

APPENDIX B – GROWING VICTORIA TOGETHER PROGRESS REPORT

Growing Victoria Together is a vision for Victoria to 2010 and beyond. It articulates the issues that are important to Victorians, and the priorities the Government has set to make Victoria a better place in which to live, work and raise a family.

Growing Victoria Together commits to regular reporting on the progress the Government has made towards the *Growing Victoria Together* vision and goals. This is the seventh report in line with this commitment. Each year, new information is included as it becomes available and where it will provide a more meaningful assessment of progress towards the *Growing Victoria Together* goals.

Further information about the Government's priorities, strategies and initiatives directed towards achieving *Growing Victoria Together* is provided in Budget Paper No. 3. Further information about *Growing Victoria Together*, including the original *Growing Victoria Together 2001*, the Update from 2005 and previous annual progress reports are available at www.growingvictoria.vic.gov.au.

Table B.1: *Growing Victoria Together*: A Vision for Victoria to 2010 and Beyond

Vision	Goals
THRIVING ECONOMY	More quality jobs and thriving, innovative industries across Victoria Growing and linking all of Victoria
QUALITY HEALTH AND EDUCATION	High quality, accessible health and community services High quality education and training for lifelong learning
HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT	Protecting the environment for future generations Efficient use of natural resources
CARING COMMUNITIES	Building friendly, confident and safe communities A fairer society that reduces disadvantage and respects diversity
VIBRANT DEMOCRACY	Greater public participation and more accountable government Sound financial management

THRIVING ECONOMY

More quality jobs and thriving, innovative industries across Victoria

Improved living standards and opportunities for all Victorians will be built on a thriving and adaptive industry base that creates rewarding jobs. Economic growth is not an end in itself. It is important because it creates good jobs, which, in turn, generate improved living standards and opportunities.

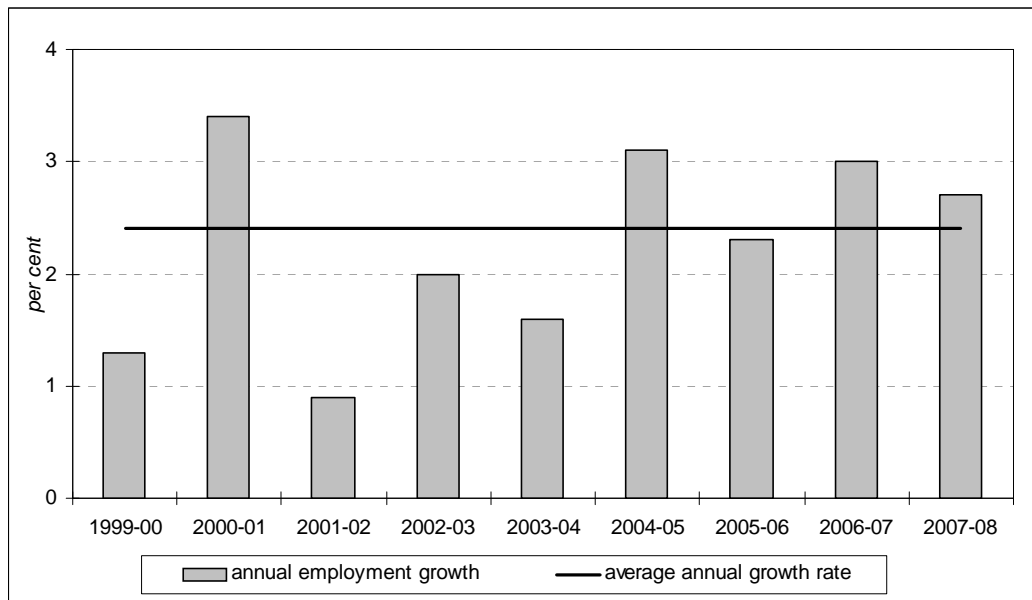
There will be more and better jobs across Victoria

Improvement over time in the quality and number of jobs available in Victoria can be measured by growth in employment and occupation types.

Employment growth

Over the period from 1999-2000 to 2007-08, Victoria averaged annual employment growth of 2.4 per cent (see Chart B.1). In 2007-08, annual employment growth was 2.7 per cent.

Chart B.1: Annual employment growth in Victoria^(a)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001)

Note:

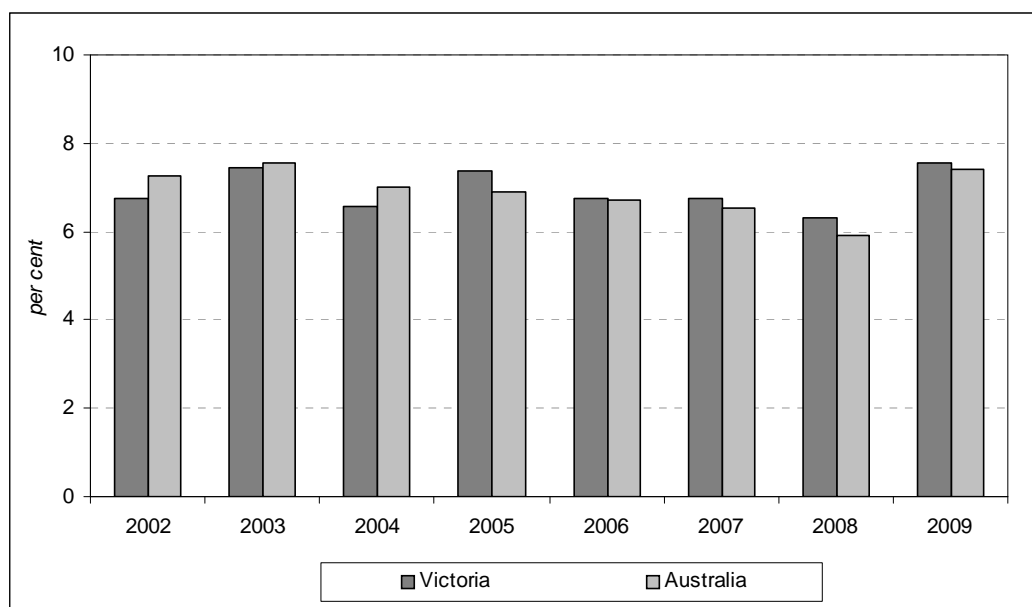
(a) Percentage change from the previous year's annual average employment.

Strong employment growth has contributed to a rise in the employment rate (the employed proportion of the working age population). In 2007-08 the average annual employment rate was 62.3 per cent, higher than the 61.7 per cent in 2006-07 and higher than the 58.5 per cent in 1999-2000. From October 1999 to March 2009, Victorian employment has risen by 460 200 persons, or 21.0 per cent.

Underemployment

Underemployment is defined as the proportion of employed persons in the labour force who want, and are available for, more hours of work than they currently have. Victoria's underemployment rate increased from 6.3 per cent in February 2008 to 7.5 per cent in February 2009 (Chart B.2). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has changed its methodology for calculating underemployment and these figures are not comparable to previous budget papers. The unemployment rate has decreased from 6.6 per cent in 1999-2000 to 4.5 per cent in 2007-08. However, due to the Global Financial Crisis the unemployment rate has started to increase.

Chart B.2: Underemployment rate in Victoria and Australia^{(a)(b)}



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. Nos. 6265.0 and 6202.0)

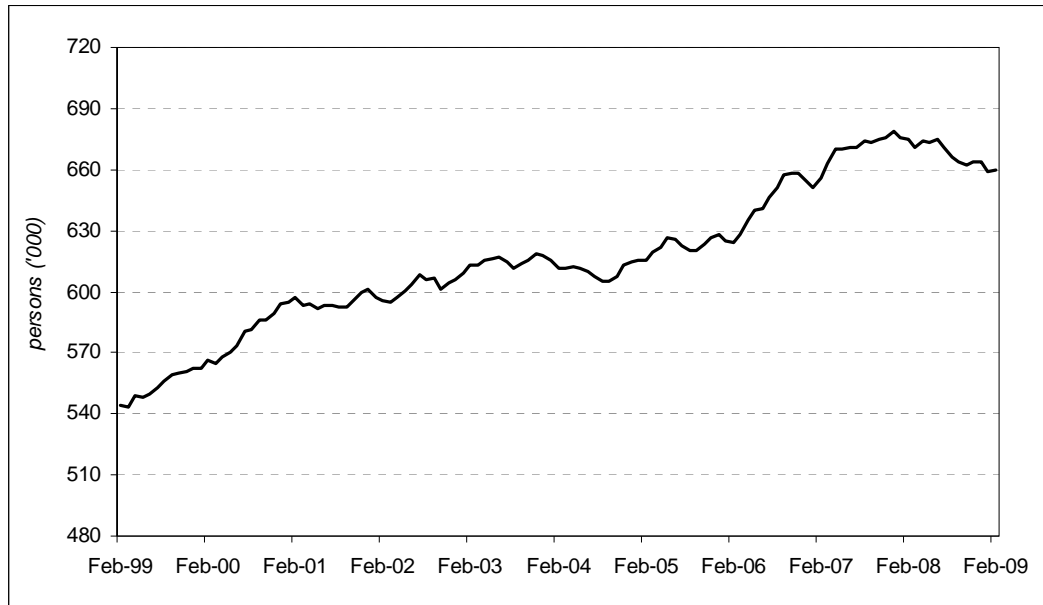
Notes:

- (a) Underemployment is at February each year.
- (b) The ABS has changed its methodology for calculating underemployment and these figures are not comparable to previous Budget Papers.

Employment in regional Victoria

Employment in regional Victoria (the area outside Melbourne Statistical Division) grew steadily from 1999 to 2008, although since December 2008 the number of people employed has decreased. Regional Victoria's share of total Victorian employment has averaged 25 per cent since 2000.

Chart B.3: Employment in regional Victoria^{(a)(b)}



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001) and Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development

Notes:

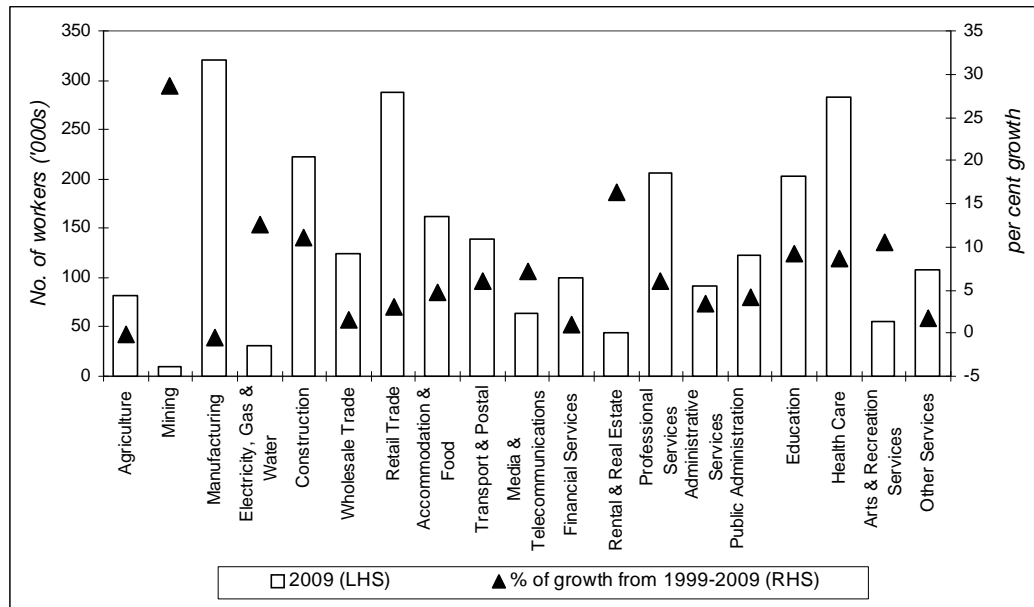
- (a) The number of persons employed in regional Victoria differs from previous GVT reports due to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' revision of labour force estimates for the period June 2001 to January 2009, where the 2006 Census population benchmark have been used.
- (b) Three monthly moving average data.

