

## Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Rural and Regional Victoria
Witness:	Mr Simon Phemister
Committee Member:	Mr Danny O'Brien MP
Page/s of transcript:	6

Relevant text:

Mr D O'BRIEN: Okay. I appreciate you might not be able to give a specific answer to this question, but what would be the general process where a grant has been provided and a project is not going to go ahead, where the recipient decides that they do not want to go ahead? Would they be required to pay that money back, or are there terms and conditions within the agreement that cover that?

Mr PHEMISTER: I am happy to take that. So we have standard formal protection in grant agreements, and Mr Latina is our expert in grant agreements. From time to time we have grants—it has happened ever since grants have existed with businesses—that have not been fulfilled or milestones that have not been met, and we ask that the business advise us pre milestones not being met, which, to be fair to SEA, they have done so, rather than advise us afterwards. We trigger the standard clauses that are in our contract, which I am happy to make available, and every business that has ever received a grant from us for essentially our jobs bounty for jobs delivered would have received it.

Mr D O'BRIEN: Could you provide that on notice to the committee?

Mr PHEMISTER: Of course.

Answer:

The standard clauses in the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions' Long Form Grant Agreement template that relate to withholding or refunds of grants are provided below.

As per Clause 1.4 below, the Long Form Grant Agreement template also identifies Refund Events, which are bespoke to each grant allocation.

Refer standard clauses as follows:

### **1. WITHHOLDING OR REFUND OF GRANT**

1.1 Where the Department is of the opinion that the Recipient:

- (a) has failed to fulfil or has breached any of its obligations under this Agreement;
- (b) has not or is unlikely to perform or complete the Project in the manner contemplated in this Agreement;
- (c) has engaged or may engage in any conduct which affects or may adversely affect the goodwill or reputation of the Recipient, the Project, the Department, a Minister, or the State; or
- (d) is subject to an Insolvency Event,

the Department may, in its absolute discretion:

- (e) withhold, suspend or cancel payment of the Grant;
- (f) seek a refund of the whole or part of the Grant previously paid; and/or
- (g) by written notice immediately terminate this Agreement.

1.2 Where the Department is of the opinion that continued association with the Project, or the Recipient may bring a Minister, the Department or the State into disrepute the Department may in its absolute discretion:

- (a) withhold, suspend or cancel payment of the Grant; and/or
- (b) by written notice immediately terminate this Agreement.

1.3 If, without the prior written consent of the Department, the Recipient:

- (a) is subject to a Change of Control; or
- (b) has undertaken a restructuring of its business or change to its legal status which has or may in the reasonable opinion of the Department adversely affect its ability to carry out its obligations under this Agreement,

the Department may, in its absolute discretion:

- (c) withhold, suspend or cancel payment of the Grant; and/or
- (d) by written notice immediately terminate this Agreement.

1.4 Where the Department is of the opinion that a Refund Event has occurred, the Department may, in its absolute discretion:

- (a) by written notice immediately terminate this Agreement; and/or
- (b) by written notice require the refund in whole or in part of any amount of the Grant previously advanced together with interest at a rate of 2% per annum above the rate fixed from time to time under section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983* calculated from the date of the payment of the Grant to the date of refund.

1.5 Any amount of the Grant not expended or legally committed for expenditure by the Recipient in accordance with this Agreement, must be refunded to the Department within thirty (30) days of the Completion Date or, in the event of termination, within seven (7) days of the date of termination, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Department.

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### Relevant text:

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** Thank you, Secretary. Can I continue in the Latrobe Valley. We asked some questions about the Latrobe Valley Authority's funding in the previous hearings. Can I ask how much grant funding was issued by the LVA in 2020–21? We had about \$26 million allocated to the LVA. About half was—

**Ms JONES:** That is correct, Mr O'Brien: \$26.9 million over two years, roughly half for staff and half for programs. I would have to come back to you on the exact amount of money that was issued in that year, but a large portion of the \$13.9 million was for programs. But I would have to come back to you with exactly how much was issued in that year.

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** If you could do that, and therefore also provide the exact amount of grant funding that will be left over and available in 2021–22 on notice, that would be great

### Answer:

The 2020-21 Victorian Budget provided total funding of \$26.9 million for the Latrobe Valley Authority, including \$13.8 million for staff for two years until June 2022 and funding of \$13.1 million for programs until June 2021.

All program funding was allocated in 2020-21. Funding agreements and partnership arrangements currently in place will see program activity continue throughout 2021-22.

