 - \$7.6 million to provide drug and alcohol, health and rehabilitative services for young offenders through coordinated case management
 - \$4.15 million to enhance staff recruitment, training and development at youth justice centres.
- The 2012–13 budget includes \$54.5 million over three years for an additional 45 beds at Malmsbury Youth Justice Centre to increase capacity across Victoria’s Youth Justice Centres to meet medium to long term demand. The initiative will also support improvements to infrastructure at Malmsbury Youth Justice Centre and at the Melbourne Youth Justice Centre at Parkville.

Children and Early Childhood Development: early intervention services — report

8770. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development: With regard to Early Childhood Intervention Services, when did the Minister first receive the final report and recommendations by the Allen Consulting Group on the ECIS Reform Project, Stage 2.

ANSWER:

Prior to the finalisation of the Early Childhood Intervention Services Reform Project Stage 2, the launch of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was announced. In Victoria, the NDIS will be trialled in the Barwon South West Region.

The impacts and relationships between state-based early intervention programs and the NDIS have not been fully finalised, and work in this area is being undertaken by all interested parties.

However, 500 additional ECIS places have recently been announced and a range of system improvements are being considered.

Ageing: Caulfield Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

8772. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Caulfield Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Montgomery Nursing Home — bed numbers

8773. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Montgomery Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Namarra Nursing Home — bed numbers

8774. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Namarra Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Barwidgee Lodge — bed numbers

8775. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Barwidgee Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Hawthorn Village — bed numbers

8776. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hawthorn Village:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Kiewa Valley House — bed numbers

8777. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kiewa Valley House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Darley House — bed numbers

8778. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Darley House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Mary Guthrie House — bed numbers

8779. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Mary Guthrie House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Bairnsdale Regional Health Service — bed numbers

8780. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Bairnsdale Regional Health Service:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Jacaranda House Hostel — bed numbers

8781. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Jacaranda House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Sutherland Lodge — bed numbers

8782. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Sutherland Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Bill Crawford Lodge — bed numbers

8783. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Bill Crawford Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Eureka Village Hostel — bed numbers

8784. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Eureka Village Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Geoffrey Cutter Centre — bed numbers

8785. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Geoffrey Cutter Centre:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Hailey House Hostel — bed numbers

8786. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hailey House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Jack Lonsdale Lodge — bed numbers

8787. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Jack Lonsdale Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: James Thomas Court — bed numbers

8788. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the James Thomas Court:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) Ten low-care beds were converted to transition care beds in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.

Ageing: Jessie Gillett Court — bed numbers

8789. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Jessie Gillett Court:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) Jessie Gillett Court closed in the 2011–12 financial year due to lack of demand. This resulted in the closure of forty-two low-care beds.

Ageing: P. S. Hobson Nursing Home — bed numbers

8790. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the P. S. Hobson Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Queen Elizabeth Centre (Steele Haughton Unit) — bed numbers

8791. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Queen Elizabeth Centre (Steele Haughton Unit):

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Queen Elizabeth Village Hostel — bed numbers

8792. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Queen Elizabeth Village Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Talbot Place Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

8793. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Talbot Place Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Alan David Lodge — bed numbers

8794. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Alan David Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: McKellar Centre — bed numbers

8795. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the McKellar Centre:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Percy Baxter Lodges — bed numbers

8796. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Percy Baxter Lodges:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Armitage House Nursing Home — bed numbers

8797. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Armitage House Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Beaufort Hostel — bed numbers

8800. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Beaufort Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Beaufort Nursing Home — bed numbers

8801. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Beaufort Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Skipton Hostel — bed numbers

8802. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Skipton Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Skipton Nursing Home — bed numbers

8803. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Skipton Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Beechworth Hospital Residential Care Program — bed numbers

8804. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Beechworth Hospital Residential Care Program:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Morrie Evans Wing Nursing Home — bed numbers

8805. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Morrie Evans Wing Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Cashalton House Hostel — bed numbers

8806. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Cashalton House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Gibson Street Complex — bed numbers

8807. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Gibson Street Complex:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Joan Pinder Nursing Home — bed numbers

8808. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Joan Pinder Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

– Joan Pinder Residential Aged Care Service (RACS) combined with Stella Anderson Nursing Home in September 2010 and is now known as Gibson Street Complex RACS.

- (1) No high-care beds closed at the Gibson Street Complex in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed at the Gibson Street Complex in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Stella Anderson Nursing Home — bed numbers

8809. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Stella Anderson Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

– Stella Anderson Nursing Home combined with Joan Pinder Residential Aged Care Service (RACS) in September 2010 and is now known as Gibson Street Complex RACS.

- (1) No high-care beds closed at the Gibson Street Complex in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed at the Gibson Street Complex in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Golden Oaks Nursing Home — bed numbers

8810. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Golden Oaks Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Simpkin House Nursing Home — bed numbers

8811. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Simpkin House Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Boort District Hospital Hostel — bed numbers

8812. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Boort District Hospital Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) One low-care bed was converted to a transition care bed in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.

Ageing: Boort District Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

8813. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Boort District Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Casterton Nursing Home — bed numbers

8814. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Casterton Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Mount Alexander Hospital — bed numbers

8815. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Mount Alexander Hospital:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) Nineteen low-care beds were closed in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.

Ageing: J. H. F. McDonald Wing Nursing Home — bed numbers

8816. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the J. H. F. McDonald Wing Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Wilson Lodge — bed numbers

8817. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Wilson Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Cohuna District Nursing Home — bed numbers

8818. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Cohuna District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Corangamarah Residential Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

8819. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Corangamarah Residential Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Darlingford Upper Goulburn Nursing Home — bed numbers

8820. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Darlingford Upper Goulburn Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

8821. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Rupanyup District Nursing Home — bed numbers

8822. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rupanyup District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Garden View Court Hostel — bed numbers

8823. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Garden View Court Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: 70 Lowe Street — bed numbers

8824. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the 70 Lowe Street:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Parkland House Hostel — bed numbers

8825. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Parkland House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Willaura Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

8826. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Willaura Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Birchip Nursing Home — bed numbers

8827. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Birchip Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Charlton Hostel — bed numbers

8828. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Charlton Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Grandview Lodge — bed numbers

8829. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Grandview Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Kara Court Nursing Home — bed numbers

8830. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kara Court Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Kara-Linga Nursing Home — bed numbers

8831. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kara-Linga Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Riverview Aged Care — bed numbers

8832. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Riverview Aged Care:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Edward Street Nursing Home — bed numbers

8833. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Edward Street Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

8834. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Monda Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

8835. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Monda Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Mooroolbark Aged Persons Mental Health Residential Care Facility — bed numbers

8836. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Mooroolbark Aged Persons Mental Health Residential Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Northside Aged Persons Mental Health Residential Care Facility — bed numbers

8837. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Northside Aged Persons Mental Health Residential Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Glanville Village — bed numbers

8838. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Glanville Village:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) One low-care bed was converted to a transition care bed in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.

Ageing: Kowree Nursing Home Unit — bed numbers

8839. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kowree Nursing Home Unit:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: The Lakes Hostel — bed numbers

8840. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the The Lakes Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Alchera House — bed numbers

8841. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Alchera House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Hillside Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

8842. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hillside Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Koorooman House Nursing Home — bed numbers

8843. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Koorooman House Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Grutzner House — bed numbers

8844. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Grutzner House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Parkvilla Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

8845. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Parkvilla Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Waranga Aged Care Hostel — bed numbers

8846. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Waranga Aged Care Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Waranga Nursing Home — bed numbers

8847. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Waranga Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Heathcote Aged Care Service — bed numbers

8848. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Heathcote Aged Care Service:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: McIvor Health and Community Services Nursing Home — bed numbers

8849. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the McIvor Health and Community Services Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Creswick Nursing Home — bed numbers

8850. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Creswick Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Daylesford Nursing Home — bed numbers

8851. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Daylesford Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Lumeah Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

8852. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lumeah Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Trentham Hostel — bed numbers

8853. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Trentham Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) Two low-care beds were converted to transition care beds in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.

Ageing: Trentham Nursing Home — bed numbers

8854. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Trentham Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Hesse Rural Health Service Nursing Home — bed numbers

8855. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hesse Rural Health Service Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Heywood Nursing Home — bed numbers

8856. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Heywood Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Sydney–Lynne Quayle & Fitzroy Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

8857. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Sydney–Lynne Quayle & Fitzroy Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Glenview Community Care Nursing Home — bed numbers

8858. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Glenview Community Care Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Inglewood and Districts Health Service Nursing Home — bed numbers

8859. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Inglewood and Districts Health Service Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Inglewood and Districts Health Service Hostel — bed numbers

8860. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Inglewood and Districts Health Service Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Glenarm Nursing Home — bed numbers

8861. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Glenarm Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Caladenia Nursing Home — bed numbers

8862. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Caladenia Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Dianella Hostel — bed numbers

8863. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Dianella Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) Two low-care beds were converted to transition care beds in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.

Ageing: Killara Hostel — bed numbers

8864. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Killara Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Westernport Nursing Home — bed numbers

8865. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Westernport Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Kyabram Nursing Home — bed numbers

8866. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kyabram Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Thomas Hogan Wing Nursing Home — bed numbers

8867. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Thomas Hogan Wing Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Two high-care beds were converted to transition care beds in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Latrobe Regional Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

8868. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Latrobe Regional Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Lorne Nursing Home — bed numbers

8869. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lorne Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Lyndoch Hostel — bed numbers

8870. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lyndoch Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Lyndoch Nursing Home — bed numbers

8871. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lyndoch Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Jessie Bowe House — bed numbers

8872. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Jessie Bowe House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Maldon Hospital Mountview Nursing Home — bed numbers

8873. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Maldon Hospital Mountview Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Canon T. D. Martin Nursing Home — bed numbers

8874. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Canon T. D. Martin Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Carinya Hostel — bed numbers

8875. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Carinya Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Dr R. W. Pattinson Hostel — bed numbers

8876. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Dr R. W. Pattinson Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Kaleesa Nursing Home — bed numbers

8877. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kaleesa Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Bindaree Retirement Centre — bed numbers

8878. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Bindaree Retirement Centre:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Buckland House Nursing Home — bed numbers

8879. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Buckland House Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Avoca Hostel — bed numbers

8880. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Avoca Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Avoca Nursing Home — bed numbers

8881. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Avoca Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Dunolly Nursing Home — bed numbers

8882. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Dunolly Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Maryborough Nursing Home — bed numbers

8883. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Maryborough Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Boyne Russell House — bed numbers

8884. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Boyne Russell House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Cyril Jewel House — bed numbers

8885. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Cyril Jewel House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Gardenview House — bed numbers

8886. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Gardenview House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: McLellan House Hostel — bed numbers

8887. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the McLellan House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Merv Irvine Nursing Home — bed numbers

8888. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Merv Irvine Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Parkville Hostel — bed numbers

8889. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Parkville Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) Sixteen low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.