Employment growth by industry

Health Care and Social Assistance experienced the greatest increase in employment numbers between 1999-2009, increasing by 84 300 workers, followed by Construction (78 100), Education and Training (62 800) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (47 300). Mining experienced the greatest level of growth over the period, with employment in the industry increasing by 29 per cent, although the actual number of people employed in the industry is very small. Rental, Hiring and Real Estate (16 per cent) and Electrical, Gas, Water and Waste Services (13 per cent) experienced the

fastest rate of growth in employment, after Mining, between 1999 to 2009. Manufacturing employment declined between 1999-2009 although it remained Victoria's largest employing industry (320 000 people), followed by Retail Trade (287 000 people) and Health Care and Social Assistance (282 000 people).

Chart B.4: Employment growth by industry^{(a)(b)}



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. No. 6291.0.55.003) and Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development

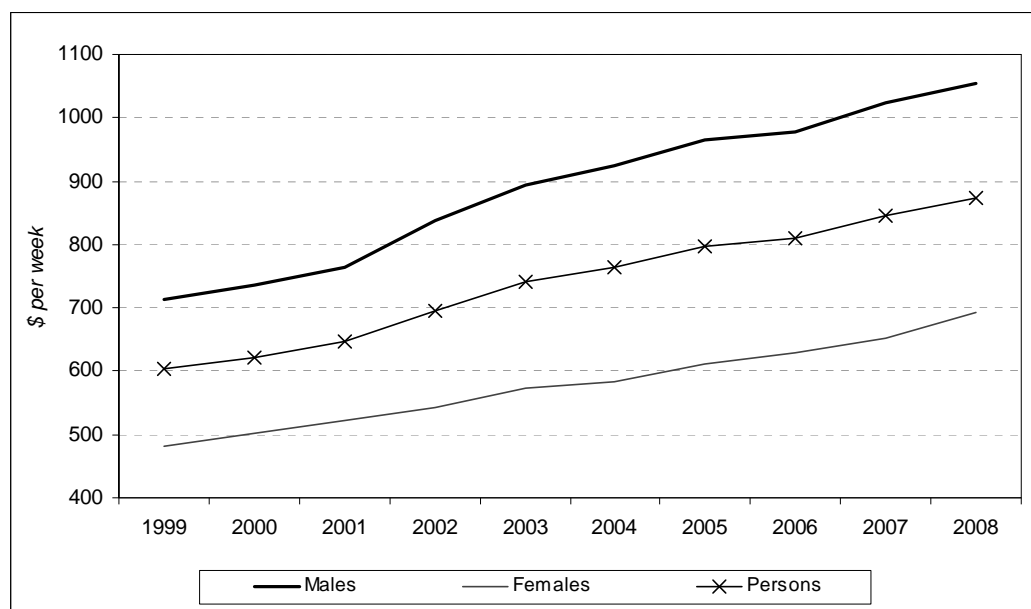
Notes:

- (a) Number employed based on annual average employment, year ending February 1999 to year ending February 2009.
- (b) Percentage change in employment growth based on annual average employment, year ending February 1999 to year ending February 2009.

Average weekly earnings

Victorians' average weekly earnings increased by 3.1 per cent in 2008 and have been increasing steadily since 1999. Male earnings have grown by an annual average rate of 4.4 per cent between 1999 and 2008, while female earnings have increased by an average of 4.1 per cent per annum over the same period (see Chart B.5).

Chart B.5: Average nominal weekly earnings of Victorians^(a)



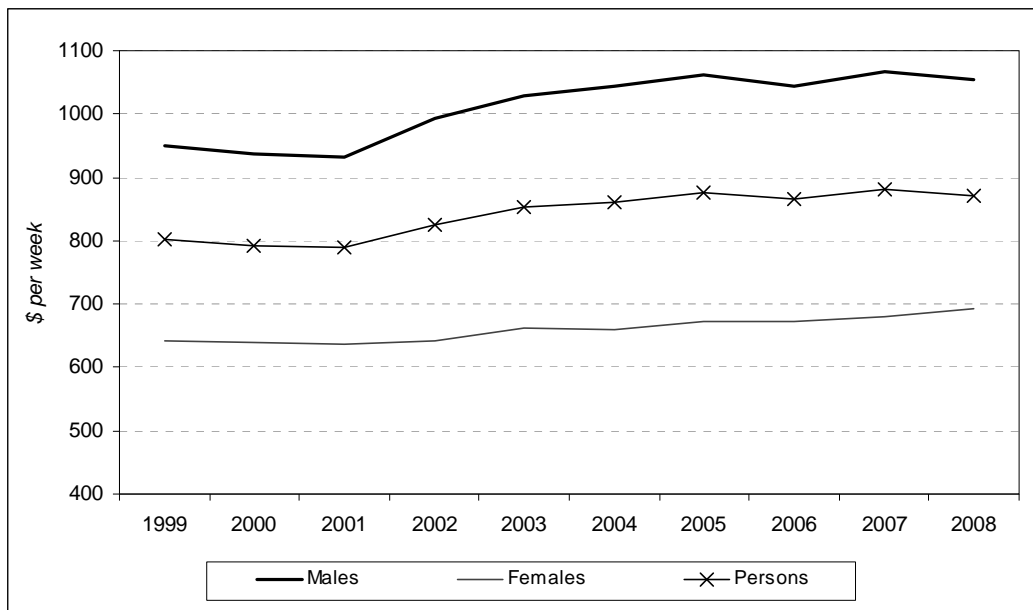
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. No. 6302.0)

Notes:

(a) Total average nominal weekly earnings, all employees including both part-time and full-time.

Average real weekly earnings for Victorians (in 2008 prices) have also been increasing steadily, with average annual growth of 0.9 per cent over the period 1999 to 2008.

Chart B.6: Average real weekly earnings of Victorians^(a)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. Nos. 6302.0 and 6401.0)

Note:

(a) Total average real weekly earnings, all employees. Includes both part-time and full-time employees and is in 2008 prices.

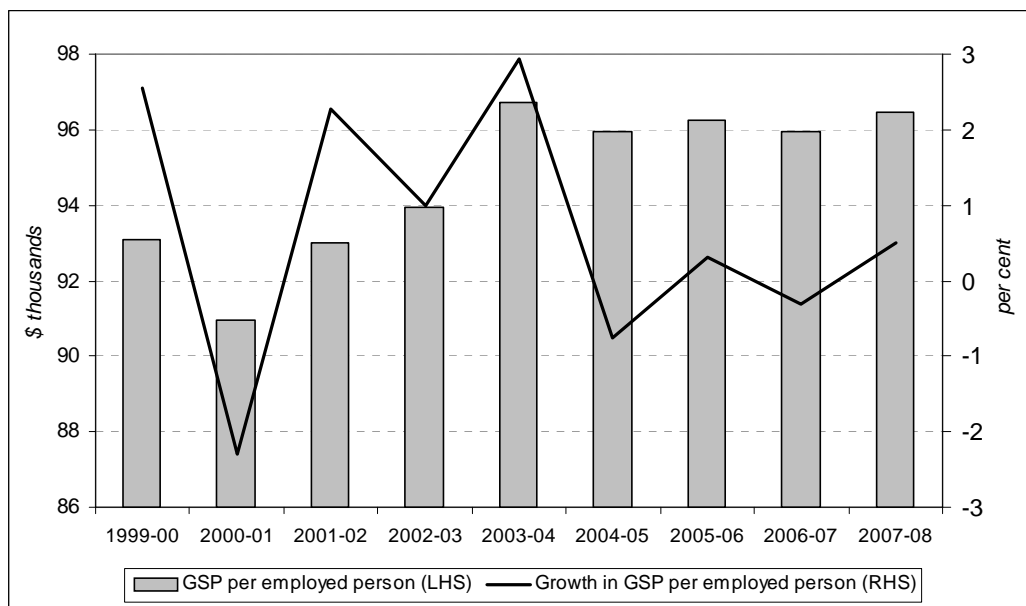
Victoria's productivity and competitiveness will increase

One of the drivers of a modern and flexible economy is a productive workforce. In Australia, a state's productivity is usually measured by gross state product (GSP) per employed person or per hour worked. GSP is defined as the total economic output of the state, including all value that is added by industries in that state.

Gross state product per employed person

Real GSP per employed person provides a measure of the value added by each worker in the Victorian economy. Real GSP per employed person increased 0.5 per cent in 2007-08 and has increased from \$93 100 to \$96 500 since 1999-2000 as measured in 2006-07 dollars (see Chart B.7).

Chart B.7: Real gross state product per employed person in Victoria^{(a)(b)}



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. Nos. 5220.0 and 6202.0)

Notes:

(a) Chain volume measure, 2006-07 prices.

(b) Annual average employed persons.

Gross state product per hour worked

Real GSP per hour worked provides a measure of the value added by each hour that Victorians work. It gives a more accurate picture of Victoria's productivity, as it accounts for the effects of changes in the hours of work for part-time and casual employees. Victoria recorded real GSP of \$56.52 per hour worked in 2007-08, down 1.2 per cent from 2006-07 but up 8.4 per cent from 1999-2000. National real gross domestic product per hour worked increased 10.3 per cent from 1999-2000 to 2007-08, but declined 1.4 per cent between 2006-07 and 2007-08. Due to data revisions, the history of these series is different from that reported in last year's budget.

Extent and quality of business regulation

Regulation can impose unnecessary burdens on businesses and not-for-profit organisations. This adds to the cost of hiring workers, reducing competitiveness, increasing prices and restricting job growth. These burdens can also distort business decisions and become an impediment to productivity growth. To remove these impediments, the Victorian Government (in the *2006-07 Budget*) introduced the Reducing the Regulatory Burden (RRB) initiative.

The RRB initiative has set targets for cutting unnecessary regulatory burden on businesses and not-for-profit organisations of 15 per cent (\$154 million) by July 2009 and 25 per cent by July 2011. The Victorian Standard Cost Model has been developed to provide a transparent methodology for measuring changes in the burden. The model is based on a methodology originally developed by the Dutch Government, and subsequently adopted by more than 20 European countries, including the United Kingdom, Germany and Austria. Progress towards achieving these targets is encouraging, with the net reduction in the administrative burden based on current initiatives estimated to be \$162 million (16 per cent) per annum since July 2006.