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Relevant text:

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** So Wellington and Baw Baw as well. That would be great. Could I also ask—you may have this—how many jobs were created by Latrobe Valley Authority projects in 2020–21?

**Ms JONES:** Mr O'Brien, in terms of the number for 2020–21, I do not have that. Sometimes there can be a bit of a lag in realising those until some of the project phasing is realised because some of those projects go beyond a year. I can only speak to the fact that there have been in excess of 3800 jobs created by the LVA in its time, but I would have to come back to you on the specific number for 2020–21.

Answer:

Based on final funding agreement reports received to date, during 2020-21 the LVA has assisted the creation of 560 jobs in the Latrobe Valley:

- 430 unemployed people were hired during 2020-21 as a result of funding provided through the Back to Work Scheme.
- 130 jobs to date from reimbursement of government fees and charges provided through the Economic Growth Zone Reimbursement Scheme.

Up to 400 additional jobs are anticipated once all projects funded in 2020-21 are complete and final reports received.

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Relevant text:

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** The minister, again last year, talked about the opportunity for other programs, so other RDV programs, for example, to go into the Latrobe Valley in conjunction with the LVA. Could I also perhaps get a list of the projects or programs that were funded by other government programs—your department at least, including RDV **and any others**—for Latrobe City for 2020–21 and also any of those projects or programs that contributed to an LVA budgeted program or project? Could I get that on—

**Ms JONES:** Yes.

**Mr PHEMISTER:** Mr O'Brien, can I clarify that, please?

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** Yes, sure.

**Mr PHEMISTER:** You said Latrobe City. Do you want the boundaries of the Latrobe Valley Authority or just Latrobe City?

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** Sorry, you are right; good point. Yes, the boundaries of the Latrobe Valley Authority.

**Answer:**

- (1) A list of all DJPR projects and programs funded in financial year 2020-21 for the Latrobe Valley (Latrobe City, Baw Baw and Wellington Shires), have been outlined in **Attachment 1**.
- (2) The LVA and Regional Development Victoria have worked collaboratively in 2020-21 to support economic diversification and growth in the Latrobe Valley, using their respective funding sources to support key initiatives. A key example of this is the \$10 million Latrobe City Food Manufacturing precinct, an outcome relevant to the LVA's Gippsland Smart Specialisation Strategy.

**Attachment 1: List of DJPR Projects and Programs for the Latrobe Valley 2020-21 (excludes Latrobe Valley Authority)**

<b>Project or Program</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>
Agricultural and Pastoral Societies Program
Agriculture Energy Investment Plan
Agriculture Energy Investment Plan extension
Animal Welfare Fund Program
On Farm Internet of Things Trial (AIJF - Programs)
Small-Scale and Craft Program
Young Farmer Scholarship
<b>Creative, Sport &amp; Visitor Economy</b>
2021 Local Sports Infrastructure Fund
Aboriginal Sport Participation Grant
Athlete Pathway Travel Grants Program
Change Our Game Community Activation Grants Program
Change Our Game Regional Governance Pilot Program
Change Our Game Scholarship Grants Program
Community Cricket Program 2019-2023
Community Sports Infrastructure Stimulus Program 2020-2021 - Round 2
Community Sports Infrastructure Stimulus Program - Round 1
COVID-19 Community Sport Sector Short-term Survival Package
COVID-19 Victoria Together Commissioning Program
Emergency Sporting Equipment Grant Program
Get Active Kids Voucher Program 2021/2022
Regional Tourism Board
Sporting Club Grants Program
VERRP-Regional Tourism Investment Fund-Stimulus
VERRP-Tourism Infrastructure Program-Flagship
Victorian Racing Industry Fund - 3
Victorian Regional Tourism Voucher
World Game Facilities Fund - 2019 - 2023
<b>Forestry &amp; Climate Change</b>
Victorian Forestry Plan
Sustainable Hunting Action Plan
<b>Global Victoria</b>
Global Gateway
<b>Inclusion</b>
First People's COVID-19 Business Support Program
Jobs Victoria 2020-21
<b>Jobs, Innovation &amp; Business Engagement</b>
Circuit Breaker Lockdown Support Package
Circuit Breaker Lockdown Support Package – Round 2
Connecting Regional Communities Program
COVID-19 Business Support Fund
COVID-19 Business Survival Package
COVID-19 Commercial Landlord Hardship Fund
Digital Innovation Futures Victoria
Investment Attractions