Ageing: South Stone Lodge Residential Facility — bed numbers

8890. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the South Stone Lodge Residential Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Weighbridge Residential Care Facility — bed numbers

8891. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Weighbridge Residential Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Westside Lodge Nursing Home — bed numbers

8892. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Westside Lodge Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Moyne Health Services Belfast House — bed numbers

8893. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Moyne Health Services Belfast House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Moyneyana House — bed numbers

8894. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Moyneyana House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Banawah Nursing Home — bed numbers

8895. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Banawah Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Illoura Residential Aged Care — bed numbers

8896. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Illoura Residential Aged Care:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Ian Brand Nursing Home — bed numbers

8897. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Ian Brand Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Karinya Grove Residential Care — bed numbers

8898. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Karinya Grove Residential Care:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- Karinya Grove is not a Public Sector Residential Aged Care Service.
- This information is not available.

Ageing: Numurkah Pioneers Memorial Lodge — bed numbers

8899. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Numurkah Pioneers Memorial Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Omeo District Hospital Hostel — bed numbers

8900. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Omeo District Hospital Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Omeo District Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

8901. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Omeo District Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Lochiel House — bed numbers

8902. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lochiel House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Waratah Lodge — bed numbers

8903. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Waratah Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Otway Health Community Services — bed numbers

8904. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Otway Health Community Services:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Carinya Nursing Home Frankston Extended Care — bed numbers

8905. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Carinya Nursing Home Frankston Extended Care:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Michael Court Hostel — bed numbers

8906. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Michael Court Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Rosebud Residential Aged Care Service — bed numbers

8907. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rosebud Residential Aged Care Service:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Harbourside Lodge — bed numbers

8908. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Harbourside Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Jacaranda Village — bed numbers

8909. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Jacaranda Village:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Manangatang & District Nursing Home — bed numbers

8910. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Manangatang & District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Riverside Hostel — bed numbers

8911. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Riverside Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Robinvale Nursing Home — bed numbers

8912. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Robinvale Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Rochester and District Hostel — bed numbers

8913. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rochester and District Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) Two low-care beds were converted to transition care beds in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.

Ageing: Rochester Nursing Home Annexe — bed numbers

8914. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rochester Nursing Home Annexe:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Hopetoun Hostel — bed numbers

8915. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hopetoun Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Hopetoun Nursing Home — bed numbers

8916. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hopetoun Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Yarriambiack Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

8917. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Yarriambiack Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Yarriambiack Lodge Nursing Home — bed numbers

8918. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Yarriambiack Lodge Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Seymour District Nursing Home — bed numbers

8919. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Seymour District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Merindah Lodge Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

8920. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Merindah Lodge Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Merindah Lodge Nursing Home — bed numbers

8921. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Merindah Lodge Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: A. G. Eastwood Hostel — bed numbers

8922. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the A. G. Eastwood Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Allambee Nursing Home Kingston Centre — bed numbers

8923. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Allambee Nursing Home Kingston Centre:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Chestnut Gardens Aged Care Home — bed numbers

8924. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Chestnut Gardens Aged Care Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Mooraleigh Hostel — bed numbers

8925. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Mooraleigh Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Yarraman Nursing Home — bed numbers

8926. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Yarraman Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Auburn House — bed numbers

8927. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Auburn House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Cambridge House — bed numbers

8928. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Cambridge House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Riverside House — bed numbers

8929. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Riverside House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Macpherson Smith Nursing Home — bed numbers

8930. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Macpherson Smith Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Nyah District Aged Care Service Jacaranda Lodge — bed numbers

8931. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Nyah District Aged Care Service Jacaranda Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Swan Hill District Nyah Campus — bed numbers

8932. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Swan Hill District Nyah Campus:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Swan Hill District Nursing Home — bed numbers

8933. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Swan Hill District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Bolga Court Hostel — bed numbers

8934. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Bolga Court Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Lakeview Nursing Home — bed numbers

8935. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lakeview Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Mount View Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

8936. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Mount View Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Timboon and District Healthcare Service — bed numbers

8937. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Timboon and District Healthcare Service:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Upper Murray Health & Community Services — bed numbers

8938. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Upper Murray Health & Community Services:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Andrews House — bed numbers

8939. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Andrews House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Cooinda Lodge Nursing Home — bed numbers

8940. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Cooinda Lodge Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Allan W. Lockwood Special Care Hostel — bed numbers

8941. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Allan W. Lockwood Special Care Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Archie Gray Nursing Home Unit — bed numbers

8942. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Archie Gray Nursing Home Unit:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Iona Digby Harris Home — bed numbers

8943. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Iona Digby Harris Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Jeparit & District Nursing Home — bed numbers

8944. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Jeparit & District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Kaniva Hostel — bed numbers

8945. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kaniva Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Natimuk BNH–Nursing Home Annexe — bed numbers

8946. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Natimuk BNH–Nursing Home Annexe:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Rainbow Bush Nursing Home Annexe — bed numbers

8947. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rainbow Bush Nursing Home Annexe:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Rainbow Bush Nursing Hospital Hostel — bed numbers

8948. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rainbow Bush Nursing Hospital Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Trescowthick House Hostel — bed numbers

8949. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Trescowthick House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: The Birches Specialist Extended Care Facility — bed numbers

8950. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the The Birches Specialist Extended Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Grange Residential Care Services — bed numbers

8951. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Grange Residential Care Services:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) One low-care bed was converted to a transition care bed in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.

Ageing: Kolor Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

8952. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kolor Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Penshurst Nursing Home — bed numbers

8953. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Penshurst Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Valley View Nursing Home — bed numbers

8954. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Valley View Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Wannan Court Hostel — bed numbers

8955. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Wannan Court Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Hazeldean Nursing Home — bed numbers

8956. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hazeldean Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Forty high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year due to a reduction in demand.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Reg Geary Nursing Home — bed numbers

8957. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Reg Geary Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Dimboola District Hospital Nursing Home Unit — bed numbers

8958. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Dimboola District Hospital Nursing Home Unit:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Kurrajong Lodge — bed numbers

8959. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kurrajong Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Wimmera Nursing Home — bed numbers

8960. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Wimmera Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Crossley House Hostel — bed numbers

8961. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Crossley House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
 (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: St Elmo's Nursing Home — bed numbers

8962. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the St Elmo's Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Allawah Special Care Hostel — bed numbers

8963. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Allawah Special Care Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Karana — bed numbers

8964. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Karana:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Warrina Hostel — bed numbers

8965. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Warrina Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Rosebank Nursing Home — bed numbers

8966. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rosebank Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Ageing: Rosebank Hostel — bed numbers

8967. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rosebank Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.
- (2) No low-care beds closed in the 2011–12 financial year.

Health: solariums — regulation

8968. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Health: In relation to solariums and sunbeds:

- (1) How many solariums currently operate in Victoria.
- (2) How many sunbeds currently operate in Victoria.
- (3) Who enforces solarium regulations.
- (4) How often are solariums visited to ensure they are operating within the guidelines.
- (5) How many operators have been found to provide tanning services to people under 18 years of age with skin type 1 (fair complexions).
- (6) How many solarium operators have been charged with providing tanning services to people under 18 years of age with skin type 1 (fair complexions).
- (7) Will the government ban solariums in Victoria.
- (8) Will the government ban the private sale of sunbeds.
- (9) Given Victoria will now be landlocked by states where solariums will be banned, what steps will the government take to ensure Victoria does not become the dumping ground for sunbeds from closed solariums in South Australia and New South Wales.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) There are currently 126 management licences issued for solarium businesses operating at 133 sites throughout Victoria.
- (2) There are currently 435 commercial tanning units (sunbeds) operating in Victoria.
- (3) Authorised officers of the Department of Health enforce the Radiation Act 2005 and Radiation Regulations 2007. This is the legislation which regulates solariums.

- (4) All solarium businesses have been inspected annually since 2008.
- (5) The department has not found any operators providing tanning services to people under 18 with skin type 1 (fair complexions).
- (6) No solarium operators have been charged with providing tanning services to people under 18 years of age with skin type 1 (fair complexions).
- (7) The Baillieu government announced on the 13 December 2012 that it would ban commercial tanning units from the end of 2014.
- (8) The exact detail of the amendments to the Radiation Act 2005 to give effect to the Baillieu government's announcement that it would ban commercial tanning units from the end of 2014 are being developed at the moment.
- (9) The Baillieu government's announcement that it would ban commercial tanning units from the end of 2014 is consistent with the announcements of both the New South Wales and South Australian Governments.

Ports: Webb Dock development — environmental impacts

8970. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Ports): In relation to the proposed Webb Dock port expansion:

- (1) What are the projected maximum noise levels, during both construction and operation, in decibels.
- (2) What is the projected level of light pollution in terms of glare, light trespass and sky glow.
- (3) Will the proposed expanded Webb Dock operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- (4) How many truck movements will occur both in and out of the site each day.

ANSWER:

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

The Port of Melbourne Corporation (PoMC) is responsible for undertaking the Port Capacity Project, which includes redeveloping Webb Dock.

Construction contractors and terminal operators will be required to comply with Victorian noise standards State Environment Protection Policy No. N-1 (SEPP N-1) which are set by and policed by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

Webb Dock is currently floodlit at night from a number of on-dock towers. The PoMC is encouraging bidders to consider the use of sustainable, efficient lighting that minimises light spill from the operational areas of the dock.

The PoMC is currently undertaking an Expression of Interest process for operators at the redeveloped Webb Dock.

Additional information on the redevelopment of Webb Dock and its proposed operation is available on the PoMC website.

Community Services: youth justice — positive sexuality program

8992. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the Male Adolescent Program for Positive Sexuality (MAPPS), how many youth offenders undertook this program between —

- (a) 1 January 2011 and 30 June 2011;
- (b) 1 July 2011 and 31 December 2011; and
- (c) 1 January 2012 and 30 June 2012.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The numbers of young people involved with the Youth Justice service who participated in individual treatment or group based interventions provided by the Male Adolescent Program for Positive Sexuality (MAPPS) are as follows:

- (a) 1 January 2011 and 30 June 2011 — 47 young people found guilty of sexual offences;
- (b) 1 July 2011 and 31 December 2011 — 43 young people found guilty of sexual offences; and
- (c) 1 January 2012 and 30 June 2012 — 44 young people found guilty of sexual offences.

Children and Early Childhood Development: early intervention services — report

8994. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development: Has the Minister received the final report and recommendations on the Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) Reform Project Stage 2.