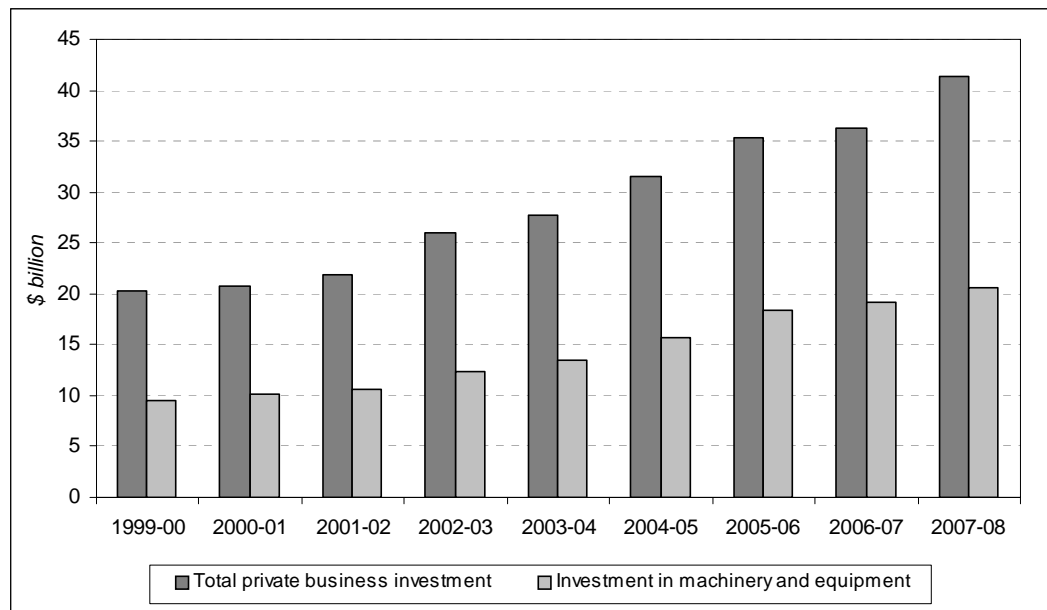
A greater share of national business investment will be in Victoria

Business investment is central to future productivity growth, as it increases the quantity and quality of resources available to the workforce. For example, investment in machinery and equipment allows for adoption of the latest technologies, and investment in research and development leads to new products and services. This Progress Report uses private business investment and its components to establish progress against this measure.

Private business investment and investment in machinery and equipment

Both private business investment and investment in machinery and equipment have grown strongly between 1999-2000 and 2007-08. Total private business investment increased from \$20 billion in 1999-2000 to \$41 billion in 2007-08. Investment in machinery and equipment grew from \$9.7 billion in 1999-2000 to \$20.6 billion in 2007-08. Total private business investment grew by 13 per cent between 2006-07 and 2007-08, compared to the 2 per cent increase the previous financial year. Investment in machinery and equipment grew by 8 per cent between the 2006-07 and 2007-08 financial years.

Chart B.8: Business investment in Victoria^(a)



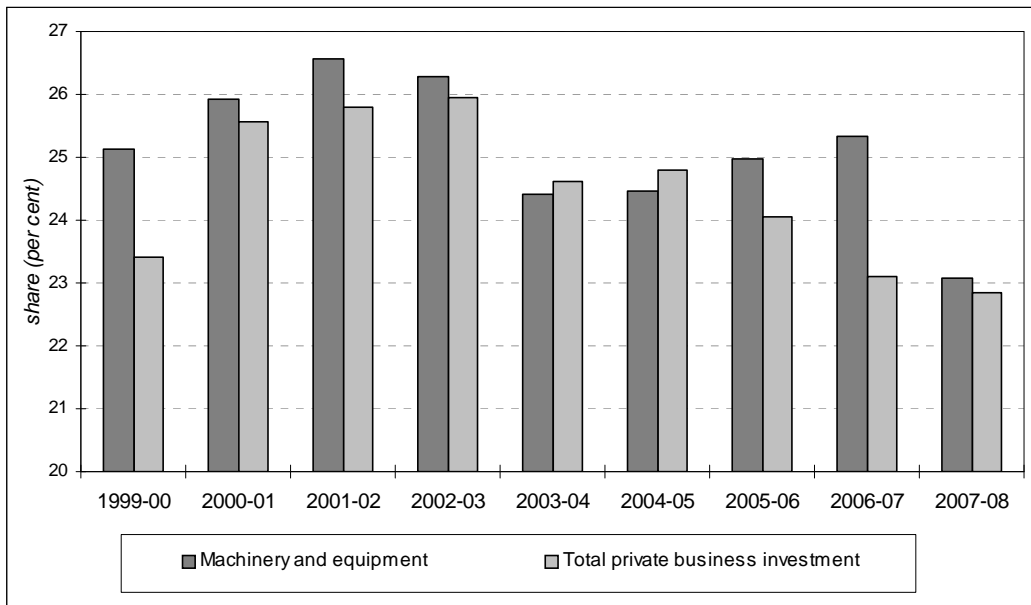
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. No. 5220.0) and Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development

Note:

(a) Chain volume measure, 2005-06 prices.

Victoria's share of national private business investment averaged 24.4 per cent between 1999-2000 and 2007-08 and was above Victoria's share of the national economy for the same period, 23.9 per cent. Victoria's share of national business investment has declined in the past year, due to the terms of trade boom boosting investment in the resource-rich states. The terms of trade have now started to ease. This is expected to narrow the growth differentials among the states, which should see Victoria's share of national business investment return to historical levels.

Chart B.9: Business investment in Victoria as a share of national business investment

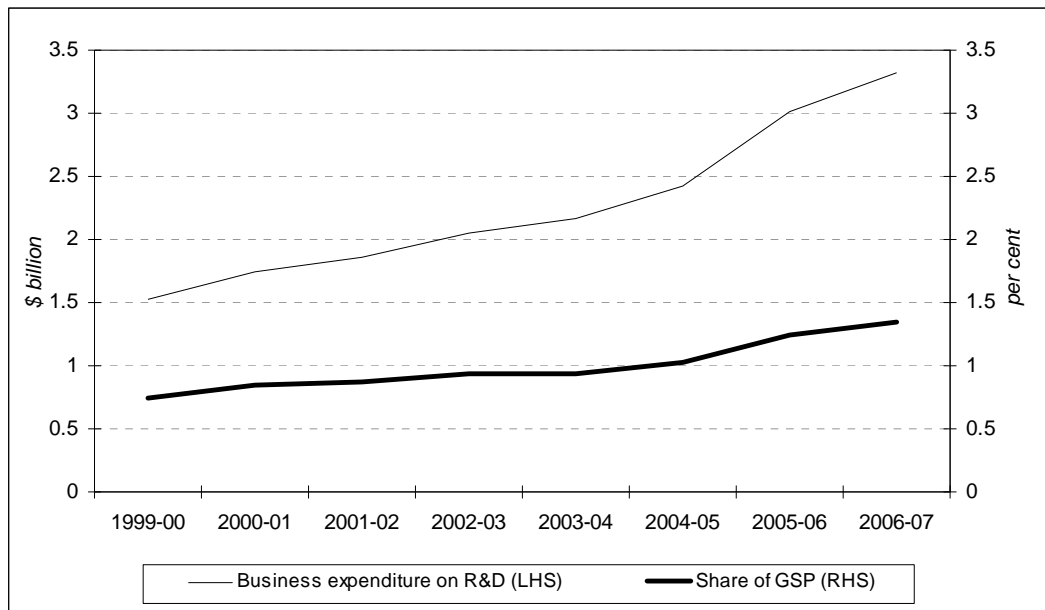


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. No. 5220.0) and Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development

Business investment in research and development

Victorian business expenditure on research and development grew from \$1.5 billion in 1999-2000 to \$3.3 billion in 2006-07, an increase of over 100 per cent. The proportion of GSP that Victorian businesses spent on research and development increased from 0.9 per cent in 1999-2000 to 1.3 per cent in 2006-07. Victoria's share of total Australian business expenditure on research and development is 27.6 per cent, which compares favourably with Victoria's share of the national economy (23.6 per cent).

Chart B.10: Business expenditure on research and development in Victoria^(a)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. No. 8104.0 plus unpublished data) and Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development

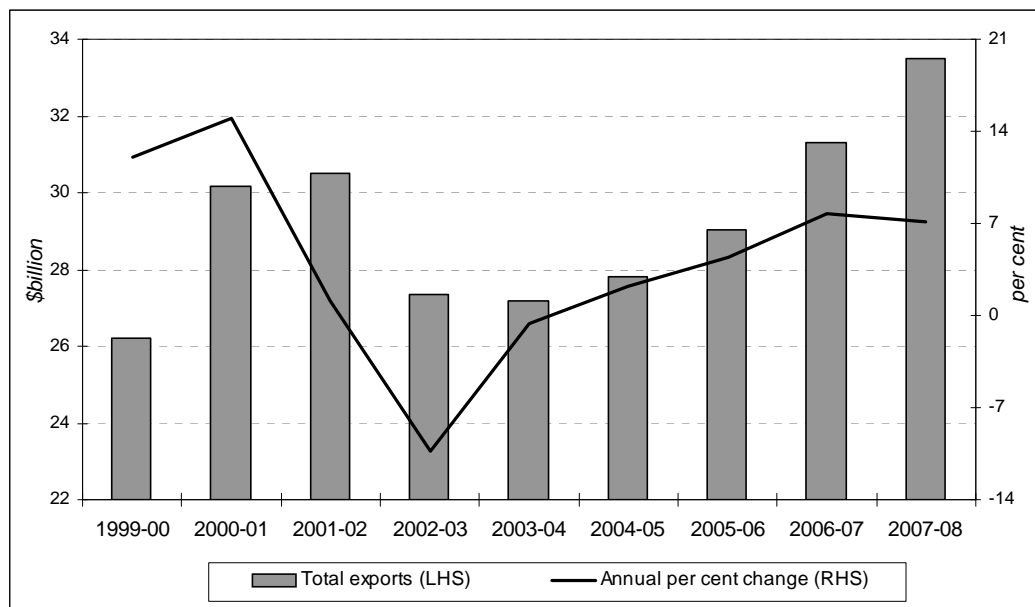
Note:

(a) Measured at current prices.

Victoria will increase exports to \$30 billion by 2010

Victoria's exports of goods and services grew from just over \$26 billion in 1999-2000 to \$33.5 billion in 2007-08. Partly as a result of the drought, exports decreased between 2000-01 and 2002-03 but are now rebounding strongly largely as a result of an increase in services exports. Education services, now Victoria's largest export, were worth \$4.45 billion in 2007-08, more than triple the value in 2000.

Chart B.11: Total Victorian exports



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. Nos. 5432.0 and 5220.0) and Department of Industry, Innovation and Regional Development

Population growth underpins economic growth, sustains regional revitalisation and further strengthens the diversity that is the heart of Victoria. Transport and communications infrastructure links people and businesses across Victoria and links the regions to Melbourne and the world.

Victoria's total population will reach six million people by 2025, and regional population growth will increase to 1.25 per cent annually by 2006

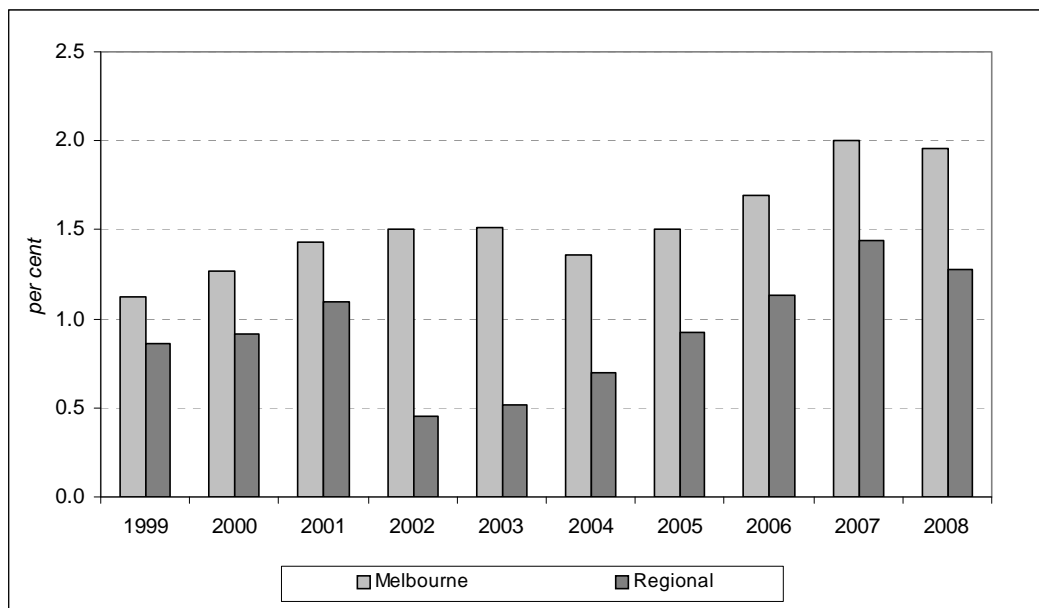
Victoria's total population

Victoria's total population growth, including regional population growth, is a key medium and long-term progress indicator. Victoria's population grew by 13.6 per cent between September 1999 and September 2008, and by 1.85 per cent over the year to September 2008, to reach 5.3 million people.