Latrobe Valley Wifi
Digital Connectivity Services in Regional Victoria (DCSRV) initiative
Technology Adoption and Innovation Program
<b>Jobs, Innovation &amp; Business Engagement / Rural &amp; Regional Victoria</b>
COVID-19 Business Survival and Adaptation Package
<b>Local Government and Suburban Development</b>
COVID Relief Program
Financial Assistance Grants (Victorian Local Government Grants Commission)
Growing Suburbs Fund
Local Councils Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package (LGA Stream)
Local Government Business Concierge and Hospitality Support Program
Premiers' Reading Challenge Book Fund
Public Libraries Funding Program
Roadside Weeds and Pests Program
Rural Council ICT Infrastructure Program
Women Building Surveyors Program
Working for Victoria Fund
<b>Rural &amp; Regional Victoria</b>
Recharge
Regional Development Australia - Regional
Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund 2020/22
Regional Partnerships
Regional Recovery Fund
Working for Victoria – Agriculture Workforce Plan
Let's Stay Connected Program

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Relevant text:

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** If you could, that would be good. And on the topic, the LVA provided, I think it was called the report to the community from memory, in December 2019, maybe 2018. I have not seen one since. Has there been an update on their progress?

**Ms JONES:** The LVA, Mr O'Brien, issue routine sort of updates to community and run forums on their progress and their priorities for the year ahead, and I understand that has certainly happened recently and some are planned for the coming future. But in terms of an update to the particular document that you are talking about, I will need to take that on notice.

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** If you could. The reason I am asking is because it specifically said: 'This is what we've done, this is what we've spent and these are the jobs that we've created'. So if you could come to that, that would be great, thank you.

**Answer:**

The LVA produced a public report, '*Transitioning to a Strong Future*', to coincide with community forums held in late 2019. No similar publicly available updated reports have been produced since.

A series of community forums were scheduled during 2020 and 2021 but were unable to be held due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Instead, the LVA held an online webinar on 27 October 2021 to update the community on progress to date and the next stages of transition in the region, answer questions and seek feedback on community sentiment and priorities for the future.

The LVA is also currently undertaking more detailed individual briefings with key stakeholder organisations in an online format.



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### Relevant text:

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** If you could. The reason I am asking is because it specifically said: 'This is what we've done, this is what we've spent and these are the jobs that we've created'. So if you could come to that, that would be great, thank you.

Secretary, can I just go to the \$2.7 billion building works package which was dedicated to COVID and in part to bushfire recovery. The RDV website says that more than half of the projects under that program are in rural and regional Victoria. Can you provide a list for us of what those projects are? Then also the budget paper this year talked about 2800 jobs having been created in 2020–21. Could I also get a list of where those jobs were created? Obviously I am interested from this perspective in how many were in regional Victoria, but if you can do it by LGA where possible.

**Mr PHEMISTER:** We can definitely do it by the regions, so our regional development boundaries. And if I can go more granular than that, I will, Mr O'Brien, but that is the level that I know we have data at.

### Answer:

**Table 1** provides detailed information on the regionally located Building Works Package (BWP) – Infrastructure Stimulus package and includes COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure focused funds.

*Table 1: Building Works Package - Regional Project List*

Region	Program	Grantee	Project Name
Barwon South West	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Parks Victoria	Tower Hill Infrastructure Upgrade
Barwon South West	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Kardinia Park Stadium Trust	Kardinia Park Stadium Trust Capital Expenditure 2020-21
Barwon South West	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Glenelg Shire Council	Enabling infrastructure to support the Cape Bridgewater Resort
Barwon South West	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Corangamite Shire Council	Twelve Apostles Trail Timboon - Port Campbell

<b>Region</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Project Name</b>
Barwon South West	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Glenelg Shire Council	Portland Foreshore Redevelopment
Barwon South West	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Corangamite Shire Council	Twelve Apostles Trail - Timboon to Port Campbell
Barwon South West	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Glenelg Shire Council	Cape Bridgewater Foreshore Masterplan Implementation
Barwon South West	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Glenelg Shire Council	Portland Foreshore Redevelopment
Barwon South West	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Parks Victoria	Tower Hill Infrastructure Project - Nature Reserve Upgrades
Barwon South West	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Searoad Ferries	Sorrento Ferry Terminal Project (Part 1) - Public Realm Works
Gippsland	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	East Gippsland Shire Council	Paynesville Boardwalk (Stage 1)
Gippsland	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	East Gippsland Shire Council	Bullock Island Masterplan Implementation
Gippsland	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Planning and Acceleration Fund	Destination Gippsland	Gippsland Lakes Aquatic Trail
Gippsland	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Planning and Acceleration Fund	Parks Victoria	Croajingolong Coastal Wilderness Walk - Concept Plan and Feasibility Assessment
Gippsland	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Planning and Acceleration Fund	Parks Victoria	Wilson's Promontory Experience Development and Circuit Walks
Gippsland	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	East Gippsland Shire Council	Bullock Island Master Plan Implementation, Lakes Entrance
Gippsland	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	East Gippsland Shire Council	Paynesville Foreshore - Stage 1 (Boardwalk)
Grampians	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Moorabool Shire Council	Parwan Employment Precinct City Gate Gas Connection
Grampians	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Planning and Acceleration Fund	Parks Victoria	Brambuk Reimaging
Grampians	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Moorabool Shire Council	Parwan Employment Precinct - City Gate Gas
Grampians	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Parks Victoria	Ararat Hills Mountain Bike Project
Hume	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Mount Hotham Alpine Resort	Growing Mt Hotham - Alpine Gateway