ANSWER:

Prior to the finalisation of the Early Childhood Intervention Services Reform Project Stage 2, the launch of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was announced. In Victoria, the NDIS will be trialled in the Barwon South West Region.

The impacts and relationships between state-based early intervention programs and the NDIS have not been fully finalised, and work in this area is being undertaken by all interested parties.

However, 500 additional ECIS places have recently been announced and a range of system improvements are being considered.

Ageing: personal alert devices — waiting list

8995. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to Personal Alerts Victoria (PAV):

- (1) How many people were waiting to be issued a personal alert as at —
 - (a) 1 January 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011;
 - (c) 1 January 2012; and
 - (d) 1 July 2012.
- (2) How much funding was provided to PAV for —
 - (a) 2011–12; and
 - (b) 2012–13.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) (a) On 1 January 2011 there were 641 people waiting to be issued a personal alert.
- (b) On 1 July 2011 there were 610 people waiting to be issued a personal alert.
- (c) On 1 January 2012 there were 1121 people waiting to be issued a personal alert.
- (d) On 1 July 2012 there were 1370 people waiting to be issued a personal alert.
- (2) (a) In 2011–2012 \$9.26 million was provided for PAV.

- (b) In 2012–2013 it is expected that \$9.4 million will be provided to PAV.

Ageing: culturally and linguistically diverse seniors grants program — applicants

8996. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to the first round of the Participation for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Seniors Grants Program:

- (1) Which groups were successful in receiving a grant and how much did each group receive.
- (2) What was the name of groups which applied for a grant but were not allocated funding.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The following organisations received funding under the first round of the Participation for CALD Seniors grants program in 2012:

Arabic Welfare	\$10 000
Ashburton Support Services	\$4000
Australia Light Foundation	\$4000
Australian Multicultural Community Services	\$9835
Australian Turkish Association	\$10 000
Australian Ukrainian SC Fellowship	\$4000
Broadmeadows Turkish Senior Citizens Club Incorporated	\$4000
Broadmeadows Vietnamese Senior Citizens Club Incorporated	\$4000
Casey Tamil Manram	\$4000
CatholicCare Archdiocese of Melbourne	\$5000
City of Wodonga	\$10 000
City of Yarra	\$10 000
Diversitat	\$10 000
Filipino Seniors and Carers Support Group of Gippsland	\$5000
Finnish Friendly Visiting Service	\$10 000
Fitzroy Chinese Women’s Group	\$4000
Harrow Bush Nursing Centre	\$5200
Horn of African Communities Network	\$9000
Indonesian Club Melbourne	\$4000
Kensington Chinese Friendship Fellowship	\$1580
Korean Welfare Association Victoria	\$3600
Latrobe Community Health Service	\$10 000
Le Petrel Mauritian Seniors Club	\$4000
LICAU-SED Inc	\$10 000
Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services	\$10 000
Macedonian Men’s Senior Group of Whittlesea	\$4000
NEMA	\$10 000
Northern Region Indian Seniors Association of Victoria (NRISA)	\$2000
Russian Ethnic Representative Council of Victoria	\$10 000
Sikh Community of Western Victoria	\$5000
Somali Elders Group	\$5000
South West Do Care	\$2570
Spanish Speaking Senior Citizens Club of Clayton	\$4000
Springvale Indo-Chinese Mutual Assistance Association Incorporated (SICMAA)	\$4000
Sri Lankan Elders Welfare Association	\$4000
The Association of Hazaras in Victoria	\$4000
The Zoroastrian Association of Victoria	\$3000
Ukrainian Elderly People’s Home-Kalyna Care	\$2000
Victorian Arabic Social Services	\$9924

Vietnamese Australian Seniors' Association	\$4000
Western Region Health Centre	\$10 000
Woomelang and District Bush Nursing Service	\$5000
Young Generation Filipino SCC of SE	\$4000

(2) A total of 221 applications were received, 43 were awarded funding.

Ageing: aged care — assessment services

8997. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to the government's response to the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee's Report on the 2012–13 budget:

- (1) Will the Minister guarantee that the key performance indicator of 'Aged Care Assessment: Average wait between client registration and Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS) assessment — hospital-based assessment' will not be discontinued.
- (2) Will the Minister guarantee that the key performance indicator of 'Aged Care Assessment: Average wait between client registration and Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS) assessment — community-based assessment' will not be discontinued.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The measure only indicates the average waiting time for all people referred for an assessment in a hospital setting. It does not measure how well the program responds to the urgency of people's need for an assessment. The key performance indicator 'Percentage of priority 1, 2 and 3 clients assessed within the appropriate time-hospital-based assessment' is a better indicator of responsiveness to people's needs.
- (2) The measure only indicates the average waiting time for all people referred for an assessment in a community setting. It does not measure how well the program responds to the urgency of people's need for an assessment. The key performance indicator 'Percentage of priority 1, 2 and 3 clients assessed within the appropriate time — hospital-based assessment' is a better indicator of responsiveness to people's needs.

Ageing: aged care — Peninsula Health

8998. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to the response provided by the Minister to my adjournment debate matter raised on 10 October 2012 relating to aged care on the Mornington Peninsula, when did the 'comprehensive communications process' undertaken by Peninsula Health occur and with whom.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The communications process has targeted current residents, relatives, staff and the general community. The process commenced in August 2012 and is ongoing.

Ageing: aged care — public sector facilities

8999. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to any of Victoria's public sector residential aged-care facilities, is your approval as Minister required, and in what circumstances, before a health service board —

- (a) sells a public residential aged-care facility;
- (b) closes a public residential aged-care facility; or
- (c) transfers a bed licence to or from any public residential aged-care facility.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Decisions are made by individual health service boards, which would normally seek information from the Department of Health to assist the decision.

As residential aged-care services are approved, accredited and funded by the commonwealth government, any transfer of licences or approval of a new provider has to be approved by the commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

Ageing: dementia — age-specific care

9000. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to the response provided by the Minister to my Adjournment Debate matter raised on 12 September 2012 relating to dementia and age-specific care, how much funding has the Baillieu government invested in the Active Ageing Network and how has this funding been used.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Active Ageing Network (AAN) will receive a total of \$300 000 between 2012–13 and 2014–15. The funding will be used for the continuation and enhancement of the AAN to improve access to physical activity programs for older people, particularly those who are disadvantaged or from disadvantaged areas.

Ageing: home and community care — client demographics

9001. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to the use of Home and Community Care (HACC) services by people aged 70 years and older for home support in the 2011–12 financial year across both Victoria and in respect of each local government area (LGA):

- (1) What number of clients were born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (2) What was the number of HACC service hours provided to clients who were born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (3) What was the average number of hours of HACC services provided per client who were born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (4) What was the population aged 70 years or older according to the 2011 census data for people born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (5) What was the percentage of the population aged 70 years or older who were HACC clients born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and

- (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- There is data available on the Victorian government’s HACC website for 2009–10. This shows the use of different types of HACC service by older people born in non-English speaking countries, by local government area.
- The Department of Health has scoped out the request to provide this data for 2011–12 and advises that it is a substantial piece of work, requiring drilling down to the top 10 countries of birth in each of 79 local government areas.
- This will be undertaken during 2013 as other priorities permit.

Ageing: home and community care — client demographics

9002. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to the use of Home and Community Care (HACC) services by people aged 70 years and older for nursing or Allied Health in the 2011–12 financial year across both Victoria and in respect of each local government area (LGA):

- (1) What number of clients were born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (2) What was the number of HACC service hours provided to clients who were born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (3) What was the average number of hours of HACC services provided per client who were born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (4) What was the population aged 70 years or older according to the 2011 Census data for people born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (5) What was the percentage of the population aged 70 years or older who were HACC clients born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- There is data available on the Victorian government’s HACC website for 2009–10. This shows the use of different types of HACC service by older people born in non-English speaking countries, by local government area.

- The Department of Health has scoped out the request to provide this data for 2011–12 and advises that it is a substantial piece of work, requiring drilling down to the top 10 countries of birth in each of 79 local government areas.
- This will be undertaken during 2013 as other priorities permit.

Ageing: home and community care — client demographics

9003. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to the use of Home and Community Care (HACC) services by people aged 70 years and older for social support in the 2011–12 financial year across both Victoria and in respect of each local government area (LGA):

- (1) What number of clients were born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (2) What was the number of HACC service hours provided to clients who were born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (3) What was the average number of hours of HACC services provided per client who were born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (4) What was the population aged 70 years or older according to the 2011 census data for people born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.
- (5) What was the percentage of the population aged 70 years or older who were HACC clients born in —
 - (a) English-speaking countries as a whole; and
 - (b) each of the top 10 non-English speaking countries as ranked by population within the LGA/state.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- There is data available on the Victorian government’s HACC website for 2009–10. This shows the use of different types of HACC service by older people born in non-English speaking countries, by local government area.
- The Department of Health has scoped out the request to provide this data for 2011–12 and advises that it is a substantial piece of work, requiring drilling down to the top 10 countries of birth in each of 79 local government areas.
- This will be undertaken during 2013 as other priorities permit.

Racing: Greyhound Racing Victoria — animal welfare

9013. MS PENNICUIK — To ask the Assistant Treasurer (for the Minister for Racing):

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

- (1) How many greyhounds are currently registered with Greyhound Racing Victoria (GRV) for racing in Victoria.
- (2) In relation to the years 2003–2011 inclusive:
 - (a) How many greyhound pups were born in each year.
 - (b) How many of these greyhound pups were registered for racing.
 - (c) What happened to the greyhounds that were never registered for racing.
 - (d) On average, in how many races does a greyhound compete per year.
 - (e) How many injuries recorded at the track resulted in euthanasia at the track, subsequent to a race.
 - (f) How many of the registered dogs were recorded as sustaining an injury each year.
 - (g) How many of the greyhounds that sustained an injury returned back to racing after recovery.
 - (h) How many greyhounds racing in any one year, returned to racing the following year.
 - (i) What is the average age of greyhounds when they retire from racing and when are they deregistered.
 - (j) Are records kept on greyhounds bred and not registered.
 - (k) What revenue does the government receive through gambling on greyhound racing each year.
 - (l) How much money does the government provide to GRV each year and what is it used for.
 - (m) How many greyhounds are rehomed through the industry’s adoption program Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) each year.
 - (n) What percentage is this of all registered, racing greyhounds.
 - (o) How many retired greyhounds are kept for breeding purposes.
 - (p) Are greyhounds provided to universities and research facilities for education, training or research, and if so, how many.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

- (1) This figure cannot be determined accurately as GRV does not classify greyhounds as registered for ‘racing’. Greyhounds are either classified as active or retired, or named or unnamed. The number of named greyhounds by year is listed below in response to question (2)(a).