Regional population growth

Population in regional Victoria, defined as the area outside the Melbourne Statistical Division, grew by 8.8 per cent between 1999 and 2008, to reach 1.4 million persons. Victoria's regional population grew by 1.4 per cent (revised) in 2006-07 and by 1.3 per cent in 2007-08. These have been the highest growth rates since 1990.

Chart B.12: Population growth for regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Regional Population Growth, Australia* (Cat. No. 3218.0)

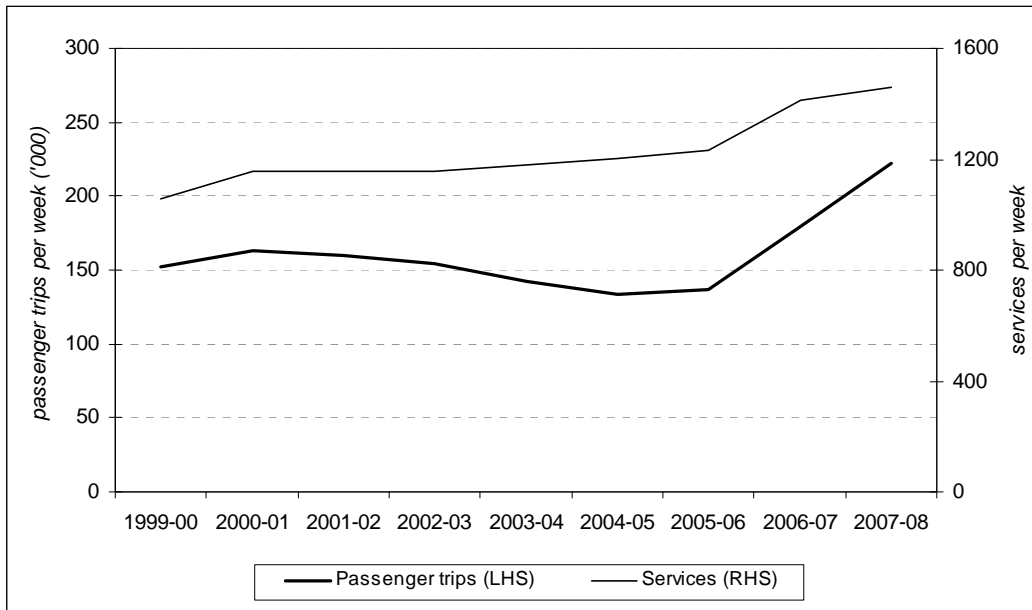
Population projections

Victoria's population is expected to reach 6 million in 2017 and 7 million in 2030.

Regional rail services will be available to more Victorians

The number of regional rail services increased by 3.4 per cent in 2007-08, reaching 1 462 services per week. Regional rail passenger trips rose 23.8 per cent in the year to 2007-08, reaching 222 000 passenger trips per week.

Chart B.13: Regional rail services and passenger trips in Victoria^(a)



Source: Department of Transport

Note:

(a) This chart has been expressed this year as 'services per week' and 'passenger trips per week' for consistency with the metropolitan public transport indicators.

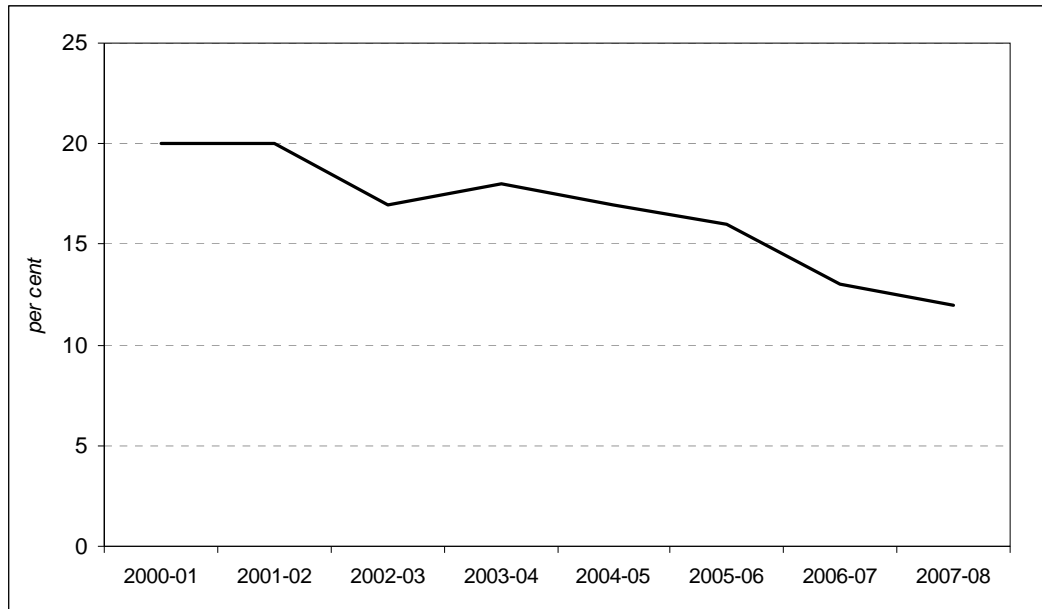
The proportion of freight transported to and from ports by rail will increase from 10 per cent to 30 per cent by 2010

Rail's share of freight transported to and from Victoria's commercial ports declined from 13 per cent in 2006-07 to 12.3 per cent in 2007-08. While the total volume of freight transported to and from the ports increased from 40.2 million tonnes to 45.7 million tonnes in 2007-08, the volume of freight carried on rail increased by a smaller amount, from 5.2 million tonnes to 5.6 million tonnes.

The main factor contributing to the decline in the proportion of freight carried on rail is lower grain exports and exports of containerised agricultural products due to the drought. The volume of grain carried by rail has declined in 2007-08 by about 50 per cent, from approximately 1.3 million tonnes to 0.6 million tonnes.

Freight Futures was released in December 2008 and is the Victorian Government's long-term strategy to shape an efficient and sustainable freight network for Victoria that supports the prosperity and liveability of the State. The Government has committed to promoting rail freight by moving to establish a Metropolitan Freight Terminal Network to move more freight on rail between the Port of Melbourne and freight terminals in key industrial zones in Melbourne.

Chart B.14: Proportion of freight transported by rail to and from Victoria's commercial ports (Melbourne, Geelong and Portland)^(a)



Source: Department of Transport

Note:

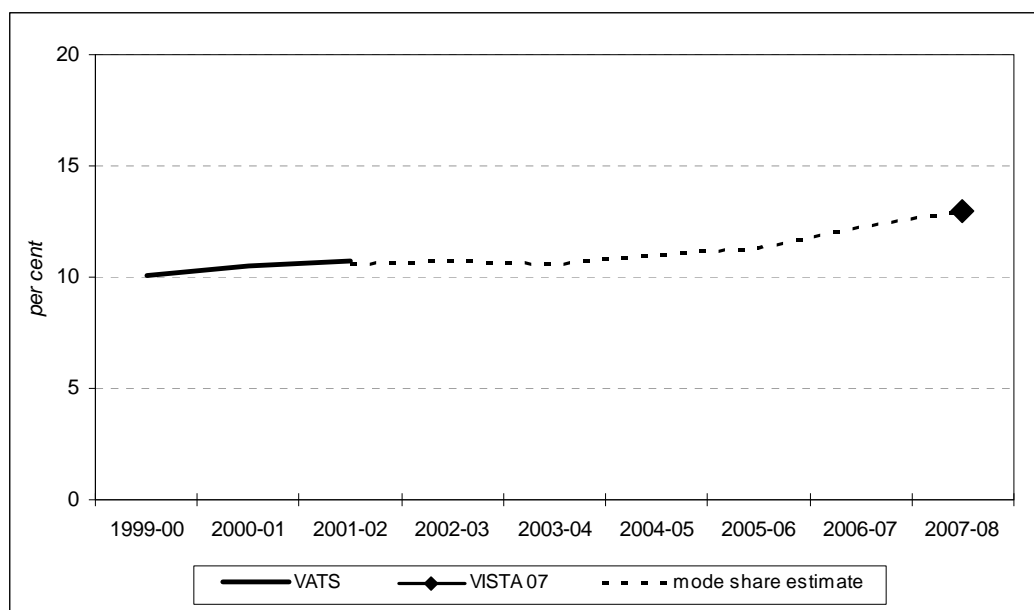
(a) The 2006-07 rail share of freight transport has been adjusted from what was reported last year, from 15 per cent to 13 per cent. The adjustment was due to a change in total freight being transported to and from the ports. The 2006-07 data collection process was revised in 2008 and found to be incomplete. More tonnage data from freight operators was collected and a revised series produced. The total freight transported was adjusted to 40.2 million tonnes.

Public transport use in Melbourne as a proportion of trips taken by motorised means will increase from 11 per cent in 2002 to 20 per cent by 2020

Mode share is calculated by measuring the number of trips taken on public transport in metropolitan Melbourne against the total number of personal motorised trips taken. Total public transport patronage increased by 7.7 per cent in 2007-08. Since 2005-06, public transport patronage has increased by 16.2 per cent.

In 2007-08, an estimated 13 per cent of all personal motorised trips in metropolitan Melbourne were taken on public transport. The Victoria Transport Plan, released in December 2008, includes \$38 billion in new transport investments.

Chart B.15: Public transport use as a proportion of trips taken by motorised means in Melbourne^{(a)(b)(c)}



Source: Department of Transport

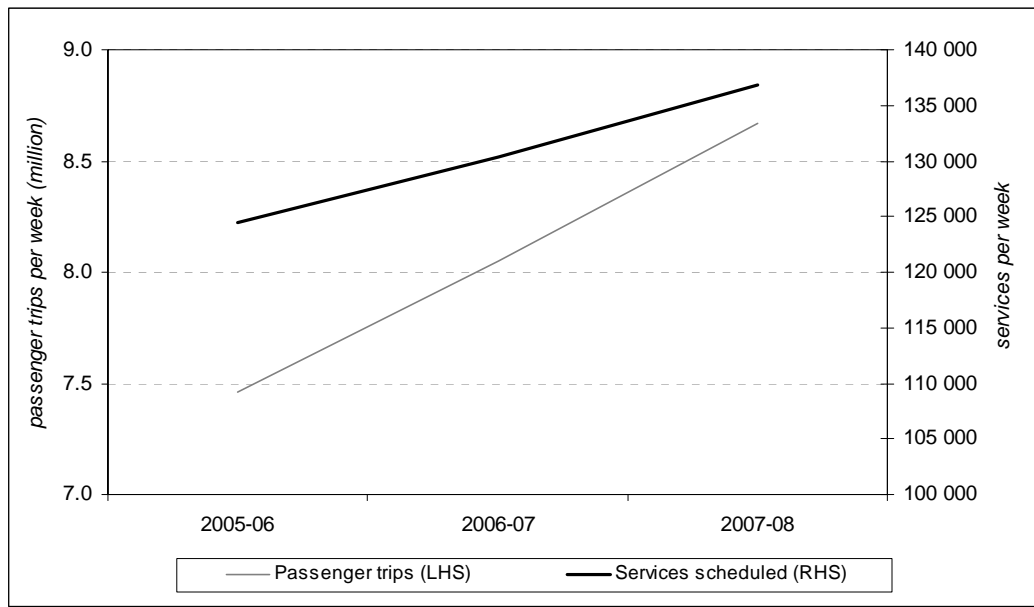
Notes:

- (a) In 2001 the Victorian Activity and Travel Survey (VATS) was used to set the mode share target of 20 per cent by 2020. The last VATS survey yielded a mode share for 2001-02 of 10.7 per cent.
- (b) Following the discontinuation of VATS in 2002, mode share was estimated using a model developed by the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE). The major input of this model was an estimate of vehicle kilometres travelled from the ABS Survey of Motor Vehicle Use. There were a number of limitations to the methodology that have affected the accuracy and reliability of the results. The Department of Transport considers the BITRE model unreliable for reporting against this measure, and has not included its data here.
- (c) The Victorian Integrated Survey of Travel and Activity (VISTA 07) replaced the BITRE model to estimate mode share in 2008. VISTA 07 is aimed at providing detailed information about daily travel and activity patterns. VISTA 07 shares a similar methodology as VATS, and reports a more accurate mode share estimate of personal travel than was previously reported by the BITRE model.