Region	Program	Grantee	Project Name
		Management Board	
Hume	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Wangaratta Rural City Council	Ned Kelly Glenrowan Project
Hume	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Parks Victoria	Mount Buffalo Chalet: Wilderness Eco Pods
Hume	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Alpine Shire Council	Tawonga Caravan Park Upgrade - Connection to reticulated sewer and facility upgrades
Hume	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Benalla Rural City Council	Activation of Benalla Foreshore and Splashpark. Extend boardwalk, new car parking
Hume	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Indigo Shire Council	Chiltern Community Hub
Hume	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Goulburn Ovens TAFE (GOTAFE)	Seymour Revitalisation - Stage 1
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Planning and Acceleration Fund	Mount Buller & Mount Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board	Mount Buller Mountain Bike Park - Developing the Green Season Market
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Planning and Acceleration Fund	Murrindindi Shire Council	Designing the Eildon Splash and Skate Park
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Planning and Acceleration Fund	Tourism North East	Activating King Valley Prosecco Road
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Planning and Acceleration Fund	Tourism North East	Victorian Country Market Activating Victoria's High Country over the Summer Months
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Alpine Shire Council	Tawonga Caravan Park Upgrade
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Benalla Rural City Council	Benalla Foreshore and Splash Park
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE	Seymour Trades Hub - (Seymour Revitalisation Stage 1)
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Indigo Shire Council	Chiltern Community Hub
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Mount Hotham Alpine Resort Management Board	Growing Mount Hotham - Alpine Gateway
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Parks Victoria	Mount Buffalo Wilderness Eco Pods
Hume	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Rural City of Wangaratta	The Ned Kelly Glenrowan Project
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Buloke Shire Council	Buloke Shire Streetscape Renewal Project

Region	Program	Grantee	Project Name
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Buloke Shire Council	Sea Lake Visitor Information Centre
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Central Goldfields Shire Council	Maryborough Energy Breakthrough
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Gannawarra Shire Council	Cohuna CBD and Waterfront Connections
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Gannawarra Shire Council	Industrial Estate Expansion – Tate Drive - Kerang
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Greater Bendigo City Council	Bendigo Botanic Gardens Central Hub
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Greater Bendigo City Council	Connections project (Heathcote, Goornong, Bendigo)
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Loddon Shire Council	Pyramid Hill – Streetscapes Revitalisation Project
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Macedon Ranges Shire	Macedon Ranges Shared Trails Project
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Mildura Rural City Council	Mildura Riverfront Stage 1a – Village Square
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Mount Alexander Shire Council	Maldon Streetscape Revitalisation Project
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Ouyen Incorporated	Ouyen Community Gym Project Stage 1 - Restoration
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council Inc	Mildura Worker Housing - Ramsay Court Mildura Worker Accommodation Phase Two
Loddon - Mallee	COVID-19 CCC Infrastructure Stimulus	Swan Hill Rural City Council	Swan Hill - Worker Housing
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Macedon Ranges Shire Council	Macedon Ranges Trails
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Mildura Rural City Council	Mildura Future Ready -Mildura Riverfront
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Buloke Shire Council	Buloke Streetscape Renewal Project
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	City of Greater Bendigo Council	Bendigo Botanic Gardens - Central Hub
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Central Goldfields Shire Council	Maryborough Energy Breakthrough
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Mildura Rural City	Mildura - Worker Housing
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Loddon Shire Council	Pyramid Hill - Streetscapes revitalisation
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Swan Hill Rural City Council	Swan Hill - Worker Housing