(2)

(a)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Pups born	7705	8298	7504	7593	6493	6213	6037	6132	6305

- (b) Only named greyhounds are eligible to race. The table below provides information on the number of greyhounds that were whelped in each year that have been named.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Named pups whelped in year that have been named.	4190	4459	4027	4142	3784	3620	3496	3349*	1466*

* As pups are not named until they are approximately 15–24 months of age there will be a proportion of pups from 2010 and 2011 that are yet to be named.

- (c) Some of the pups that have not been named will have passed through the GAP or rehomed through other rehoming agencies (RSPCA, Lost Dog’s Home, private rescue groups). Some will have been kept

as pets by their owners, or given away to third parties as pets and some will have been humanely euthanased.

GRV advises that decisions relating to the end of career options for unnamed greyhounds rest with their registered owner, and will be made in light of the greyhound’s temperament and suitability as a pet.

In recent years, GRV has introduced a number of animal welfare policies and initiatives to ensure greyhounds are looked after throughout their lifecycle.

In 2007, GRV appointed a full-time Animal Welfare Manager to oversee the greyhound racing industry’s many animal welfare initiatives and has focussed specifically on breeding practices within the industry with the aim of decreasing the number of litters bred. This officer also works to ensure participants comply with regulations and requirements relating to greyhound ownership and on educating the greyhound industry participants about their animal welfare responsibilities.

As a result of these initiatives, over the past four years there has been a substantial reduction in the number of litters bred and in the last two years there has been a large decrease in the number of greyhounds euthanased in Victoria. GRV recognises the number of greyhounds euthanased is still too high and is continuing to develop and implement animal welfare initiatives aimed at further reducing these numbers.

- (d) 11.
- (e) For the period 2006–2011, on average, one greyhound in every 1000 starts was euthanased due to an injury sustained during a race or died subsequent to a race. No data is available for the period prior to 2006.
- (f) For the period 2004–2011 an average of 12.1 greyhounds per 1000 starts received a stand down due to injury of 8–21 days, with an average of 2.8 greyhounds per 1000 starts receiving a stand down of more than 22 days. No data is available for the period prior to 2004.
- (g) GRV does not collect data which would precisely answer this question.
- (h) For the period 2003–2011, an average of 57 per cent of greyhounds having a start in one calendar year had a start in the following calendar year.
- (i) On average, greyhounds that have raced retire somewhere between the ages of 2–4 years. In Victoria, greyhounds are not ‘deregistered’ at any age.
- (j) Records are kept of breeding greyhounds serviced, litters registered and greyhounds ‘named’.
- (k) Wagering taxes derived from greyhound racing for the 2003–2011 calendar years were:

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
\$14 398 693	\$15 624 460	\$17 076 239	\$17 583 101	\$19 351 986

2008	2009	2010	2011
\$21 480 145	\$20 685 025	\$20 679 437	\$22 956 874

From 16 August 2012, the wagering tax rate has been reduced from 19.11 per cent to 7.6 per cent, as part of the arrangements for the new Wagering and Betting Licence. This will have the effect of substantially reducing government tax revenue derived from wagering on racing, including greyhound racing.

- (l) GRV does not receive any direct funding from the Victorian government. GRV and its clubs are eligible to apply for project-based funding from the government’s Victorian Racing Industry Fund.
- (m)

	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
Number adopted	189	253	329	343	350	370	361	297	354

Data to respond to this question is only available on a financial year basis. In the 2011–12 state budget the government committed \$1 million to the world leading Victorian Greyhound Adoption Program.

Funding is being provided over four years to ensure that this invaluable service is adequately resourced. This is the first time any government has funded this vital greyhound welfare initiative.

Since GAP's inception in 1996, close to 4000 greyhounds have found homes as pets via this fantastic program. GRV is continually looking for more members of the public to adopt a greyhound at the end of their racing career as the greyhounds make excellent pets due to their calm, placid and loving nature.

- (n) GRV cannot provide the requested percentage. However, approximately 10 per cent of all retirement notifications received are for dogs going to GAP.
- (o) GRV retirement data suggests that approximately 11 per cent of retirement notifications received are for greyhounds being retired for breeding purposes.
- (p) GRV does not 'supply' greyhounds to universities or research facilities.

Housing: heatwave alerts — Keeping in Touch

9015. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Housing: In relation to the 'Keeping in Touch' program, which provides weekly calls to public housing residents over the age of 75 years and living alone, and which has been identified by the Department of Human Services in the 'Heatwave plan for Victoria' (2009) as a means to disseminate heatwave alerts and information to isolated residents at risk:

- (1) Why is it only available to residents 75 and over, when people 65 and over are identified as being vulnerable to heat.
- (2) Why is it only available to older residents, and not available to residents with heat sensitive diseases, disabilities, and other high risk groups.
- (3) How many public housing residents are over the age of 65 and live alone.
- (4) How many public housing residents are over the age of 75 and live alone.
- (5) Are special calls made on days exceeding heat health temperature thresholds to ensure residents are okay.
- (6) Are special calls made on heatwave emergency days to ensure residents are okay.
- (7) Has the government considered expanding the service of the 'Keeping in Touch' program to develop a heat-vulnerable contact list that might not be contacted weekly, but would be contacted in the case of days exceeding the heat health temperature threshold.
- (8) How much did this program cost to run in total in 2011–12.
- (9) How much did this program cost to run per person registered in 2011–12.
- (10) How many residents were registered with the program in 2011–12.

ANSWER:

I can advise that:

The 'Keeping in Touch' program was an initiative of the Department of Human Services in response to concerns about elderly, isolated persons discovered in their properties having been deceased for quite some time.

Tenants elect to be contacted on a weekly basis. On days of high heat alert, Customer Service Officers also take the opportunity to remind tenants about keeping cool and ways to achieve this. Other eligible tenants who elect not to be on the weekly cycle are contacted six monthly to determine if their circumstances have changed.

At the end of June 2012, there were 1132 people registered to receive a weekly call, equating to more than 70 000 calls. The number of persons on the weekly program fluctuates according to need and eligible persons can elect to join or leave the program at any time. The cost of the program per person in 2011–12 was \$54.

Housing: air conditioning — eligibility

- 9016. MS HARTLAND** — To ask the Minister for Housing: In relation to public housing, considering that this summer is projected to be hot, with a 60–75 per cent chance of exceeding the long-term median maximum temperature across Victoria and a 35–40 per cent chance of exceeding the long-term median minimum temperature:
- (1) Will the government provide air conditioning to public housing residents over 65 years old, who suffer increased health risks on hot days.
 - (2) How many public housing residents are over the age of 65.
 - (3) How many public housing residents are over the age of 75.
 - (4) How many public housing residents are there in Victoria.
 - (5) How many public housing residents suffer from heat-sensitive diseases or disabilities.
 - (6) How many public housing residents with heat-sensitive diseases or disabilities have opted to have an air-conditioning unit installed.
 - (7) How many public housing complexes are there in Victoria.
 - (8) How many public housing complexes in Victoria have an air-conditioned communal area.
 - (9) Will the government ensure that every public housing complex has a communal area that is air conditioned; if so, when.
 - (10) When does the government plan to carry out its commitment, made as part of the Council of Australian Government’s National Strategy on Energy Efficiency, to audit the energy efficiency of public housing.
 - (11) When does the government plan to energy efficiency retrofit the various high-rise public housing estates across Melbourne.

ANSWER:

I can advise that:

The Department of Human Services policy is that air conditioning can be provided where a tenant provides evidence of a medical condition or disability that requires it. This is consistent with the approach taken by government departments providing public housing in other states. As a landlord under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*, the department is held to the same standards as private landlords who are not required to provide air conditioning.

I understand that the Department of Human Services, working in conjunction with the Department of Health, has designated approximately 100 public housing community facilities across Victoria as ‘Cooler Places’, operating as drop-in centres on declared Heat Health Alert Days.

These community facilities are air conditioned, and are open to all tenants and residents seeking relief from extreme temperatures. Priority of access is given to elderly people and those with children under four years of age.

The energy efficiency of Victoria’s public housing is being audited through a number of activities which measure and pilot efficiency improvements in a range of housing stock. There are a range of energy assessment activities under way, which are gathering detailed energy performance information for selected apartments and houses across the public housing portfolio.

The department is also assisting clients to reduce their energy consumption through an ongoing program to upgrade high-rise apartments. These upgrades include the replacement of the original windows with high-performance window frames and glass, which improves the energy performance of the apartment and client comfort.

Ageing: Hawthorn Village — bed numbers

9018. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Hawthorn Village:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kiewa Valley House — bed numbers

9019. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Kiewa Valley House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Darley House — bed numbers

9020. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Darley House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Mary Guthrie House Nursing Home — bed numbers

9021. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Mary Guthrie House Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Bairnsdale Regional Health Service — bed numbers

9022. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Bairnsdale Regional Health Service:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Jacaranda House Hostel — bed numbers

9023. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Jacaranda House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Sutherland Lodge — bed numbers

9024. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Sutherland Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Bill Crawford Lodge — bed numbers

9025. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Bill Crawford Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Eureka Village Hostel — bed numbers

9026. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Eureka Village Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Geoffrey Cutter Centre — bed numbers

9027. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Geoffrey Cutter Centre:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Hailey House Hostel — bed numbers

9028. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hailey House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Jack Lonsdale Lodge — bed numbers

9029. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Jack Lonsdale Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: James Thomas Court — bed numbers

9030. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to James Thomas Court:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Jessie Gillett Court — bed numbers

9031. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Jessie Gillett Court:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: P. S. Hobson Nursing Home — bed numbers

9032. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the P. S. Hobson Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Queen Elizabeth Centre Steele Haughton Unit — bed numbers

9033. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Queen Elizabeth Centre Steele Haughton Unit:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Queen Elizabeth Village Hostel — bed numbers

9034. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Queen Elizabeth Village Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Talbot Place Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

9035. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Talbot Place Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Alan David Lodge — bed numbers

9036. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Alan David Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: McKellar Centre — bed numbers

9037. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the McKellar Centre:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Percy Baxter Lodges — bed numbers

9038. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Percy Baxter Lodges:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Armitage House Nursing Home — bed numbers

9039. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Armitage House Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Griffiths Point Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

9040. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Griffiths Point Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kirrak House — bed numbers

9041. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Kirrak House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Beaufort Hostel — bed numbers

9042. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Beaufort Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Beaufort Nursing Home — bed numbers

9043. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Beaufort Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Skipton Hostel — bed numbers