Public transport patronage and services

The number of metropolitan public transport services increased by 5.0 per cent in 2007-08, reaching 136 864 services per week. Metropolitan public transport patronage rose 7.7 per cent in the year to 2007-08, reaching 8.67 million passenger trips per week. This represents the highest level of public transport passenger trips for over four decades.

Chart B.16: Public transport services and passenger trips per week



Source: Department of Transport

**QUALITY HEALTH
AND EDUCATION****High quality, accessible health and
community services**

Health greatly influences quality of life. High quality health and community services need to be available to all Victorians when they need them to preserve and restore good health. Better access to hospital, community health, dental, aged care, mental health, disability, alcohol and drug, and children's and family support services, particularly in rural and regional communities, is crucial.

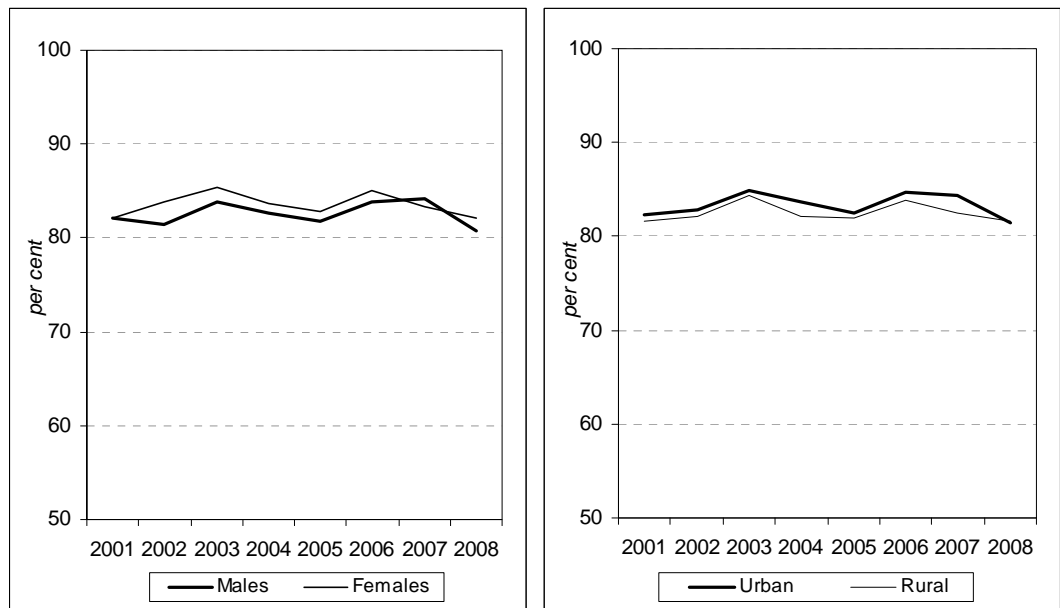
The health of Victorians will improve

Long-term improvements in the health of Victorians can be measured through average life expectancy and the quality of life during those years. Quality of life is measured by indicators of physical and mental wellbeing as perceived by Victorians.

Self-rated health status

The Department of Human Services' Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS) collects data on the self-rated health status of Victorians, which is a strong predictor of morbidity and mortality trends, as well as health care use. The proportion of adult Victorians reporting their health as 'excellent', 'very good' or 'good' has remained above 80 per cent for both males and females since 2001 (see Chart B.17). The difference between rural/ regional and urban responses is not substantial and is consistent with previous years.

Chart B.17: Self rated health status, percentage of respondents reporting 'excellent', 'very good' and 'good'

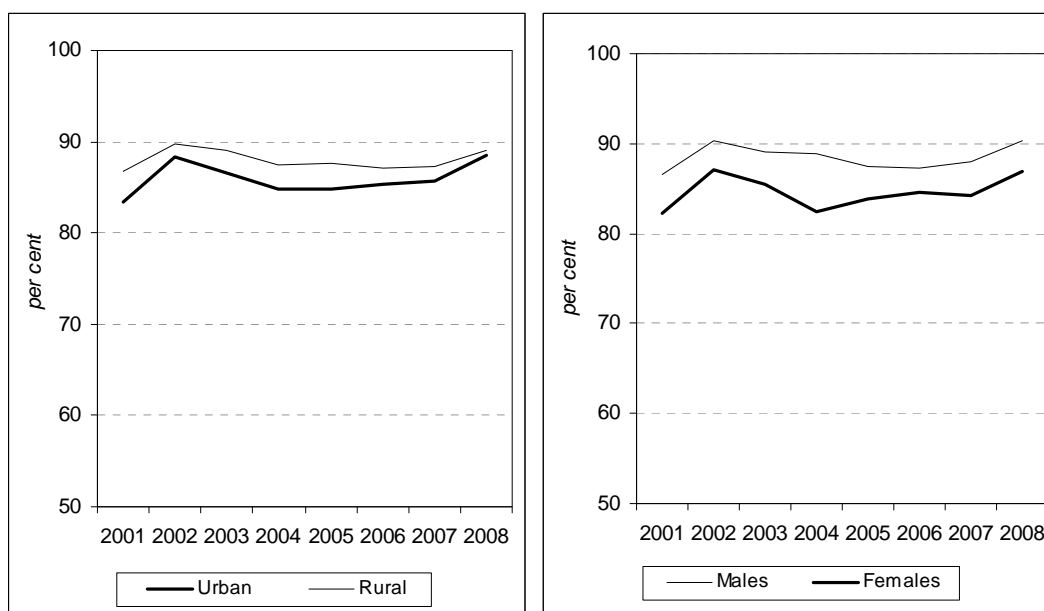


Source: Department of Human Services' Victorian Population Health Survey

Psychological distress

The VPHS collects data on a measure of psychological distress – the Kessler 10. The Kessler 10 is a set of ten questions designed to categorise levels of psychological distress over a four-week period. It cannot be used to determine the prevalence of major mental illnesses (such as psychosis) but, like self-rated health status, is closely correlated with medical diagnoses of anxiety, depression and worry (psychological distress). The proportion of Victorians reporting no or low levels of psychological distress (falling into the 'low risk' category of the Kessler 10) has increased since 2001 (see Chart B.18). A lower proportion of females report no or low levels of psychological distress than males. There are a higher proportion of persons living in rural/regional areas reporting no or low levels of psychological distress than those living in urban areas.

Chart B.18: Psychological distress, percentage of respondents reporting no or low levels of psychological distress



Source: Department of Human Services' Victorian Population Health Survey

Life expectancy

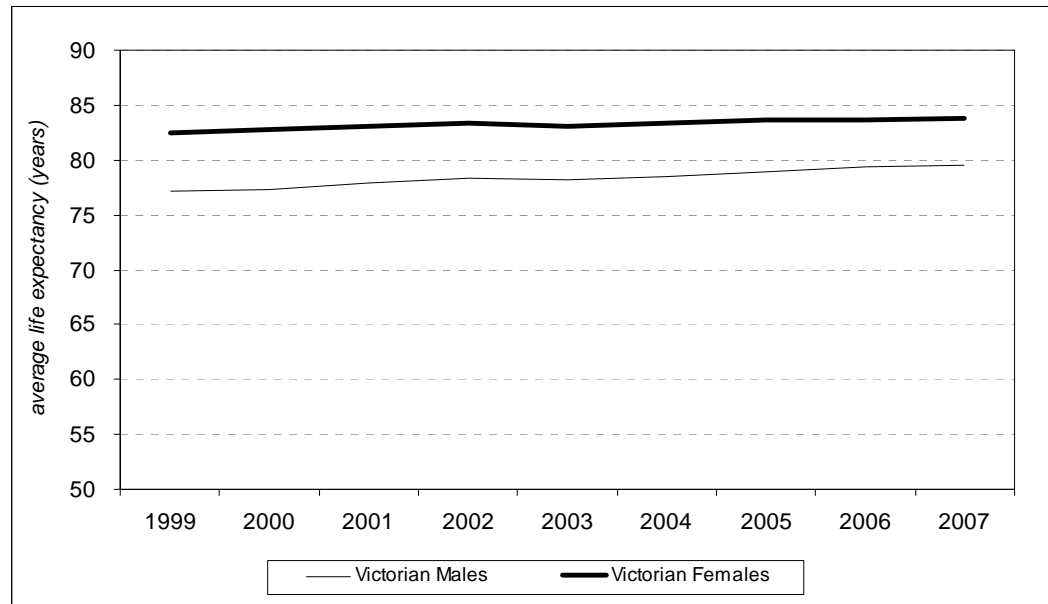
In line with the above self-reported health measures, Victorians enjoy a long life expectancy that has been consistently above the Australian average. In 2007, the Victorian male average life expectancy was 79.5 years and the female life expectancy was 83.8 years.

These are average figures for all Victorians, and do not represent estimated average life expectancy for certain populations within the State. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) does not currently provide annual updates of Indigenous life expectancy, however the recognised life expectancy for Indigenous Victorians is considerably less than the Victorian average. Indigenous life expectancy, based on deaths in Victoria, New South Wales, ACT and Tasmania combined between 1996 and 2001, was estimated at 60.0 years for males, and 65.1 years for females.

Victoria has committed to the COAG targets on Indigenous health and life expectancy and is working with all other States, Territories and the Commonwealth to develop datasets and supplementary indicators to use in addition to five year census data.

ABS has recently released a discussion paper with experimental Indigenous life expectancy estimates derived using a different statistical method. Life expectancy estimates using this method will differ from those previously published. ABS is to advise on the timing of the release of these experimental Indigenous life tables and life expectancy estimates.

Chart B.19: Average life expectancy at birth in Victoria^(a)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. Nos. 3105.0.65.001 for years 1999 to 2001 and 3302.2.55.001 for years 2002 to 2005)

Note:

(a) According to ABS convention each year's life expectancy estimate is the average of the prior three year period.