Region	Program	Grantee	Project Name
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Buloke Shire Council	Sea Lake Visitor Centre
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Campaspe	Echuca Entertainment Precinct – Stage 1: infrastructure linkages to support a defined events precinct stretching from the historic wharf and heritage precinct to the Aquatic Reserve.
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	City of Greater Bendigo Council	Connections project (Heathcote, Goornong, Bendigo). Linkages for active transport to key community facilities including schools and Heathcote Hospital.
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Gannawarra Shire Council	Kerang Industrial Estate - Stage 9: civil services to new subdivision (power, water, sewer, roads and drainage) for an additional 15 lots.
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Gannawarra Shire Council	Cohuna CBD and Waterfront Development
Loddon Mallee	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Mildura Rural City Council	Ouyen Community Gym Project - Stage 1
Statewide	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Rural Regional and Interface LGAs	AgriLinks Upgrade Program (AUP) - Local Roads to Market Round 3
Statewide	Building Works Package – Infrastructure	Assorted community sporting entities	Building more indoor sports stadiums
Statewide	Building Works Package - Infrastructure	70 assorted community sporting entities	Local sport and active recreation infrastructure

**Table 2** provides detailed information regarding the location of projected jobs created by Building Works projects, by region. These numbers were determined based on early project modelling and includes numbers based on job projections in regional Victoria only.

Table 2: Building Works Package – Regional Job Creation

<b>Region</b>	<b>Project Count</b>	<b>Sum of Direct Construction Jobs (FTE)</b>	<b>Sum of Support Services Jobs (FTE)</b>
<b>Barwon South West</b>	10	26	1
<b>Gippsland</b>	7	3	0
<b>Grampians</b>	5	9	0
<b>Hume</b>	18	24	12
<b>Loddon Mallee</b>	29	137	93
<b>Statewide</b>	3	342	157
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>263</b>

## Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Jobs, Innovation and Business Engagement
Witness:	Mr David Latina
Committee Member:	Mr Danny O'Brien MP
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Relevant text:

**Mr O'BRIEN:** Could I also get a list, speaking of the broadband side of it, of all the suburbs and regional towns where business-grade broadband has been expanded or provided as a result of this particular program?

**Mr LATINA:** Yes. It is fair to say some of those sites have been announced, and there has been extensive consultation with the community and some of those have got to be progressively announced over the course of the agreement with NBN.

**Mr O'BRIEN:** Okay. If we can get a list, that would be good.

**Mr LATINA:** Yes, of course.

Answer:

11 Business Fibre Zones (BFZ) have been activated in 12 locations as of 1 September 2021. These locations are:

- 1) Hamilton
- 2) Portland
- 3) Wonthaggi and Inverloch
- 4) Warragul
- 5) Colac
- 6) Benalla
- 7) Dromana
- 8) Pakenham North
- 9) Pakenham South
- 10) Lara
- 11) Cranbourne South

Businesses within these BFZs are now able to access Enterprise Ethernet (EE) services at nil cost build. EE is a premium business grade broadband service which is capable of symmetrical up and download speeds of 1 gigabit per second.

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Relevant text:

**Mr D O'BRIEN:** If you could provide that detail and also on notice the mobile black spot list—what is funded, what has been funded across the state from that program as well for mobile black spots. Thank you, Mr Latina.

Answer:

Since the announcement of Victoria's Digital Future Now (VDFN) program, the Government has awarded funding to new mobile coverage in 43 locations. These projects are funded from VDFN and related funding sources. This includes co-investment from mobile carriers and the Commonwealth government under its Mobile Black Spot Program (MBSP) 5a and the Regional Connectivity Program.

Funded locations include:

- Anglers Rest
- Burrowwye
- Frenchman Gap
- Goongerah
- Heathcote
- Koetong
- Monaro Highway (near the Buladah Rd Monaro Highway intersection)
- Pheasant Hill
- Tawonga
- W Tree Creek.
- Broughton
- Cabbage Tree Creek
- Mt Hotham
- Ensay
- Tambo Crossing
- Omeo
- Dinner Plain
- Gazette
- Gipsy Point
- Halls Gap East
- Kobyboyn
- Lascelles
- Toongabbie
- Avenel South
- Avenel
- Halls Gap
- Ecklin South
- Tawonga South
- Nyora
- Scotts Creek
- Fryerstown
- Berriwillock
- Bridgewater on Loddon
- Galah
- Corack East
- Rennick
- Euroa North
- Mount Stanley
- Mallacoota
- Annuello
- Wandown
- Woorinen South
- Beverford



Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Rural and Regional Victoria
Witness:	Mr Simon Phemister
Committee Member:	Mr Sam Hibbins MP
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Relevant text:

**Mr HIBBINS:** Yes. Okay. Thank you. And how many other applications for operations have also been submitted that are now waiting on review?