9044. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Skipton Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Skipton Nursing Home — bed numbers

9045. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Skipton Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Beechworth Hospital Residential Care Program — bed numbers

9046. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Beechworth Hospital Residential Care Program:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Morrie Evans Wing Nursing Home — bed numbers

9047. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Morrie Evans Wing Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Carshalton House Hostel — bed numbers

9048. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Carshalton House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Gibson Street Complex — bed numbers

9049. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Gibson Street Complex:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Joan Pinder Nursing Home — bed numbers

9050. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Joan Pinder Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- Joan Pinder Residential Aged Care Service (RACS) combined with Stella Anderson Nursing Home and in September 2010 and is now known as Gibson Street Complex RACS
- (1) No high-care beds closed at the Gibson Street Complex RACS from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed at the Gibson Street Complex RACS from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Stella Anderson Nursing Home — bed numbers

9051. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Stella Anderson Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- Stella Anderson Nursing Home combined with Joan Pinder Residential Aged Care Service (RACS) in September 2010 and is now known as Gibson Street Complex RACS
- (1) No high-care beds closed at the Gibson Street Complex from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed at the Gibson Street Complex from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Golden Oaks Nursing Home — bed numbers

9052. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Golden Oaks Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Simpkin House Nursing Home — bed numbers

9053. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Simpkin House Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Boort District Hospital Hostel — bed numbers

9054. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Boort District Hospital Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Boort District Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

9055. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Boort District Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Casterton Nursing Home — bed numbers

9056. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Casterton Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Mount Alexander Hospital — bed numbers

9057. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Mount Alexander Hospital:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: J. H. F. McDonald Wing Nursing Home — bed numbers

9058. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the J. H. F. McDonald Wing Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Wilson Lodge — bed numbers

9059. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Wilson Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Cohuna District Nursing Home — bed numbers

9060. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Cohuna District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Corangamarah Residential Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

9061. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Corangamarah Residential Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Darlingford Upper Goulburn Nursing Home — bed numbers

9062. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Darlingford Upper Goulburn Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

9063. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Rupanyup District Nursing Home — bed numbers

9064. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rupanyup District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Garden View Court Hostel — bed numbers

9065. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Garden View Court Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: 70 Lowe Street — bed numbers

9066. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to 70 Lowe Street:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Parkland House Hostel — bed numbers

9067. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Parkland House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Willaura Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

9068. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Willaura Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Birchip Nursing Home — bed numbers

9069. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Birchip Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Charlton Hostel — bed numbers

9070. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Charlton Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Grandview Lodge — bed numbers

9071. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Grandview Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kara Court Nursing Home — bed numbers

9072. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kara Court Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kara-Linga Nursing Home — bed numbers

9073. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kara-Linga Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Riverview Aged Care — bed numbers

9074. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Riverview Aged Care:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Edward Street Nursing Home — bed numbers

9075. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Edward Street Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

9076. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Grant Lodge Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Monda Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

9077. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Monda Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Mooroolbark Aged Persons Mental Health Residential Care Facility — bed numbers

9078. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Mooroolbark Aged Persons Mental Health Residential Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Northside Aged Persons Mental Health Residential Care Facility — bed numbers

9079. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Northside Aged Persons Mental Health Residential Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Glanville Village — bed numbers

9080. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Glanville Village:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kowree Nursing Home Unit — bed numbers

9081. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kowree Nursing Home Unit:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: The Lakes Hostel — bed numbers

9082. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to The Lakes Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Alchera House — bed numbers

9083. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Alchera House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Hillside Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

9084. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Hillside Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Koorooman House Nursing Home — bed numbers

9085. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Koorooman House Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Grutzner House — bed numbers

9086. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Grutzner House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Parkvilla Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

9087. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Parkvilla Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Waranga Aged Care Hostel — bed numbers

9088. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Waranga Aged Care Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Waranga Nursing Home — bed numbers

9089. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Waranga Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Heathcote Aged Care Service — bed numbers

9090. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Heathcote Aged Care Service:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: McIvor Health and Community Services Nursing Home — bed numbers

9091. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to McIvor Health and Community Services Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Creswick Nursing Home — bed numbers

9092. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Creswick Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Daylesford Nursing Home — bed numbers

9093. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Daylesford Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Lumeah Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

9094. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Lumeah Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Trentham Hostel — bed numbers

9095. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Trentham Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Trentham Nursing Home — bed numbers

9096. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Trentham Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Hesse Rural Health Service Nursing Home — bed numbers

9097. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hesse Rural Health Service Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Heywood Nursing Home — bed numbers

9098. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Heywood Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Sydney-Lynne Quayle & Fitzroy Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

9099. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Sydney-Lynne Quayle & Fitzroy Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Glenview Community Care Nursing Home — bed numbers

9100. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Glenview Community Care Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Inglewood and Districts Health Service Nursing Home — bed numbers

9101. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Inglewood and Districts Health Service Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Inglewood and Districts Health Service Hostel — bed numbers

9102. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Inglewood and Districts Health Service Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Glenarm Nursing Home — bed numbers

9103. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Glenarm Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Caladenia Nursing Home — bed numbers

9104. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Caladenia Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Dianella Hostel — bed numbers

9105. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Dianella Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Killara Hostel — bed numbers

9106. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Killara Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Westernport Nursing Home — bed numbers

9107. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Westernport Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kyabram Nursing Home — bed numbers

9108. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kyabram Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Thomas Hogan Wing Nursing Home — bed numbers

9109. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Thomas Hogan Wing Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Latrobe Regional Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

9110. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Latrobe Regional Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Lorne Nursing Home — bed numbers

9111. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lorne Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Lyndoch Hostel — bed numbers

9112. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lyndoch Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Lyndoch Nursing Home — bed numbers

9113. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lyndoch Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Jessie Bowe House — bed numbers

9114. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Jessie Bowe House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Maldon Hospital Mountview Nursing Home — bed numbers

9115. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Maldon Hospital Mountview Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Canon T. D. Martin Nursing Home — bed numbers

9116. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Canon T. D. Martin Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Carinya Hostel — bed numbers

9117. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Carinya Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Dr R. W. Pattinson Hostel — bed numbers

9118. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Dr R. W. Pattinson Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kaleesa Nursing Home — bed numbers

9119. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kaleesa Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Bindaree Retirement Centre — bed numbers

9120. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Bindaree Retirement Centre:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Buckland House Nursing Home — bed numbers

9121. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Buckland House Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Avoca Hostel — bed numbers

9122. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Avoca Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Avoca Nursing Home — bed numbers

9123. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Avoca Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Dunolly Nursing Home — bed numbers

9124. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Dunolly Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Maryborough Nursing Home — bed numbers

9125. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Maryborough Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Boyne Russell House — bed numbers

9126. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Boyne Russell House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Cyril Jewel House — bed numbers

9127. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Cyril Jewel House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Gardenview House — bed numbers

9128. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Gardenview House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: McLellan House Hostel — bed numbers

9129. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the McLellan House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Merv Irvine Nursing Home — bed numbers

9130. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Merv Irvine Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Parkville Hostel — bed numbers

9131. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Parkville Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: South Stone Lodge Residential Facility — bed numbers

9132. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the South Stone Lodge Residential Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Weighbridge Residential Care Facility — bed numbers

9133. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Weighbridge Residential Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Westside Lodge Nursing Home — bed numbers

9134. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Westside Lodge Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Moyne Health Services Belfast House — bed numbers

9135. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Moyne Health Services Belfast House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Moyneyana House — bed numbers

9136. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Moyneyana House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Banawah — bed numbers

9137. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Banawah:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Illoura Residential Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

9138. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Illoura Residential Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Ian Brand Nursing Home — bed numbers

9139. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Ian Brand Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Karinya — bed numbers

9140. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Karinya:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Numurkah Pioneers Memorial Lodge — bed numbers

9141. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Numurkah Pioneers Memorial Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Omeo District Hospital/Hostel — bed numbers

9142. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Omeo District Hospital/Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Omeo District Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

9143. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Omeo District Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Lochiel House — bed numbers

9144. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Lochiel House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Waratah Lodge — bed numbers

9145. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Waratah Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Otway Health Community Services — bed numbers

9146. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Otway Health Community Services:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Carinya Nursing Home Frankston Extended Care — bed numbers

9147. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Carinya Nursing Home Frankston Extended Care:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Michael Court Hostel — bed numbers

9148. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Michael Court Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
 (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Rosebud Residential Aged Care Service — bed numbers

9149. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rosebud Residential Aged Care Service:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Harbourside Lodge — bed numbers

9150. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Harbourside Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Jacaranda Village — bed numbers

9151. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Jacaranda Village:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Manangatang & District Nursing Home — bed numbers

9152. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Manangatang & District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Riverside Hostel — bed numbers

9153. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Riverside Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Robinvale Nursing Home — bed numbers

9154. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Robinvale Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Rochester and District Hostel — bed numbers

9155. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rochester and District Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Rochester Nursing Home Annexe — bed numbers

9156. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rochester Nursing Home Annexe:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Hopetoun Hostel — bed numbers

9157. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hopetoun Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Hopetoun Nursing Home — bed numbers

9158. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hopetoun Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Yarriambiack Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

9159. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Yarriambiack Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Yarriambiack Lodge Nursing Home — bed numbers

9160. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Yarriambiack Lodge Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Seymour District Nursing Home — bed numbers

9161. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Seymour District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Merindah Lodge Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

9162. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Merindah Lodge Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Merindah Lodge Nursing Home — bed numbers

9163. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Merindah Lodge Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: A. G. Eastwood Hostel — bed numbers

9164. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the A. G. Eastwood Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Allambee Nursing Home Kingston Centre — bed numbers

9165. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Allambee Nursing Home Kingston Centre:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Chestnut Gardens Aged Care Home — bed numbers

9166. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Chestnut Gardens Aged Care Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Mooraleigh Hostel — bed numbers

9167. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Mooraleigh Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Yarraman Nursing Home — bed numbers

9168. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Yarraman Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Auburn House — bed numbers

9169. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Auburn House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Cambridge House — bed numbers

9170. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Cambridge House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Riverside House — bed numbers

9171. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Riverside House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Macpherson Smith Nursing Home — bed numbers

9172. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Macpherson Smith Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Nyah District Aged Care Service Jacaranda Lodge — bed numbers

9173. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Nyah District Aged Care Service Jacaranda Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Swan Hill District Nyah Campus — bed numbers

9174. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Swan Hill District Nyah Campus:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Swan Hill District Nursing Home — bed numbers

9175. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Swan Hill District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Bolga Court Hostel — bed numbers

9176. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Bolga Court Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Lakeview Nursing Home — bed numbers

9177. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Lakeview Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Mount View Aged Care Facility — bed numbers

9178. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Mount View Aged Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Timboon & District Healthcare Service — bed numbers