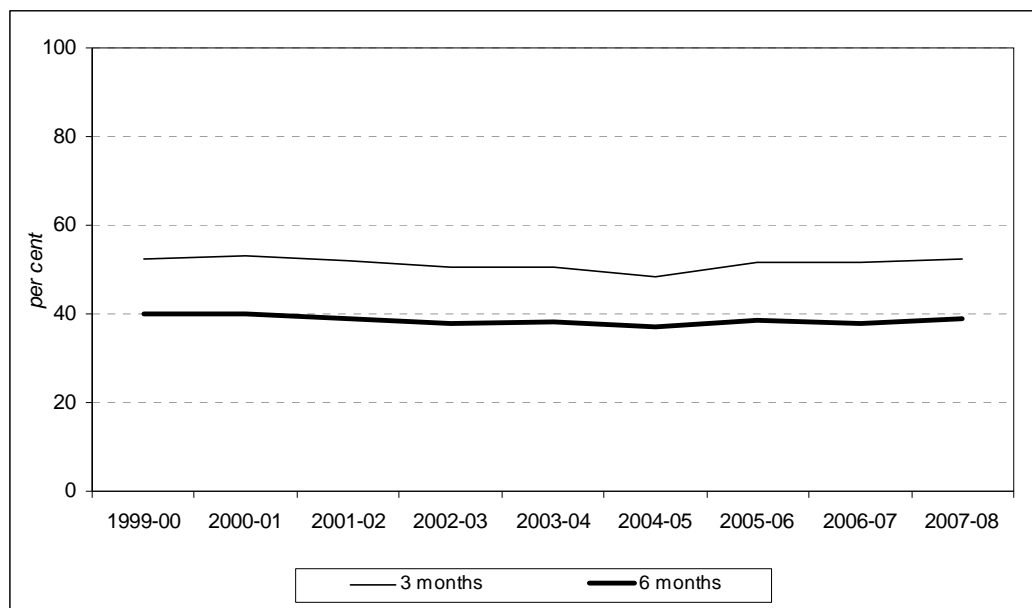
The wellbeing of young children will improve

Improving the wellbeing of young children can overcome disadvantage and substantially improve their quality of life as adults.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding has a range of positive effects on the survival, development and growth of babies. Breastfeeding also contributes to the health and well-being of mothers, including some protection against breast cancer (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2005). As shown in Chart B.20 the proportion of Victorian infants fully breastfed in 2007-08 is at the same level as the previous year. At three months, over half of Victorian infants are still breastfed and the downwards trend up to 2004 has been reversed. By six months, this proportion is reduced to less than 40 per cent.

Chart B.20 Breastfeeding rates at 3 and 6 months



Source: Maternal and child health services, Department of Human Services

Immunisation

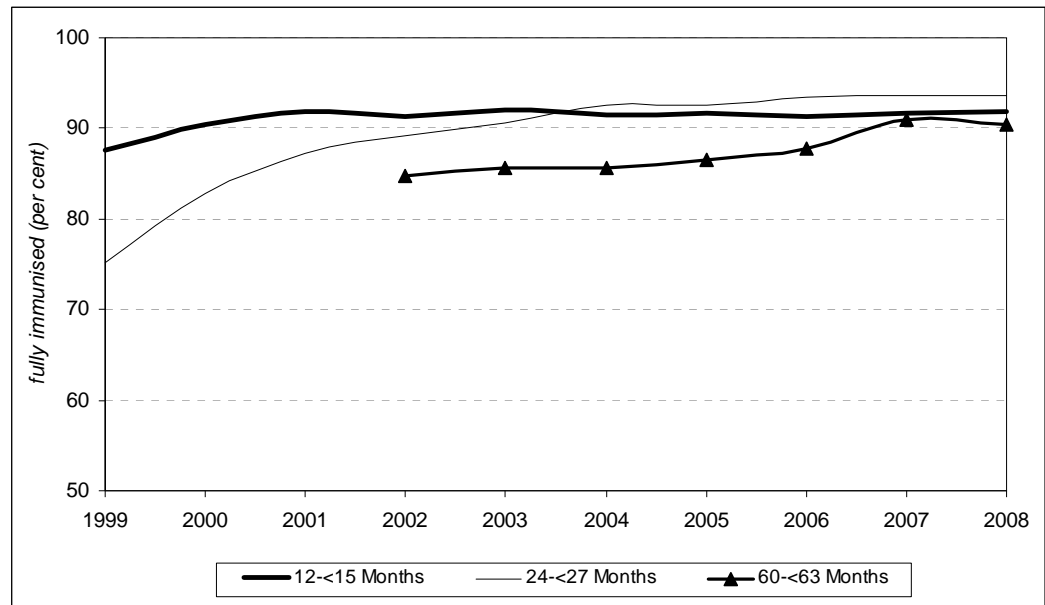
Immunisation against communicable diseases has been shown to reduce morbidity and mortality from a range of childhood diseases. Immunisation offers protection for individual children and also reduces the rate at which these diseases circulate within the broader community. Evidence suggests that a minimum of 90 per cent vaccination coverage is required to interrupt the ongoing transmission of diseases (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2005).

A child is considered fully immunised according to the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) if they have had the following vaccines at the measured ages:

- At 12-<15 months they have had all scheduled vaccine doses of diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTP), poliomyelitis, Haemophilus influenzae type b (HIB) and Hepatitis B;
- At 24-<27 months they have had all scheduled vaccine doses of DTP, poliomyelitis, HIB, Hepatitis B, measles, mumps and rubella (MMR); and
- At 60-<63 months (previously 72-<75 months) they have had all scheduled vaccine doses of DTP, poliomyelitis, HIB, Hepatitis B and MMR vaccines.

As shown in Chart B.21, Victorian immunisation rates for children have increased steadily since 1999. They have exceeded 90 per cent for children aged 12-<15 months since 2000, for children aged 24-<27 months since 2003 and for children aged 72-<75 months since 2007. Maintaining vaccine coverage of 90 per cent and greater in all three cohorts during periods of complicated changes to the childhood vaccine schedule is challenging.

Chart B.21: Proportion of Victorian children fully immunised

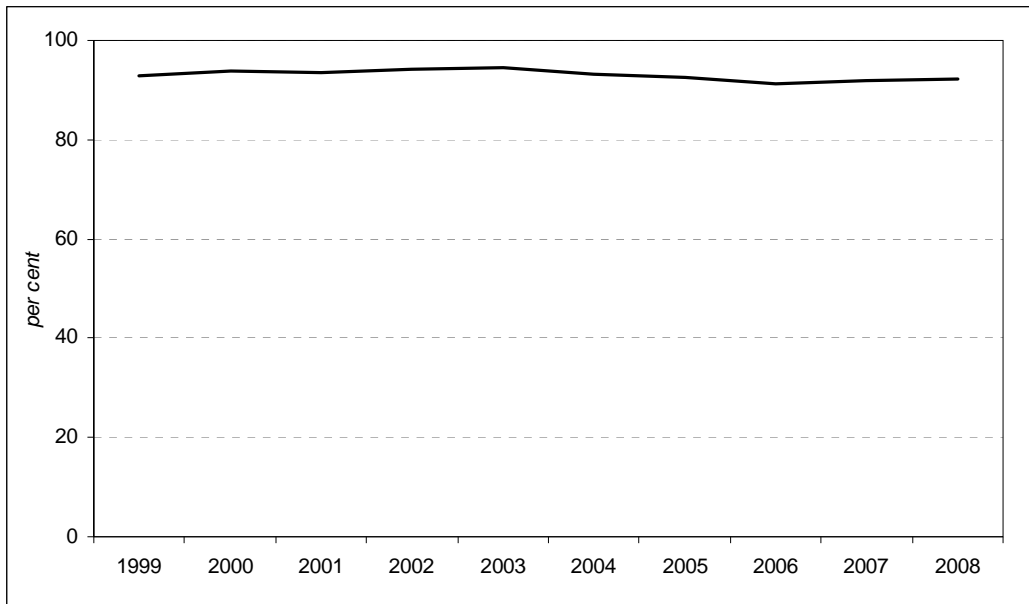


Source: Australian Childhood Immunisation Register

Kindergarten attendance

Educational and social outcomes are also important when measuring the wellbeing of young children. Attendance at kindergarten by four year olds in Victoria is used as a proxy measure for these outcomes in this report. Since 1999, participation rates have remained consistently over 90 per cent (see Chart B.22). Participation figures are based on the number of four year old children enrolled in their first year of state-funded kindergarten by the ABS estimated resident population of children. The participation rate was 92.4 per cent in 2008, an increase compared to 91.8 per cent in 2007.

Chart B.22 Rate of four year olds participating in kindergarten in Victoria^(a)



Source: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. No. 3101.0)

Note:

(a) Participation rate is calculated in July each year using the latest available population estimates from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Waiting times (emergency, elective and dental) will be reduced

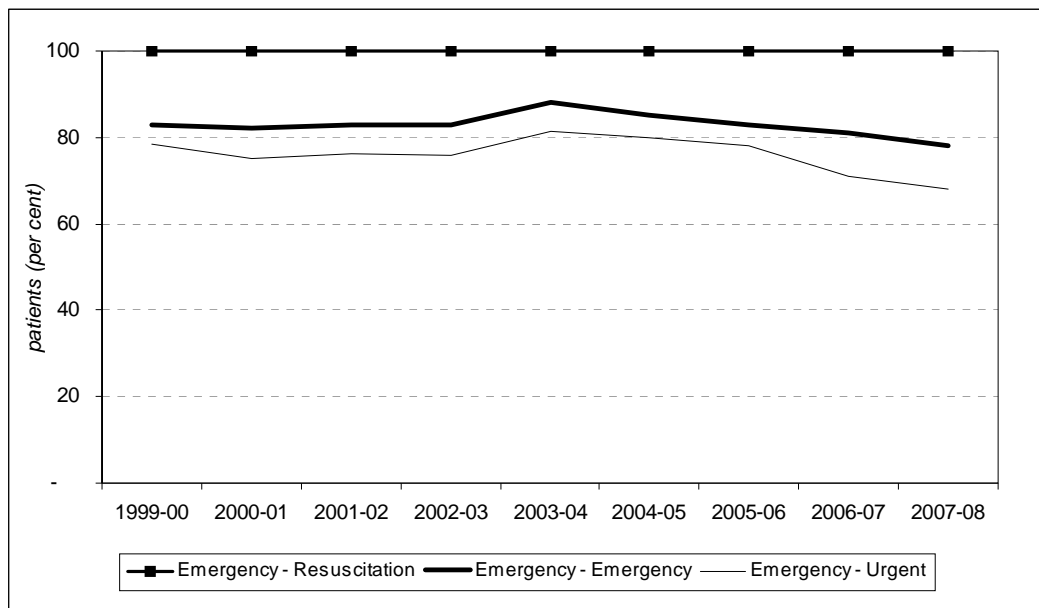
The Department of Human Services collects a range of data about the performance of Victoria's public hospital system, including the number of patients in emergency departments and the number of patients waiting for elective surgery that are treated within ideal times.

Emergency waiting times

Since 2000, 100 per cent of Triage Category 1 emergency patients (those requiring resuscitation) were seen immediately. In 2007-08, 78 per cent of Triage Category 2 emergency patients (emergency) were seen within the ideal time, below the target of 80 per cent. For Triage Category 3 emergency patients (urgent), 68 per cent were seen within the ideal time, below the target of 75 per cent (see Chart B.23).

Growth in emergency department activity, up 3.6 per cent from 2006-07 to 2007-08, continues to present a challenge for emergency access performance. The increase in emergency presentations has been accompanied by a 6.3 per cent increase in Triage Categories 1 to 3 presentations from 2006-07 to 2007-08.