**Ms JONES:** I would have to take that on notice, Mr Hibbins. I am not aware of any others at the moment, but I will need to take that on notice to come back to you with an accurate answer.

**Answer:**

Three applications for petroleum operations were submitted during the period of the previous moratorium on onshore conventional gas, which are pending review by Earth Resources Regulation within the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

## Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Employment and Inclusion
Witness:	Mr Simon Phemister
Committee Member:	Mr Sam Hibbins MP
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Relevant text:

**Mr HIBBINS:** Yes, I am after Jobs Victoria.

**Mr PHEMISTER:** Right. Apologies. I was answering for Working for Victoria, which was the 2020–21 initiative. So you are on Jobs Victoria.

**Mr CLEMENTS:** Yes, that is right. That was announced in the delayed November budget.

**Mr HIBBINS:** Yes. Okay. Thank you. Just in terms of the job numbers—and you can take this on notice—I think there are two levels, level 1 and level 2, or two streams. If we can get any further detail in terms of the jobs by that stream as well.

**Mr CLEMENTS:** This is the differentiation of subsidy, you mean, Mr Hibbins, between \$10 000 and \$20 000?

**Mr HIBBINS:** Yes.

**Mr CLEMENTS:** Sure, yes.

**Mr HIBBINS:** And any data in terms of the specific cohorts that have received jobs. And also if we can get it by postcode or by geography in terms of where the jobs are located.

**Mr CLEMENTS:** We will provide you with what we can to give you the sort of information you are after.

### Answer:

The 2020-21 'Jobs for Victoria' budget initiative is a \$619.4 million investment by the Victorian Government to address labour market challenges facing Victoria and will contribute to an inclusive recovery from the economic impacts of COVID-19.

\$250 million of the investment forms the Jobs Victoria Fund which provides subsidies for at least 10,000 jobs to help businesses employ new eligible staff, with a focus on people who have been most affected by the economic impacts of the pandemic.

The Jobs Victoria Fund creates secure employment for Victorians through two streams. The first is the Innovation stream, whereby Jobs Victoria works with industries that need workers on large-scale job creation projects.

The second is the Open Fund wage subsidy stream which allows businesses to receive wage subsidies of up to \$20,000. Two levels of wage subsidies are available, a level 1 wage subsidy of up to \$20,000 per employee and a level 2 wage subsidy of up to \$10,000 per employee. The wage subsidy amount available depends on each employee and whether the job is full-time or part-time.

As at 12 November 2021 Jobs Victoria has contracted the following number of jobs in each of the two streams:

- Open Fund: 944
- Innovation Stream: 2,225

A breakdown of the number of jobs contracted under the Open Fund across the level 1 and level 2 subsidy is provided below.

### Open Fund

As at 12 November 2021, the total number of jobs contracted under the two levels of subsidy are:

- Level 1 (\$20,000): 641
- Level 2 (\$10,000): 303

### Number of participants by level of subsidy and cohort as at 12 November 2021

**Note: Number of participants and percentages will not add up to 100% of jobs as participants can be counted in multiple cohort categories.**

Cohort	Number of participants		Percentage of total participants	
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 1	Level 2
Woman	463	137	49%	15%
Woman over 45	298	0	32%	0%
People over 45	335	71	36%	8%
Long-term unemployed people	348	0	37%	0%
Jobseekers registered with a Jobs Victoria Partner	88	0	9%	0%
Young people aged under 25	56	225	6%	24%
People previously employed under the Working for Victoria initiative	13	12	1%	1%
People seeking asylum/refugees	13	0	1%	0%
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people	8	0	1%	0%
People with disability	27	0	3%	0%
Newly arrived migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds	61	0	7%	0%
Veterans	< 5	< 5	-	-

**Number of participants by level of subsidy and region as at 12 November 2021**

<b>Primary Region</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>			<b>Percentage of total participants</b>		
	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
Barwon South West	27	7	34	3%	1%	4%
Gippsland	25	21	46	3%	2%	5%
Grampians	21	7	28	2%	1%	3%
Hume	18	12	30	2%	1%	3%
Loddon - Mallee	23	21	44	2%	2%	4%
Metro - Eastern	132	54	186	14%	6%	20%
Metro - Melbourne	128	62	190	14%	7%	21%
Metro - Northern	59	31	90	6%	3%	9%
Metro - Southern	136	66	202	14%	7%	21%
Metro - Western	72	22	94	8%	2%	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Jobs, Innovation and Business Engagement
Witness:	Mr Simon Phemister
Committee Member:	Mrs Beverley McArthur MP
Page/s of transcript:	30-31

Relevant text:

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, team. My first question is to the Secretary. Page 72 of the questionnaire relates to the increasing protective personal equipment stockpiles program. Stream 2 relates to contactless thermometers: 4000 were provided to businesses and 5200 for broader community use. How much did all this cost, how many of those thermometers are still in use and have you lately been tested by any business with one of these thermometers?