9179. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Timboon & District Healthcare Service:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Upper Murray Health & Community Services — bed numbers

9180. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Upper Murray Health & Community Services:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Andrews House — bed numbers

9181. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Andrews House:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Coinda Lodge Nursing Home — bed numbers

9182. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Coinda Lodge Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Allan W. Lockwood Special Care Hostel — bed numbers

9183. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Allan W. Lockwood Special Care Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Archie Gray Nursing Home Unit — bed numbers

9184. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Archie Gray Nursing Home Unit:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Iona Digby Harris Home — bed numbers

9185. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Iona Digby Harris Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Jeparit & District Nursing Home — bed numbers

9186. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Jeparit & District Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kaniva Hostel — bed numbers

9187. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Kaniva Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Natimuk BNH-Nursing Home Annexe — bed numbers

9188. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Natimuk BNH-Nursing Home Annexe:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Rainbow Bush Nursing Home Annexe — bed numbers

9189. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rainbow Bush Nursing Home Annexe:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Rainbow Bush Nursing Hospital Hostel — bed numbers

9190. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rainbow Bush Nursing Hospital Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Trescowthick House Hostel — bed numbers

9191. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Trescowthick House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: The Birches Specialist Extended Care Facility — bed numbers

9192. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to The Birches Specialist Extended Care Facility:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Grange Residential Care Services — bed numbers

9193. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Grange Residential Care Services:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kolor Lodge Hostel — bed numbers

9194. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Kolor Lodge Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Penshurst Nursing Home — bed numbers

9195. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Penshurst Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Valley View Nursing Home — bed numbers

9196. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Valley View Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Wannan Court Hostel — bed numbers

9197. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Wannan Court Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Hazeldean Nursing Home — bed numbers

9198. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Hazeldean Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Dimboola District Hospital Nursing Home Unit — bed numbers

9200. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Dimboola District Hospital Nursing Home Unit:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Kurrajong Lodge — bed numbers

9201. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Kurrajong Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Wimmera Nursing Home — bed numbers

9202. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Wimmera Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Eight high-care beds were converted to transition care beds from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011 due to a reduction in demand.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Crossley House Hostel — bed numbers

9203. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Crossley House Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: St Elmo's Nursing Home — bed numbers

9204. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the St Elmo's Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Karana — bed numbers

9206. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Karana:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Warrina Hostel — bed numbers

9207. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Warrina Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Rosebank Nursing Home — bed numbers

9208. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Rosebank Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Rosebank Hostel — bed numbers

9209. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Rosebank Hostel:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Employment and industrial relations: Waurin Ponds — job losses

9210. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the 90 job losses at the Boral Cement plant in Waurin Ponds: What assistance will the Baillieu government provide Boral workers in Waurin Ponds who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Officers of the Department of Business and Innovation contacted Boral at Waurin Ponds on 6 December 2012 to discuss the decision to cease production of clinker for cement manufacturing, and the conditions and timing of redundancies.

The department has offered to coordinate information and support for affected employees from the relevant government agencies and service providers, including Workers in Transition program.

However, I note the chairman of Boral, Mr Bob Every, who told the *Courier Mail* in November 2011 that: 'It will be difficult to ever justify building another cement kiln in Australia, owing to the impact of the carbon tax'. He also said the carbon tax was 'putting Boral at a disadvantage compared with offshore competitors'.

Employment and industrial relations: Ararat — job losses

9211. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the 20 job losses at the Bartco factory in Ararat: What assistance will the Baillieu government provide Bartco workers in Ararat who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The department coordinated information and support for affected employees from the relevant government agencies and service providers, including the Workers in Transition program.

Employment and industrial relations: Ballarat — job losses

9213. **MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the 26 job losses at SP Treads in Ballarat: What assistance has the Baillieu government provided SP Treads workers in Ballarat who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Department of Business and Innovation offered to coordinate information and support for affected employees from the relevant government agencies and service providers. This offer was not accepted.

Employment and industrial relations: Ballarat — job losses

9215. **MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the job losses at CMI Industries in Ballarat: What assistance has the Baillieu government provided workers at CMI Industries in Ballarat who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Department of Business and innovation coordinated information and support for affected employees from relevant government agencies and service providers. This included the Workers in Transition program.

An information session for affected CMI employees was held in Ballarat on 10 October 2012.

Employment and industrial relations: Ballarat — job losses

9216. **MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the 13 job losses at UGL Rail in Ballarat: What assistance has the Baillieu government provided to UGL Rail workers in Ballarat who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The department coordinated information and support for affected employees from the relevant government agencies and service providers. This included the Workers in Transition program.

Employment and industrial relations: Cororooke — job losses

9217. **MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the 130 job losses at Fonterra in Cororooke: What assistance has the Baillieu government provided Fonterra workers in Cororooke who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The department has coordinated information and support for affected employees from the relevant government agencies and service providers.

Fonterra is providing significant outplacement services for affected employees, and will offer to employees the opportunity to relocate to other Fonterra plants in Victoria.

Employment and industrial relations: Geelong — job losses

9218. **MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the 25 job losses at Dick Smith in Geelong and North Geelong: What assistance has the Baillieu government provided Dick Smith workers in Geelong and North Geelong who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Officers of the Department of Business and Innovation contacted Dick Smith in Geelong to discuss the status of the business and the conditions and timing of voluntary redundancies, including the payment of employee entitlements and the level of employer support available for affected staff.

The Department was advised that all affected staff except for one were relocated to other stores, including Waurin Ponds in Geelong.

Employment and industrial relations: Geelong — job losses

9219. **MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the 20 job losses at Chubb Security in Geelong: What assistance has the Baillieu Government provided Chubb Security workers in Geelong who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Department of Business and Innovation offered to coordinate information and support for affected employees from the relevant government agencies and service providers.

This offer was not taken up by the company.

Employment and industrial relations: Geelong — job losses

9221. **MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the job losses at Ford in Geelong: What assistance has the Baillieu government provided Ford workers in Geelong who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Information sessions were run on 22, 23 and 27 November 2012.

Employment and industrial relations: Sebastopol — job losses

9222. **MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the 24 job losses at the Dahlsens Store in Sebastopol: What assistance will the Baillieu government provide Dahlsens workers in Sebastopol who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Department of Business and Innovation Officers held information sessions to coordinate government agencies and service providers including the government's Workers in Transition program.

Employment and industrial relations: public sector — job losses

9225. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the Baillieu government's cuts to the public service resulting in more than 4000 staff being made redundant: What assistance has the Baillieu government provided to public service workers who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

The Victorian government is committed to delivering as efficient, responsive and sustainable public service for the benefit of all Victorians. Victoria's public service grew at an average annual rate of 5.3 per cent over the period 2006 to 2010 compared to a 2 per cent average annual population growth over the same period.

The Victorian government has strengthened the state's finances by restraining head office expenditure, putting in place a responsible wages policy and building budget capacity. Strengthening the state's finances is vital to fund a substantial program of high quality infrastructure, deliver better quality services and keep taxes competitive without accumulating unsustainable levels of public debt.

Employment and industrial relations: Koroit — job losses

9227. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations: In relation to the 20 job losses at the Murray Goulburn factory in Koroit: What assistance has the Baillieu government provided Murray Goulburn workers in Koroit who have recently been made redundant.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Department of Business and Innovation has coordinated an information session and support for affected employees from the relevant government agencies and service providers including the Workers in Transition program.

Police and emergency services: Geelong and Surf Coast — police numbers

9228. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services): In relation to the Baillieu government's commitment to providing 70 police officers to the Geelong region: How many new police officers have been allocated to the Geelong and Surf Coast region since December 2010.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

The government is committed to making our communities, including Geelong and the Surf Coast, safer so families can feel safe on our streets, on public transport and in their homes. This is why the government is providing \$602 million to deliver 1700 extra front-line police members by November 2014, and by the end of June this year there will be an additional 1200 of these sworn officers allocated to communities across Victoria.

I can advise that in Division 1 of the Victoria Police Western Region, which includes Geelong and Surf Coast, Victoria Police is allocating a further 24 police officers this financial year. This increase is on top of the 12 officers the Division received over the past two years.

The allocation of police resources across the state is an operational decision made by the Chief Commissioner of Police. Manpower, vehicles and other operational equipment are deployed and assigned taking into account specific operational needs and priorities.

The allocation of police is not fixed and police command regularly reviews the distribution to ensure that the changing needs of each Police Service Area are taken into account.

I can assure you that Victoria Police is committed to providing the best available policing service and continually reviews policing resources with a view to ensuring areas are resourced in the most efficient manner to maximise service delivery.

Police and emergency services: Bellarine Peninsula — police numbers

9229. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services):

- (1) How many new police officers have been provided to stations on the Bellarine Peninsula.
- (2) Which specific stations on the Bellarine Peninsula have they been located.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

The government is committed to making our communities including Geelong, the Bellarine Peninsula and Surf Coast safer, so families can feel safe on our streets and on public transport and in their homes. This is why the Government is providing \$602 million to deliver 1700 extra frontline police members by November 2014, and by the end of June this year, there will be an additional 1200 of these sworn officers allocated to communities across Victoria.

I can advise that in Division 1 of the Victoria Police Western Region, which includes Geelong, the Bellarine Peninsula and Surf Coast, Victoria Police is allocating a further 24 police officers this financial year. This increase is on top of the 12 officers the Division received over the past two years.

The allocation of police resources across the state is an operational decision made by the Chief Commissioner of Police. Manpower, vehicles and other operational equipment are deployed and assigned taking into account specific operational needs and priorities.

The allocation of police is not fixed and police command regularly reviews the distribution to ensure that the changing needs of each Police Service Area are taken into account.

I can assure you that Victoria Police is committed to providing the best available policing service and continually reviews policing resources with a view to ensuring areas are resourced in the most efficient manner to maximise service delivery.

Police and emergency services: Surf Coast — police numbers

9230. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services):

- (1) How many new police officers have been provided to stations on the Surf Coast.
- (2) Which specific stations on the Surf Coast have they been located.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

The government is committed to making our communities, including Geelong and the Surf Coast, safer so families can feel safe on our streets, on public transport and in their homes. This is why the government is providing \$602 million to deliver 1700 extra front-line police members by November 2014, and by the end of June this year, there will be an additional 1200 of these sworn officers allocated to communities across Victoria.

I can advise that in Division 1 of the Victoria Police Western Region, which includes Geelong and Surf Coast, Victoria Police is allocating a further 24 police officers this financial year. This increase is on top of the 12 officers the Division received over the past two years.