Chart B.23: Emergency treatment within ideal times in Victorian hospitals^(a)



Source: Department of Human Services, Victorian Emergency Minimum Dataset

Notes:

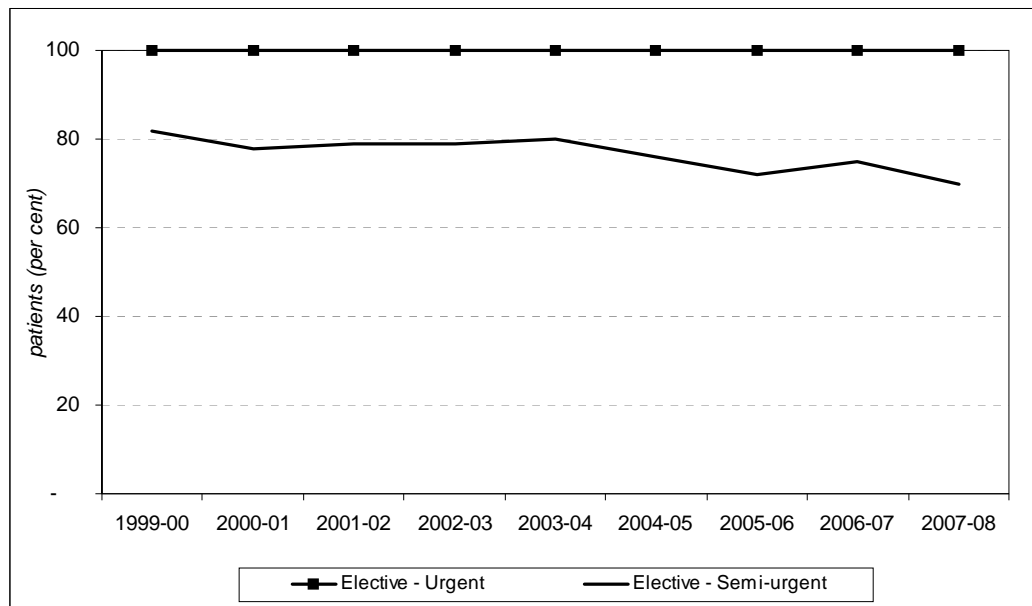
- (a) *Emergency-resuscitation: Triage Category 1 (desirable to be treated immediately);*
- Emergency-emergency: Triage Category 2 (desirable to be treated within 10 minutes);*
- Emergency-urgent: Triage Category 3 (desirable to be treated within 30 minutes).*

Elective surgery time to treatment

For patients requiring elective surgery over the past nine years, 100 per cent of urgent patients (Category 1) were treated within 30 days (see Chart B.24). In 2007-08, 70 per cent of semi-urgent (Category 2) patients were treated within 90 days. The number of semi-urgent patients treated has increased from 56 000 in 1999-2000 to 62 000 in 2007-08. The median time to treat urgent and semi-urgent patients in 2007-08 was seven days and 53 days respectively.

In 2008, the Victorian and Commonwealth Government provided an additional \$60 million dollars for elective surgery to Victoria's public hospitals. This additional funding resulted in more than 13 400 additional elective surgery procedures than in 2007. Victoria's public hospitals treated 143 817 elective surgery patients in 2008 compared to 130 340 elective surgery patients treated in 2007.

Chart B.24 Elective treatment within ideal times in Victorian hospitals^(a)



Source: Department of Human Services, Elective Surgery Information System

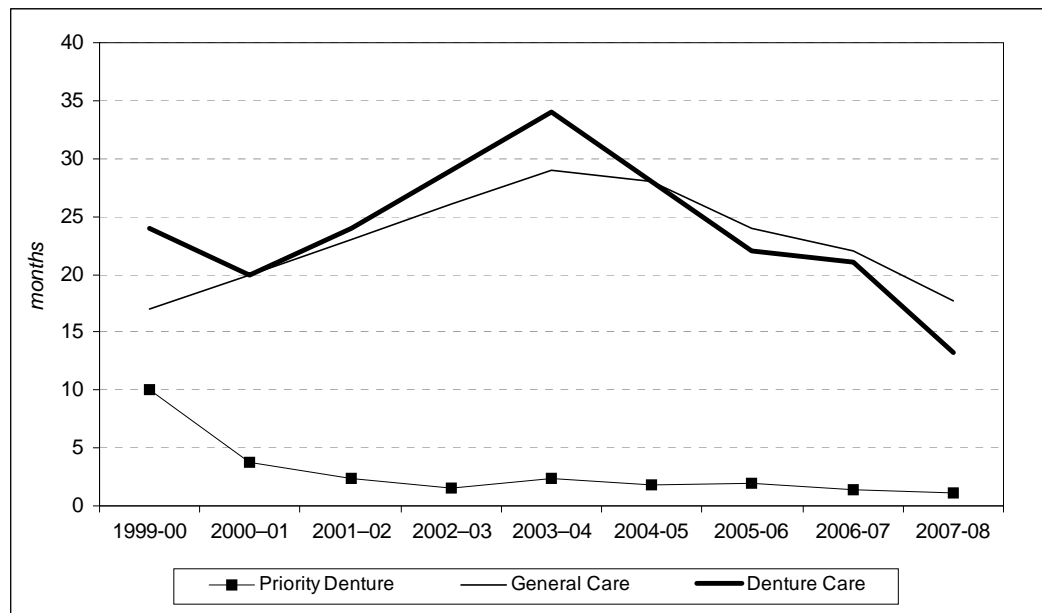
Note:

(a) Elective-urgent: Category 1 (desirable to be admitted within 30 days); and Elective-semi urgent: Category 2 (desirable to be admitted within 90 days).

Timeliness of dental health services

The Department of Human Services collects data on waiting times for dental treatments in the public system. Chart B.25 shows that waiting times have reduced significantly for priority dentures and non-urgent general and denture care. Clients with urgent dental needs are assessed within 24 hours.

Chart B.25 Average public dental waiting times in Victoria



Source: Department of Human Services, Dental Health Services Victoria, Community Dental program

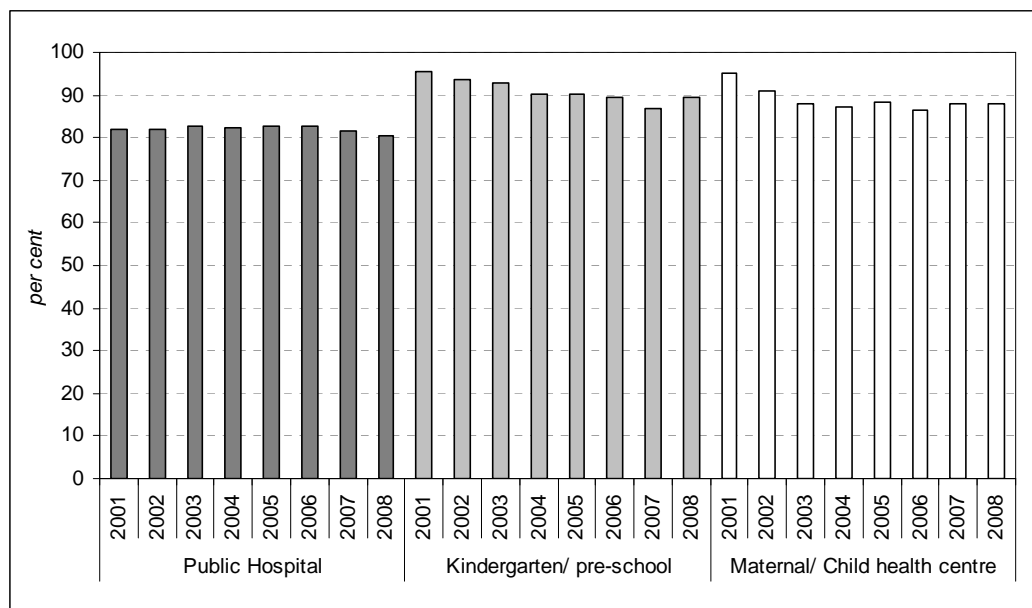
Levels of confidence in health and community services will increase

The quality and accessibility of health and community services can be judged by the level of confidence Victorians have in those services. The VPHS covers satisfaction rates with selected health services, including public hospitals, community health centres, home nursing, kindergartens, and maternal and child health centres. Satisfaction with the surveyed range of Victorian health and community services remains high (see Chart B.26). Rural/regional respondents were generally more satisfied with the three services surveyed than urban respondents.

In 2008, of those persons who had used the services, the proportion who were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ were:

- 84.2 per cent of rural/regional respondents and 78.7 per cent of urban respondents who had used public health services;
- 91.1 per cent of rural/regional respondents and 89.3 per cent of urban respondents who had kindergarten or preschool services; and
- 89.4 per cent of rural/regional respondents and 87.3 per cent of urban respondents who had used maternal/child health services.

Chart B.26: Victorians' satisfaction with health and community services^(a)



Source: The Department of Human Services Victorian Population Health Survey

Note:

(a) An extra category was added from 2004 onwards to enable respondents to answer 'no response.' This category is included in the calculation of satisfaction rate.

Education is the key to creating a dynamic, successful community and improving the opportunities in life for all Victorians. Victoria must be a place where children get the best possible start to their education and where people of all ages are motivated to keep learning.

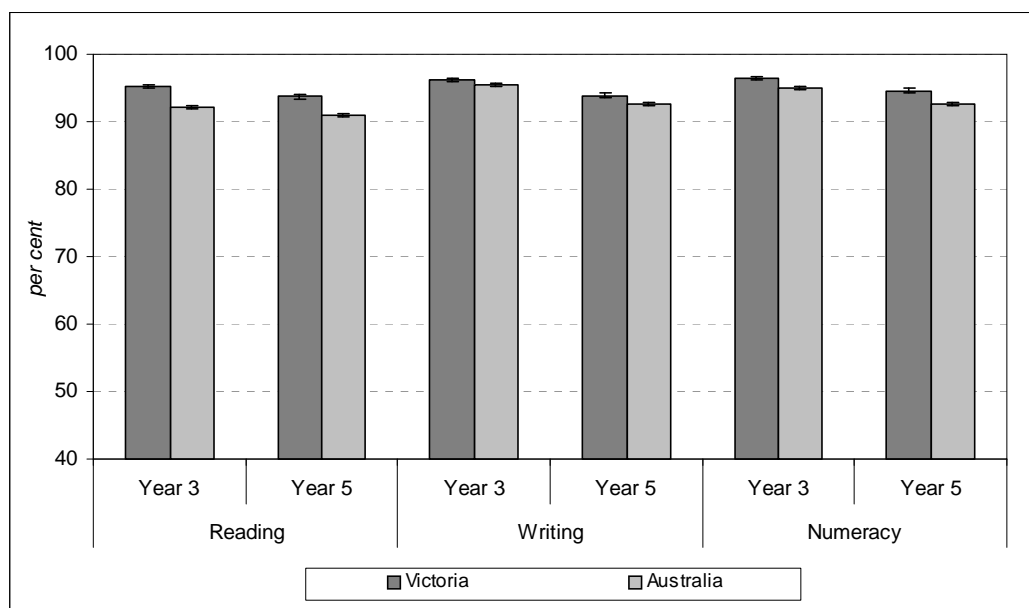
The proportion of Victorian primary students achieving the national benchmark levels for reading, writing and numeracy will be at or above the national average.

Developing strong literacy and numeracy skills in primary school is the basis for later achievement in education and training, and for full social and economic participation.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority administers national literacy and numeracy tests annually to assess the literacy and numeracy standards of Victorian primary school students. In previous years, the State's literacy and numeracy performance was measured and reported against national benchmarks. However, in 2008 a new data set and methodology was established to measure national and literacy standards against national minimum standards. The minimum standard is calculated at a national level by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). Results for 2008 were released through MCEETYA in December 2008. Previously reported national benchmark data are not comparable to the new national minimum standard results.

The percentage of year three and year five Victorian students achieving the national literacy and numeracy minimum standards in 2008 was above the national average. In 2008 more than 95 per cent of Victorian year three students achieved the national minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy (see Chart B.27). At year five, more than 94 per cent of Victorian students achieved the national minimum standard in numeracy and more than 93 per cent achieved the national minimum standard in reading and writing. Generally a higher proportion of female than male students achieved national minimum standards for year three and year three in Victoria and Australia.