**Mrs McARTHUR:** How much did they cost, and are they still in use?

**Answer:**

10,040 thermometers were purchased and distributed to small businesses and community organisations in 2020-21. The cost was \$761,878.70.

DJPR does not have data on the current usage of thermometers by small business and community organisations.

## Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Agriculture
Witness:	Mr Matt Lowe
Committee Member:	Mrs Beverley McArthur MP
Page/s of transcript:	31

### Relevant text:

**Mrs McARTHUR:** My next question is for Matt Lowe, the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, if you don't mind. So, Deputy Secretary, in September last year the government, at the height of the lockdown I must say, presumably via Animal Welfare Victoria, was conducting a phone survey about forthcoming animal welfare legislation. What was the cost of this survey?

**The CHAIR:** Sorry, Mrs McArthur. Is your question in relation to the financial year

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Last year's, yes. Last September.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Mr LOWE:** Let me just check my notes to see if I have got that, and thank you for the question. I have got a breakdown of the work that we did to support the legislative reform program. We engaged a supplier, Whereto Research, to undertake quantitative and qualitative research about animal welfare legislation and community expectations

**Mrs McARTHUR:** And how much did it cost?

**Mr LOWE:** Government? That one was \$223 997.

**Mrs McARTHUR:** How many Victorians were contacted, and were they in Melbourne? Was it mobile or landline contact?

**Mr LOWE:** I do not know if I have got that detail in front of me at the moment.

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Could I put it on notice?

**Mr LOWE:** Yes, happy to supply that to you.

### Answer:

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) is implementing the Victorian Government's commitment to reforming and modernising Victoria's animal protection legislation. Given the strong community interest in this work, DJPR commissioned Whereto Research in July 2020, through a competitive tender, to undertake a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative market research project to provide evidence of Victorians' views, perspectives and expectations regarding animal welfare. Research to understand community views is a commonly used tool in the legislative design process for complex issues.

This work was commissioned to provide a representative sample of views from the Victorian community and stakeholders as part reforming Victoria's animal welfare laws. The research findings are a key input into the development of a new animal welfare Act and will support ongoing engagement with the Victorian community on the draft legislation in 2022.

Whereto was engaged to explore understanding of animal welfare requirements and concepts in the community, identify views across the community relating to specific proposals for legislative reform

that have been implemented in other jurisdictions (minimum standards, penalty settings and enforcement powers) and articulate views about the potential risks and opportunities of different options.

Whereto was required to develop a model and a defensible and repeatable representative market research methodology for broad research as well as for targeted topics. They undertook an iterative evidence gathering and deliberative process, involving an evidence review, consultations with animal sectors and other experts (people volunteering, recreating or working with animals, academics), as well as large scale qualitative and quantitative research surveys.

Based on this research, Whereto developed design principles to inform the new legislation, identified implementation options and provided advice about the different segments in the Victorian community in terms of understanding and interest in animal welfare.

- **How many Victorians were contacted?** – Over 3,500 Victorians were engaged in this market research.
- **How was the research conducted?**
  - 3,501 Victorian participated in online and phone-based surveys (Victorians aged 16 years and older participated in the state-wide survey, participating via online and Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) surveys).
  - Over 70 additional participants were engaged to take part in 23 one on one in-depth interviews with animal sectors (people volunteering, recreating or working with animals) or six qualitative group discussions.
  - Outcomes of these workshops, interviews and surveys was utilised to support a further series of 8 deliberative workshops which were used to develop design principles to inform the new legislation and identify implementation options.
- **Whether the survey used mobiles or landlines** – The combined online and CATI survey incorporated both landline and mobile phone numbers.
- **The breakdown between regional and metro respondents in surveys** - 3,501 Victorians participated in the surveys: 2,209 from across Northern, Eastern, South Eastern, Southern and Western Metropolitan Melbourne and 1,292 from Northern, Eastern and Western Victoria. Other demographic criteria (including age, gender, location, education and language at home) were utilised to generate a representative research sample of the Victorian community.
- **The total cost for this project was \$223 997 (excluding GST) (\$248,886 GST inclusive).** The project was completed in December 2020.