The allocation of police resources across the state is an operational decision made by the Chief Commissioner of Police. Manpower, vehicles and other operational equipment are deployed and assigned taking into account specific operational needs and priorities.

The allocation of police is not fixed and police command regularly reviews the distribution to ensure that the changing needs of each Police Service Area are taken into account.

I can assure you that Victoria Police is committed to providing the best available policing service and continually reviews policing resources with a view to ensuring areas are resourced in the most efficient manner to maximise service delivery.

Police and emergency services: Great Ocean Road — police numbers

9231. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services):

- (1) How many new police officers have been provided to stations on the Great Ocean Road.
- (2) Which specific stations along the Great Ocean Road have they been located.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

The government is committed to making our communities, including Geelong and the Surf Coast, safer so families can feel safe on our streets, on public transport and in their homes. This is why the government is providing \$602 million to deliver 1700 extra front-line police members by November 2014, and by the end of June this year, there will be an additional 1200 of these sworn officers allocated to communities across Victoria.

I can advise that in Division 1 of the Victoria Police Western Region, which includes the Great Ocean Road Surf Coast area, Victoria Police is allocating a further 24 police officers this financial year. This increase is on top of the 12 officers the Division received over the past two years.

The allocation of police resources across the state is an operational decision made by the Chief Commissioner of Police. Manpower, vehicles and other operational equipment are deployed and assigned taking into account specific operational needs and priorities.

The allocation of police is not fixed and police command regularly reviews the distribution to ensure that the changing needs of each Police Service Area are taken into account.

I can assure you that Victoria Police is committed to providing the best available policing service and continually reviews policing resources with a view to ensuring areas are resourced in the most efficient manner to maximise service delivery.

Police and emergency services: Bellarine Peninsula, Surf Coast and Great Ocean Road — police numbers

9232. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services): How many police officers are allocated to police stations on the Bellarine, Surf Coast and Great Ocean Road during the summer tourist season.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

Victoria Police recognises the importance of policing along the Bellarine, Surf Coast and the Great Ocean Road coastal tourist destinations over the summer period and accordingly provides support to the area through general policing services to ensure public safety.

The allocation of police resources across the state is an operational decision for Victoria Police. Manpower, vehicles and other operational equipment are deployed and assigned taking into account specific operational needs and priorities.

Police command regularly reviews the distribution of police members to ensure that the changing needs of each Police Service Area (PSA) are taken into account. Prior to the 2012–2013 summer tourist season, police developed a new resourcing strategy of policing for Bellarine, Surf Coast and the Great Ocean Road Coast areas over the holiday period. No exact numbers are available as they vary according to demand.

I am advised that following a detailed analysis of when and where the public requested policing services, police determined that the historical practice of placing resources at specific stations was not the most efficient model.

Rostering and resource allocation is now managed at a higher operational level rather than the localised manner of the past. Victoria Police advises this approach is to ensure that the area, as a whole, is resourced in the most efficient manner to maximise service delivery and ensure there are adequate resources available in the area.

During the summer period, local police are being supported by additional resources from neighbouring areas as well as from the Operations Response Unit.

Victoria Police indicates this strategy has proven beneficial during the ‘schoolies’ period by increasing the number of visible police patrol units at critical times and there will be a greater awareness of the police presence in the area over the Christmas-New Year and summer holiday period.

Police and emergency services: Bellarine Peninsula, Surf Coast and Great Ocean Road — police numbers

9233. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services): How many police officers are allocated to police stations on the Bellarine, Surf Coast and Great Ocean Road during the summer tourist season in the evenings.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

Victoria Police recognises the importance of policing along the Bellarine, Surf Coast and the Great Ocean Road coastal tourist destinations over the summer period and accordingly provides support to the area through general policing services to ensure public safety.

The allocation of police resources across the state is an operational decision for Victoria Police. Manpower, vehicles and other operational equipment are deployed and assigned taking into account specific operational needs and priorities.

Police command regularly reviews the distribution of police members to ensure that the changing needs of each Police Service Area (PSA) are taken into account. Prior to the 2012–2013 summer tourist season, police developed a new resourcing strategy of policing for Bellarine, Surf Coast and the Great Ocean Road areas over the holiday period. No exact numbers are available as they vary according to demand.

I am advised that following a detailed analysis of when and where the public requested policing services, police determined that the historical practice of placing resources at specific stations was not the most efficient model.

Rostering and resource allocation is now managed at a higher operational level rather than the localised manner of the past. Victoria Police advises this approach is to ensure that the area, as a whole, is resourced in the most efficient manner to maximise service delivery and ensure there are adequate resources available in the area.

During the summer period, local police are being supported by additional resources from neighbouring areas as well as from the Operations Response Unit.

Victoria Police indicates this strategy has proven beneficial during the ‘schoolies’ period by increasing the number of visible police patrol units at critical times and there will be a greater awareness of the police presence in the area over the Christmas-New Year and summer holiday period.

Health: Frankston Hospital — funding

9237. MR TARLAMIS — To ask the Minister for Health:

- (1) Why has the government not accepted any of the \$200 million that was offered by the federal department to fund the 64 acute beds promised at the 2010 election for Frankston Hospital.
- (2) Which wards, or departments have the 30 extra beds for Frankston Hospital, announced by the member for Nepean in May 2011, been allocated to.
- (3) What were the number of beds at Frankston Hospital for —
 - (a) 2010;
 - (b) 2011; and
 - (c) 2012.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) There are three funded capital projects currently being delivered at Frankston Hospital:
 - (a) Under the National Partnership Agreement on Improving Public Hospital services, the commonwealth government committed \$5 million to Frankston Hospital for the provision of 24 acute adult short stay beds at Frankston Hospital.
 - (b). The Baillieu government allocated \$36 million in the 2011–12 state budget for the expansion of Frankston Hospital to provide 64 additional acute multi-day medical and surgical beds and expansion of critical care services through the addition of 2 intensive care beds and 2 additional special care nursery cots.
 - (c) The Baillieu government allocated a further \$40 million in the 2012–13 state budget for the redevelopment of the emergency department at Frankston Hospital.
- (2) All three funded projects are being delivered together and will be located in the same new building at Frankston Hospital.
- (3) The number of available beds at Frankston Hospital varies according to hospital activity and clinical demand. Nevertheless available beds have averaged 374 beds in each of the years 2009–10, 2010–11 and 2011–12.

Police and emergency services: Frankston — fire services

9238. MR TARLAMIS — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services): In relation to statements made by the member for Frankston, Mr Geoff Shaw, MP, on 11 December 2012 in the *Frankston Weekly* that ‘Frankston is saying they want a new station and new facilities and these are not front-line services ...’ and in response to claims of firefighters having to keep uniforms in a back shed that ‘If that is the case, it’s been happening for years and isn’t a result of budget cuts ...’:

- (1) Can the minister confirm if fire stations are front-line services.
- (2) Does the minister agree with the member for Frankston that this situation is not an issue for firefighters in Frankston.
- (3) When does the minister plan to remedy this situation.

ANSWER:

I am advised that the Country Fire Authority (CFA) has worked with the Frankston Fire Brigade members over recent years and put in place some interim measures to support and enhance the brigade's capacity to serve the community.

As you may be aware, the government has committed to 250 new and upgraded CFA stations across Victoria in its first term, and invested \$22.9 million in the 2012–13 budget to continue delivering on our CFA station commitment.

The location and timing of CFA stations is an operational decision for CFA to make.

Ageing: Caulfield Hospital Nursing Home — bed numbers

9240. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Caulfield Hospital Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Montgomery Nursing Home — bed numbers

9241. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Montgomery Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Namarra Nursing Home — bed numbers

9242. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to the Namarra Nursing Home:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Ageing: Barwidgee Lodge — bed numbers

9243. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: With regard to Barwidgee Lodge:

- (1) How many high-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) How many low-care beds have closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) No high-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.
- (2) No low-care beds closed from 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Health: Mildura Base Hospital — management

9244. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Health: In relation to Mildura Base Hospital:

- (1) What was the profit made in the 2009–10, 2010–11 and 2011–12 financial years by Ramsay Health Care Group through the private ownership and management of Mildura Base Hospital.
- (2) Has the turnover rate of specialist staff been higher than that of public hospital averages.
- (3) Does Mildura Base Hospital use a greater proportion of fly-in, fly-out specialists than that of public hospital averages.
- (4) What is the cost of fly-in, fly-out specialists and other medical staff.
- (5) Will the Mildura Base Hospital be returned to public management and ownership at the end of the current contract period.
- (6) If the government renews the contract of a privately owned and managed public hospital in Mildura:
 - (a) will they put a not-for-profit management in place;
 - (b) what role will the local community have in the management of the hospital; and
 - (c) will the management of the hospital be required to operate in a transparent way.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The financial results of Ramsay Health Care Group are reported in a consolidated annual financial statement that does not break down results for Mildura Base Hospital as a separate business unit.
- (2) The department does not collect data relating to the turnover rate of specialist staff of public hospitals.
- (3) Due to medical workforce shortages in rural areas, most rural hospitals are reliant on fly-in, fly-out specialists. The department does not collect data about the proportion of fly-in, fly-out medical staff compared with other medical staff.
- (4) In 2011–12, Mildura Base Hospital spent: \$4.89 million on fly-in/locum specialists and \$13.57 million on other medical staff.
- (5) No decision has been made in this matter.
- (6) No decision has been made in this matter:
 - (a) No decision has been made in this matter;
 - (b) The government supports community involvement in management of all publicly funded hospitals.

- (c) The government has in place the same performance monitoring and reporting arrangements for all publicly funded hospitals.

Education: bullying — Bully Stoppers prevention toolkit

9245. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills (for the Minister for Education): In relation to the planned introduction of the bullying prevention toolkit:

- (1) When will the minister release the bullying prevention toolkit.
- (2) What is the timeline for the toolkit’s rollout.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

The Bully Stoppers — Make a stand. Lend a hand. online bullying prevention toolkit was launched on 15 March 2013 in conjunction with a community awareness campaign. Additional resources will be released to complement the toolkit throughout the year.

Bully Stoppers provides advice and support for parents, students and school-based staff, including online learning courses, fact sheets, policy advice and podcasts. Bully Stoppers provides practical tools and resources to tackle bullying in all its forms — physical, verbal and online.

On 15 March, a Bully Stoppers grants program was also launched, providing \$5000 grants for up to 200 Victorian schools to develop projects to address the problem of bullying, and empower students to take a stand and lend a hand against bullying, and for the whole school community to really make a difference.

