

Victorian Labor's Election Policies

December 2014

On 29 November 2014 the Victorian state election was held. Victorian Labor secured a majority in the Legislative Assembly, and has formed government. The Hon Daniel Andrews MP will be appointed Premier of Victoria this week. Labor will not secure a majority in the Legislative Council, with cross-benchers set to control the balance of power.

The Hawker Britton Occasional Paper on the election outcome will be available shortly.

This Occasional Paper outlines the key policies announced by the Labor Opposition in the lead up to the 2014 state election. Where applicable, links to relevant media releases and policy releases are included.

Labor's financial statement, which provides costings for all election commitments is available [here](#).

Jobs and employment

In November 2014, Victorian Labor released its Back To Work Plan. The Plan includes:

- The **Back To Work Act**, which establishes a \$100 million fund to provide payroll tax relief to companies hiring unemployed youth, the long-term unemployed and retrenched workers into full time work. It will support the creation of 100,000 full time jobs. The Premier has announced he will recall Parliament before the end of the year to introduce this legislation;
- The **Premier's Jobs and Investment Panel**, an independent body of senior business and industry leaders, providing direct advice to the Premier on the expenditure of \$500 million for jobs and investment;
- The **Future Industries Fund**, a \$200 million grant program to support job-creating projects in six identified high-growth areas, including pharmaceuticals, new energy, food and fibre, and international education;
- The **Regional Jobs Fund**, a \$200 million investment fund to support job-creating projects in Regional Victoria;
- The establishment of **Reverse super trade missions** to bring international business leaders to Victoria, and establish new Victorian Government Business Offices in South America, Turkey and Singapore;
- Labor will also establish Start-Up Victoria, a \$60 million body to assist start ups with business case development, investment attraction and intellectual property advice.

The full Back To Work Plan is available [here](#).

The Hawker Britton Occasional Paper on Labor's Back to Work plan is available [here](#).

Transport and infrastructure

Public Transport

- \$300 million for planning and early works for the **Melbourne Metro Rail**:
 - five new underground stations (Arden, Parkville, CBD North, CBD South and Domain) will be built in and around the city loop precinct;
 - the completed project is estimated to cost taxpayers a total of around \$9 billion, with the state government to provide one third of the total construction cost, and the remaining two thirds to be sourced from the Federal Government and the private sector;
- \$310 million for Stage 1 of Labor's **30 new trains** for Melbourne's metropolitan network, all built locally (media release [here](#));
- \$40 million for Stage 1 of Labor's **20 new VLocity V/Line carriages**, all built locally (media release [here](#));
- \$100 million to improve **Victoria's bus networks**, adding more routes, increasing frequencies, restoring cut services and improving links in Melbourne's growth areas and regional centres (policy announcement available [here](#))
- \$50 million for **HomeSafe**, a plan for 24-hour public transport on the weekends (policy announcement available [here](#))

Roads and infrastructure

- \$2-2.4 billion for Stage 1 of Labor's plan to **remove 50 of the worst level crossings** (media release [here](#)):
 - the project has an estimated cost of \$5–6 billion, with funding to be sourced from the Victorian Transport Building Fund which will be initially established through proceeds from the long term lease of the Port of Melbourne;
 - competitive bids to be sought from the market to determine the correct form of civil engineering required at each site;
- \$500 million for construction of the **West Gate Distributor** to remove 5 000 trucks a day from the West Gate Bridge (media release [here](#), video [here](#));
- \$175 million for the **Thompsons Rd duplication**, which will see the two remaining sections between Frankston-Dandenong Road to South Gippsland Highway, and Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road to Clyde Road duplicated (media release [here](#));
- \$110 million for the **Chandler Highway Bridge duplication**, adding two additional lanes to ease traffic congestion (media release [here](#));
- \$109 million for construction of **Drysdale Bypass**, which will include a 5.9km, two lane bypass to take trucks off Geelong-Portarlington Rd, an upgrade of Geelong-Portarlington Rd in Drysdale and a separated bike path (media release [here](#));
- \$95 million for the **Yan Yean Rd duplication** to fix the 3.9km stretch of Yan Yean Rd in Plenty, between Diamond Creek Rd and Kurrak Rd (media release [here](#));

- \$50 million for the **Frankston Station precinct redevelopment**, which includes construction of a state-of-the-art transport hub, a home for new employers and establishment of a Station Precinct Taskforce (media release [here](#)); and
- \$40.7 million for an upgrade to **O’Hearns Road**, which includes a new ‘diamond’ interchange connecting O’Herns Rd with the Hume Freeway and duplication of a section of the road (media release [here](#)).

The Hawker Britton Occasional Paper on *Project 10,000: Labor’s Transport Alternative* is available [here](#).