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Rural and Regional Victoria
Witness:	Ms Beth Jones
Committee Member:	Mrs Beverley McArthur MP
Page/s of transcript:	32

Relevant text:

**Mrs McARTHUR:** I now move to the Deputy Secretary for Rural and Regional Victoria. Deputy Secretary, are you able to tell us the total cost to taxpayers of the nine regional partnerships in the last financial year?

**Ms JONES:** In the last financial year? No, I would have to take

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Take it on notice?

**Ms JONES:** Yes. A lot of it is voluntary is what I would say, though, in terms of the time and effort that is given up by various members of the partnerships.

Answer:

The total cost to taxpayers to run the nine Regional Partnerships in the 2020/21 Financial Year was \$1,323,808. This includes associated salaries and operational costs.



## Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Global Victoria
Witness:	Mr Simon Phemister
Committee Member:	Mrs Beverley McArthur MP
Page/s of transcript:	32

Relevant text:

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Could you tell us the total cost of operations and activities of the five Victorian government trade and investment officers in China?

**Ms SERBEST:** I do not know if I have the exact details, but we can take that on notice.

### Answer:

The budget data for the China Victorian Government Trade and Investment (VGTI) offices for 2020-21 is as below. This includes the VGTI offices of Shanghai, Beijing, Chengdu, Nanjing and Hong Kong.

Budget data	
Greater China	\$4,347,395

- The data provided in the above table is in AUD.
- Foreign exchange rates have been applied to generate the AUD data from the local currency.

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Forestry and Climate Change
Witness:	Dr Paul Smith
Committee Member:	Mrs Beverley McArthur MP
Page/s of transcript:	34

Relevant text:

**Mrs McARTHUR:** The government announced it would urgently review the code of practice for timber production in July 2020, but it was not completed until last week. What is the financial cost of this delay by government in reviewing the code?

**Dr SMITH:** I will need to take that on notice.

Answer:

Costs incurred for delivering on the review of the Code have been met from within DJPR's existing operating budget.

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Forestry and Climate Change
Witness:	Dr Paul Smith
Committee Member:	Mrs Beverley McArthur MP
Page/s of transcript:	33-34

Relevant text:

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Thank you so much for that. And do you know if any of this compensation maybe you would take this on notice was paid to activists?

**Dr SMITH:** We do not compensate activists for their activities in halting the native timber harvesting.

**Mrs McARTHUR:** But others who were affected might get compensated.

**Dr SMITH:** Those who are affected, yes.

**Mrs McARTHUR:** You would take that on notice? Thank you.

Answer:

In some instances VicForests contractors have been subject to extended delays to their operations by illegal and dangerous entry into Timber Harvest Safety Zones by unauthorised individuals. In these circumstances, VicForests contractors have either been found alternative work sites or have been paid stand down rates by VicForests.

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Forestry and Climate Change
Witness:	Dr Paul Smith
Committee Member:	Mrs Beverley McArthur MP
Page of transcript:	33

Relevant text:

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Thank you. Can you tell us how much compensation has been paid to VicForests for harvest operations suspended due to vexatious litigation brought against them as a result of ambiguity in the code of practice for timber production?

**Dr SMITH:** That figure will be available, it is just not in front of me here.

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Can you take it on notice?

**Dr SMITH:** I will take it on notice.

Answer:

VicForests manages the impact of ongoing litigation through its own legal counsel and by adjusting its operations in State Forests. The Government does not provide funding earmarked for these VicForests managed activities.

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio:	Corporate Services
Witness:	Mr Simon Phemister
Committee Member:	Mrs Beverley McArthur MP
Page/s of transcript:	34

Relevant text:

**Mrs McARTHUR:** Okay, thank you. Can I go to the Secretary, please. Secretary, page 117 of the department's 2020-21 financial report refers to the fact that DJPR is the subject of two class actions concerning its involvement in the government's response to the pandemic, one from Victorian businesses and another from Victorian residents. Can you please advise us what level of external legal costs DJPR has incurred in relation to these two Supreme Court proceedings?

**Mr PHEMISTER:** In the 2020–21 financial year, Mrs McArthur, I am unsure about the 2020–21 financial year. They are currently afoot now. I will give them a bell and see if we did incur expenses in that financial year.

Answer:

The two class actions relating to the government's pandemic response are the *5 Boroughs NY Pty Ltd v State of Victoria & Ors* and *Jordan Roberts v State of Victoria & Ors* proceedings. These proceedings are being managed by the Department of Justice and Community Safety as they are proceedings of state significance.