Education: schools — student suspension

9246. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills (for the Minister for Education): What is the total number of students who were suspended from school in:

- (a) 2009;
- (b) 2010;
- (c) 2011; and
- (d) 2012.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

The total number of students suspended from school over the past four years:

- (a) 15 904 students in 2009
- (b) 13 935 students in 2010
- (c) 14 249 students in 2011
- (d) 11 876 students in 2012.

Education: schools — student expulsion

9247. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills (for the Minister for Education): What is the total number of students who were expelled from school in:

- (a) 2009;
- (b) 2010;

- (c) 2011; and
- (d) 2012.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

The department collects expulsion between the commencement of term 1 and August in any given school year. During these periods the total number of students expelled from school over the past four years was:

- (a) 134 students in 2009
- (b) 163 students in 2010
- (c) 121 students in 2011
- (d) 169 students in 2012.

Education: schools — student expulsion

9248. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills (for the Minister for Education): What is the total number of pre-expulsion meetings held in:

- (a) 2009;
- (b) 2010;
- (c) 2011; and
- (d) 2012.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

Data on the numbers of pre-expulsion meetings is collected at a local level and is not collated centrally.

Education: schools — student expulsion

9249. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills (for the Minister for Education): With regard to the total number of students who were issued with suspensions or expulsions in 2012:

- (1) How many of these students had a recognised disability.
- (2) Of those students with a recognised disability, how many received funding through the Program for Students with a Disability (PSD).

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development does not keep a separate data collection on the number of students with disabilities who were issued with suspensions or expulsions in 2012.

Education: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development — staff

9250. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills (for the Minister for Education): In relation to the consolidation of Department of Education regions into four regions, job losses in the department, and given Department of Education staff who, outside of normal duties, had responsibilities to provide support in times of emergency incidents as part of local Emergency Response

Teams such as opening schools for fire refuges, providing catering to CFA workers, or cancelling school buses when there was a fire threat:

- (1) How many staff members worked in Department of Education regional service centres (i.e. in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Benalla, Moe, Warrnambool, Horsham, Mildura, Swan Hill, Shepparton, Sale, Bairnsdale and other subregional offices) at the start of this term of government.
- (2) How many staff members currently work in Department of Education regional service centres and what has the reduction in staff been during this term of government.
- (3) How many Department of Education staff based in regional service centres had formal duties as part of their position to respond to emergency incidents in the community, such as in schools and other locations outside of their office workplace at the start of this term of government.
- (4) How many Department of Education staff currently based in regional service centres have formal duties as part of their position to respond to emergency incidents in the community, such as in schools and other locations outside of their office workplace.
- (5) At the start of this term of government, how many Department of Education staff based in regional offices had responsibilities, beyond their normal duties, to respond to emergency incidents in the community, such as in schools and other locations outside of their office workplace, and formed part of the emergency response teams.
- (6) How many Department of Education staff currently based in regional service centres have responsibilities, beyond their normal duties, to respond to emergency incidents in the community, such as in schools and other locations outside of their office workplace, and form part of the emergency response teams.
- (7) At the start of this term of government, how many staff located in metropolitan service centres had formal duties as part of their position, to respond to emergency incidents.
- (8) How many staff located in metropolitan service centres currently have formal duties as part of their position to respond to emergency incidents.
- (9) Has the department received any complaints from the CFA from members of the community or anyone else about insufficient or untimely support being provided in the case of emergency incidents in the community in 2012 or 2013 so far.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

At the start of this term of government approximately 60 FTE based in regional service centres had formal emergency management responsibilities, and approximately 33 FTE in metropolitan centres were formally delegated emergency management duties. In the new regional structure, there are approximately 124 roles (up to 31 roles within each of the four regions) with formally delegated emergency management responsibilities across rural and metropolitan centres. This represents a substantial increase in staff with formal emergency management responsibilities. These roles are flexible across regions, providing greater surge capacity to combine regional and metropolitan resources to respond to emergencies wherever they occur in the state.

At the start of this term of government there was an expectation — as there is now — that all staff in regional offices could be called on to respond to emergency incidents as required. All members of emergency management teams are trained in the department's emergency management response protocols.

The department's Emergency Management division and the regional teams advise that no complaints have been received from the CFA nor the broader community about insufficient or untimely responses to emergency management in 2012 or 2013 to date.

Health: Bendigo Hospital — construction

9251. MS BROAD — To ask the Minister for Health: With regard to the new Bendigo Hospital project:

- (1) Why was the deadline of 2012 missed for the start of construction of Bendigo's new hospital.

- (2) Why has the Liberal-National government chosen to include the new Bendigo Hospital project under its Code of Construction for the Building Industry after the tender process had started.
- (3) Will the Liberal-National government remove the new Bendigo Hospital project from the projects covered by the Code of Construction for the Building Industry given the hospital tender had started before the Code was put in place.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Government has recently commenced a Best and Final Offer process involving the two shortlisted tenderers in order to optimise the outcomes of the project. Construction of the hospital will commence immediately after government enters into contracts with the successful tenderer. The project is still expected to be completed by the end of 2016 as announced.
- (2) Details of the new Implementation Guidelines to the Code of Practice for the Building and Construction Industry were released in April 2012, and were therefore included in the tender documentation that was issued to the shortlisted consortia in May 2012.
- (3) No. As noted above, the Implementation Guidelines were released before government issued the detailed tender documentation to the shortlisted consortia.

Health: National Centre for Farmer Health — diabetes prevention program

- 9254. MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Health: In relation to the Minister's response to an adjournment matter relating to diabetes funding in which he stated that the 'Life! Program has established links with the National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH)', what are these established links.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Life! program is a state-wide diabetes and cardiovascular disease prevention program delivered by Diabetes Australia — Victoria.

The Life! program aims to support Victorians who are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease to make lifestyle changes to prevent the onset of these diseases.

To identify and engage with people that are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, Diabetes Australia — Victoria establishes links with organisations to improve the reach of the program and support the identification and engagement of people associated with those organisations.

Diabetes Australia — Victoria has linked with the National Centre for Farmer Health to improve the reach of the program into Victorian farming communities. While this is not a formal partnership, the relationship brings staff from both organisations together to share expertise and work collaboratively to identify opportunities to provide type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease prevention support to farmers. These links have resulted in the promotion of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease prevention to farmers at rural exhibitions and events, and the promotion of the Life! telephone health coaching service as an accessible support program for farmers at risk of developing these serious diseases.

Crime prevention: closed-circuit television cameras — city of Ballarat

- 9376. MS PULFORD** — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Crime Prevention): What factors have been taken into consideration when determining the location of CCTV cameras in the Ballarat CBD and what authorities, agencies or organisations are consulted prior to locating CCTV cameras.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

The Victorian coalition government has provided \$200 000 (GST exclusive) to the City of Ballarat to upgrade and further expand the CCTV network to make the Ballarat Community safer, as part of its \$35 million community crime prevention program. The City of Ballarat itself also contributed \$200 000, and obtained a further \$100 000 in federal funding.

I am advised that the locations of the government-funded CCTV cameras were determined by the council following extensive consultation and after considering a range of factors, including Victoria Police crime data, input from local traders, community organisations, government agencies and the community generally.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Alfredton Primary School

9377. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Alfredton Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Alfredton Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Alfredton Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Ballarat North Primary School

9378. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Ballarat North Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Ballarat North Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Ballarat North Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Black Hill Primary School

9379. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Black Hill Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Black Hill Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Black Hill Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching Profession: Reading Recovery — Delacombe Primary School

9380. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Delacombe Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Delacombe Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Delacombe Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Forest Street Primary School

9381. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Forest Street Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Forest Street Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.

- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Forest Street Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Invermay Primary School

9382. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Invermay Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Invermay Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Invermay Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Little Bendigo Primary School

9383. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Little Bendigo Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Little Bendigo Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Little Bendigo Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Macarthur Street Primary School

9384. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Macarthur Street Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Macarthur Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Macarthur Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Phoenix P–12 Community College

9385. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Phoenix P–12 Community College:

- (1) How many teachers at the college are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Phoenix P–12 Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Phoenix P–12 Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Pleasant Street Primary School

9386. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Pleasant Street Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Pleasant Street Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Pleasant Street Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Sebastopol Primary School

9387. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Sebastopol Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.

- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Sebastopol Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Sebastopol Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Urquhart Park Primary School

9388. **MS PULFORD** — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Urquhart Park Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Urquhart Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Urquhart Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Wendouree Primary School

9389. **MS PULFORD** — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Wendouree Primary School:

- (1) How many teachers at the school are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Wendouree Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Wendouree Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Teaching profession: Reading Recovery — Yuille Park P–8 Community College

9390. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: In relation to delivery of the Reading Recovery program at Yuille Park P–8 Community College:

- (1) How many teachers at the college are currently accredited in the delivery of this program.
- (2) When will each of these teachers be required to update their accreditation.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The current number of accredited Reading Recovery teachers at Yuille Park P–8 Primary School is not held by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. This information is held by individual schools. The accreditation of teachers is only recorded centrally in the year that a teacher completes their initial training.
- (2) There is no requirement for Reading Recovery teachers at Yuille Park P–8 Primary School to update their accreditation. Accreditation is maintained through regular professional learning with a trained Reading Recovery tutor.

Attorney-General: surplus land — city of Ballarat

9397. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Attorney-General): In the period from 1 January 2012, has the Department of Justice identified, or been advised of, land owned by the Victorian government that is surplus to requirements and located within Ballarat City Council; and if so —

- (a) what is the address of each property; and
- (b) what action has the government taken to dispose of each property.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

The Department of Justice has not been advised of, nor identified, any surplus government land in Ballarat since 1 January 2012.

Public transport: surplus land — city of Ballarat

9400. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Public Transport): In the period from 1 January 2012, has the Department of Transport identified, or been advised of, land owned by the Victorian government that is surplus to requirements and located within Ballarat City Council; and if so —

- (a) what is the address of each property; and
- (b) what action has the government taken to dispose of each property.

ANSWER:

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

The Department of Transport had not identified, or been advised of, land owned by the Government that is surplus to requirements and located within Ballarat City Council.

Public transport: Box Hill to Ringwood rail trail — funding

9404. **MR LEANE** — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Public Transport): In relation to the bike track from Box Hill to Ringwood rail trail:

- (1) What funding has been provided to this project in —
 - (a) 2011; and
 - (b) 2012.
- (2) When will the rail trail bike track be completed.

ANSWER:

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

In relation to the questions regarding the bike track from Box Hill to Ringwood rail trail:

- (1a) No funding was provided to the Box Hill to Ringwood rail trail in 2011
- (1b) No funding was provided to the Box Hill to Ringwood rail trail in 2012
- (2) The government will announce funding and timing for the project.

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