East West Link Project

- Contracts for the East West Link Project were signed by the former Napthine Government.
- These contracts are currently before the Supreme Court, where it is alleged the former Minister for Planning failed to comply with the *Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act 2009* when making his approval decision for the East West Link Project. This court challenge is not due to be resolved until December 2014, at the earliest.
- The Labor Government will support the councils’ legal challenge and, regardless of the outcome, will not proceed with the East West Link Project.

Labor’s media release, letter to former Premier the Hon Denis Napthine MP and Labor’s legal advice are available [here](#).

Health and wellbeing

Hospitals

- \$200 million to build the **Western Women’s and Children’s Hospital** in Sunshine. The hospital will provide 237 beds, 39 special care nursery cots, four theatres and additional clinics (media release [here](#));
- \$150 to build **Monash Heart Hospital**, Australia’s first specialist heart hospital and bring the world’s best cardiovascular care, research and training to Victoria. The hospital will include a 22-bed emergency department, 10 cardiac cath labs, specialist surgical and imaging facilities and telehealth services. Partners will contribute the remainder of the \$300–350 million total cost (media release [here](#));
- \$106.3 million for a major expansion for **Casey Hospital**, building the hospital’s first intensive care unit, an eight-storey inpatient unit, four new operating theatres and a new surgery recovery centre. In total, the size of the hospital will increase by 35 per cent (media release [here](#)); and
- Victoria will become the first state in Australia to have **nurse to patient and midwife to patient ratios** enshrined in legislation (media release [here](#)).

Research

- \$60 million to completely rebuild the world’s largest international research institute for youth mental health, the **Orygen Youth Mental Health Centre** (media release [here](#)); and
- \$60 million to build the new **Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery** at St Vincent’s Hospital (media release [here](#)).

Ambulances and Paramedics

- \$60 million to establish a **Response Time Rescue Fund** to support initiatives that free up ambulances for our sickest patients including allowing paramedics to organise alternative transport and care for less urgent patients (media release [here](#));
- \$20 million to **upgrade ambulance stations** and \$20 million to **upgrade vehicles and equipment**, with five new Complex Patient Ambulance Vehicles added to the fleet (media release [here](#)); and
- Labor will immediately **remove the Ambulance Victoria Board** and replace it with new members (media release [here](#)).

Pharmacies

- \$28.7 million to establish twenty **24/7 Super Pharmacies**, where nurses will provide face to face advice on symptoms in the same way as the Nurse-On-Call service does over the phone. They may also offer services such as wound care, blood pressure checks, immunisation and advice on referrals (media release [here](#))

Education and skills

Schools

- \$639 to fix school buildings across the state (media release [here](#)). This includes:
 - \$510 million for a **School Capital package** for new and upgraded buildings in Victorian government schools; and
 - \$120 million to **build and upgrade various Catholic and Independent schools**. Labor will also provide long-term funding certainty for non-government schools.
- \$100 million for a **school asbestos removal program**;
- \$13.5 million to establish **breakfast clubs** at 500 government primary schools and serve 25,000 children across the state;
- \$50 million to **upgrade and build kinders** across the state; and
- \$18 million for **doctors in schools**.

Skills and training

- 10 new **Tech Schools for students in Years 7–12** will be established. They will be focused on local industries and be run by local schools, TAFEs, universities and industries. A consortium of five to ten Government and non-Government schools will govern and use each campus;



- \$320 million for a **TAFE Rescue Fund** to re-open closed campuses, bailout institutes and upgrade TAFE buildings, workshops, labs and classrooms. This will include funding for campuses in Moorabin, Frankston, Ballarat and Lilydale; and
- a **VET Funding Review** will be undertaken to develop stable funding methods to improve Victoria's training system, in consultation with public and private providers.

The Hawker Britton Occasional Paper on Labor's Education and Skills package is available [here](#).

Further information on Labor's Education and Skills policies is available [here](#).

Planning and the environment

Labor will:

- consider the establishment of an **Office of the Building Rights Advocate**, funded through the Victorian Building Authority;
- require the Victorian Planning Authority, alongside the Victorian Government Architect and the Melbourne City Council, to consider all applications for **developments above 25,000 square metres**;
- ensure there are **public guidelines for developments** that enhance liveability, and that planning applications, permits, plans and reasons for decision are publicly available;
- reduce the **exclusion zone for wind farms** around dwellings from two to one kilometre;
- create the \$20 million **New Energy Jobs Fund** which will offer grants of up to \$1 million to firms and companies specialising in high-growth renewable sectors like new energy technology;
- undertake a five-yearly **State of the Bay report** to monitor the health of coasts, bays and waterways; and
- introduce a **Yarra River Protection Act** to guard the river corridor from inappropriate development.

Labor's planning policy is available [here](#).

Labor's wind farm policy is available [here](#).

Labor's environment policy is available [here](#).