Chart B.27: Percentage of Year 3 and Year 5 primary students achieving national minimum standards in 2008^(a)



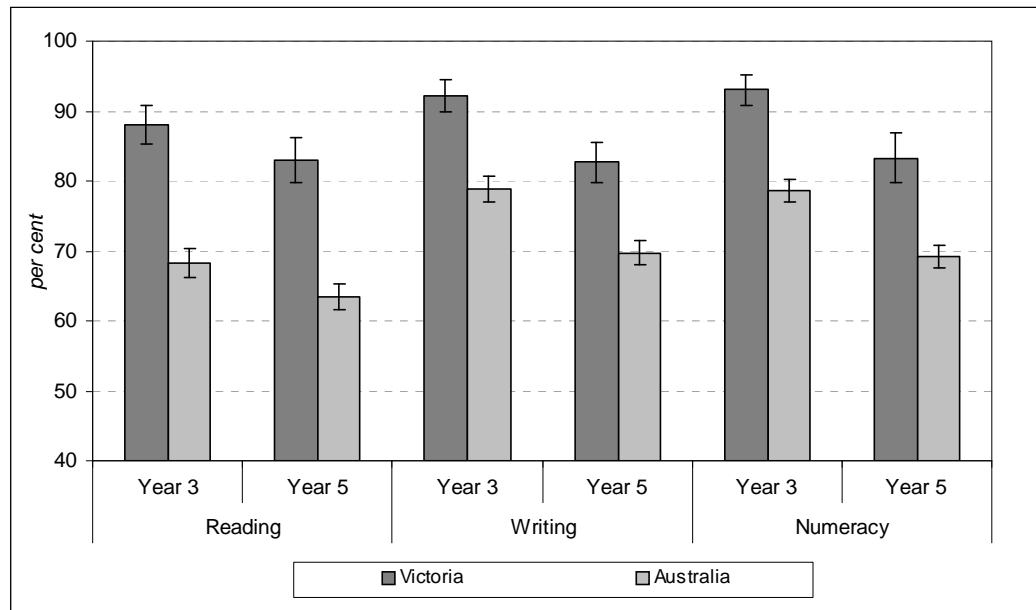
Source: 2008 National Assessment Program, Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data

Note:

(a) The 'whisker' at the top of the bar shows the margin of error. There is a 95 per cent statistical confidence that the true percentage of students achieving the national benchmark lies within this range.

The proportion of Indigenous primary students in Victoria and the whole of Australia achieving national minimum standards was substantially below that for the respective cohort for all students in reading, writing and numeracy. However, Victorian Indigenous primary students performed well above the national Indigenous average (see Chart B.28).

Chart B.28: Percentage of Year 3 and Year 5 Indigenous primary students achieving national minimum standards in 2008^(a)



Source: 2008 National Assessment Program, Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data

Note:

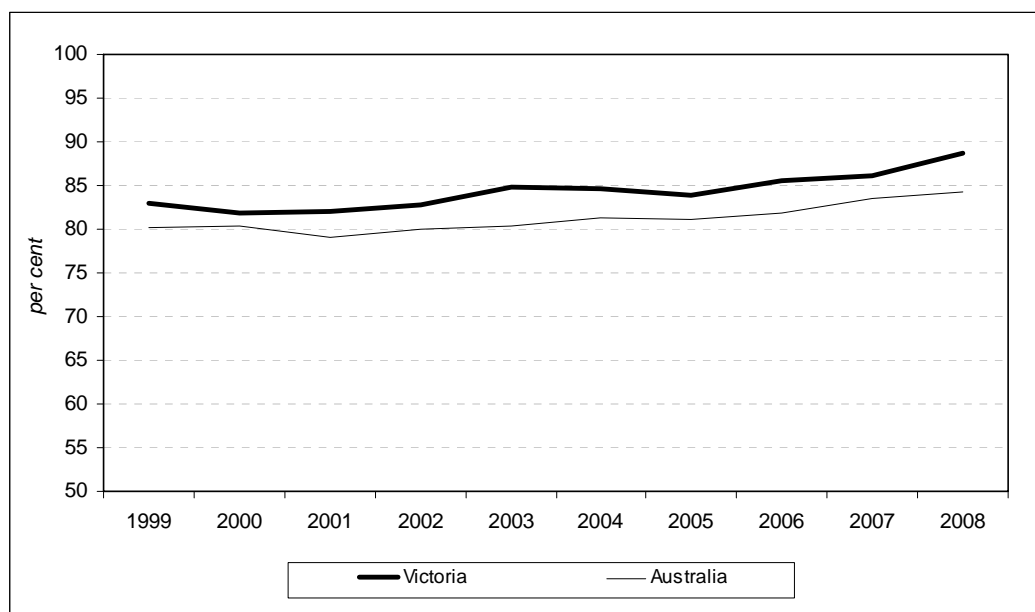
(a) The 'whisker' at the top of the bar shows the margin of error. There is a 95 per cent statistical confidence that the true percentage of students achieving the national benchmark lies within this range.

By 2010, 90 per cent of young people in Victoria will successfully complete year 12 or its educational equivalent

The completion of year 12 or its equivalent qualification, such as an apprenticeship or traineeship, is a foundation for stable and rewarding employment. This measure uses data from the ABS *Survey of Education and Work* to estimate the number of Victorians aged 20 to 24 who have attained Year 12 or a vocational certificate at the Australian Qualifications Framework Level Two or above. The ABS has recently changed the method for the calculation of this measure resulting in historical data being revised. Use of the new methodology has resulted in an approximate 1 per cent reduction in previously reported figures from 2002 to 2006 on a state and national basis.

In 2008, 88.7 per cent of Victorians aged 20 to 24 had completed year 12 or its educational equivalent. This has increased from 81.8 per cent in 2000 and was above the 2008 national average of 84.2 per cent.

Chart B.29: Percentage of 20-24 year olds who attained year 12 or its educational equivalent



Source: ABS Survey of Education and Work

The level of participation in vocational education and training of adults aged 25 to 64 years will increase

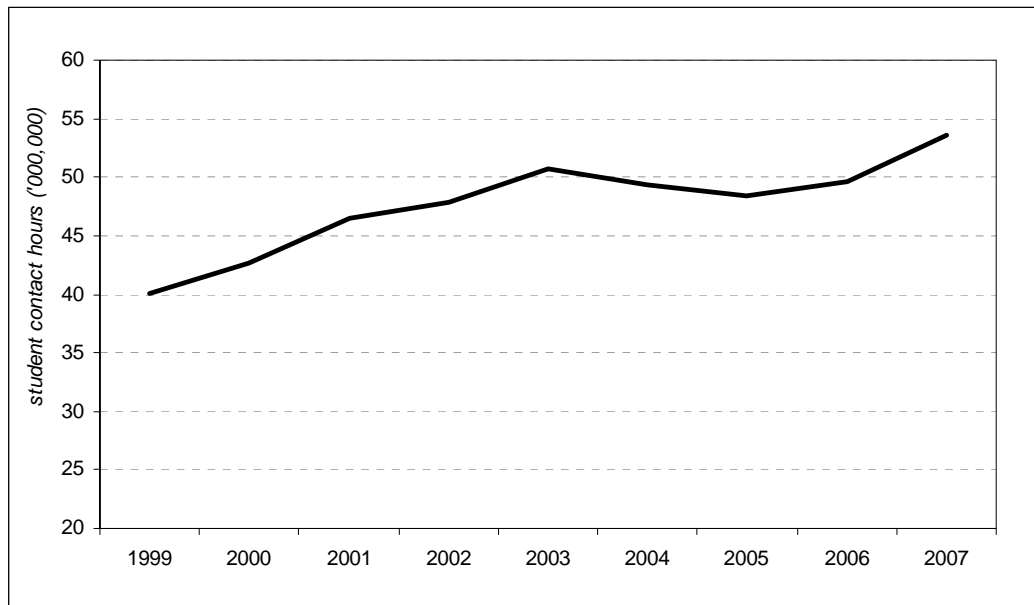
To participate in the modern economy, more adult Victorians need to increase their skills through further education and training. Skills Victoria collects data on the number of 25 to 64 year olds participating in vocational and education programs.

Number of students

From 1999, Victorian Education and Training (VET) student numbers among 25 to 64 year olds trended upwards peaking at almost 307 000 students in 2003. This number declined to just over 264 000 in 2006, and grew again to more than 274 000 students in 2007.

It is likely the decline between 2003 and 2006 was due to a number of factors including the strength of the Victorian labour market, shifting patterns of participation towards courses of longer duration and a decline of 32 per cent in student numbers in the Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector.

Chart B.30: Number of 25 to 64 year olds who participated in a vocational education and training program in Victoria^(a)



Source: Skills Victoria Student Statistical Collection, 1999-2007

Note:

(a) Figures represent numbers over the whole year and include all students irrespective of the source of funding

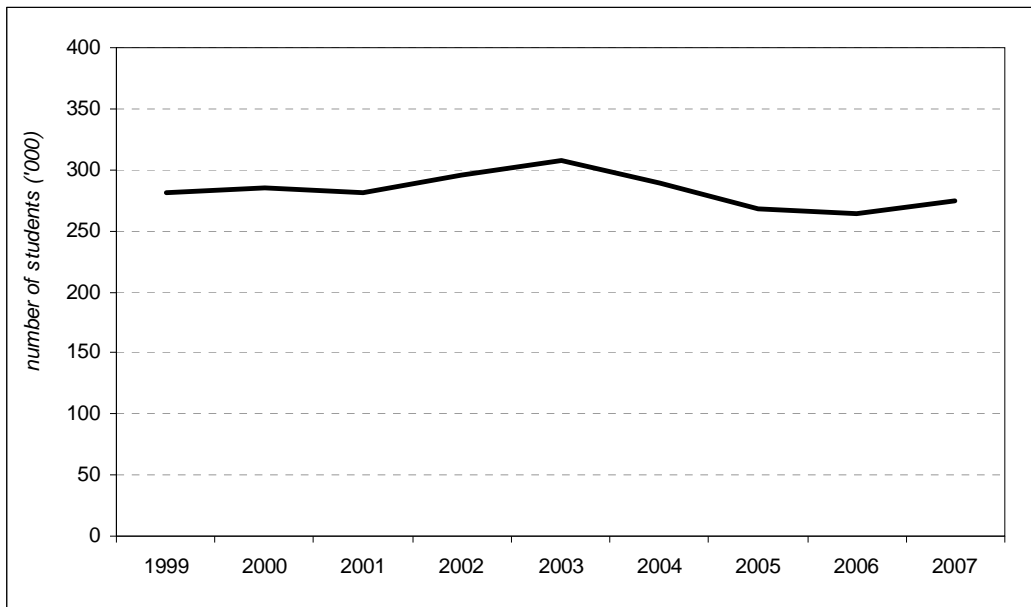
Student contact hours

VET student contact hours among 25 to 64 year olds increased from just over 40 million in 1999 to more than 53 million in 2007. However, student contact hours were broadly stable over 2004 to 2006, broadly reflecting student numbers in this age group over this period.

The overall growth in student contact hours can be attributed to a number of factors including:

- an increase in training at higher qualification levels in courses of longer duration;
- the shift of students away from shorter non accredited training into accredited training; and
- Skills Victoria actively purchasing student contact hours through the establishment of funding agreements with VET providers in order to target priority areas.

Chart B.31: Contact hours of 25 to 64 year olds who participated in a vocational education and training program in Victoria^{(a)(b)(c)}



Source: Skills Victoria Student Statistical Data Collection, 1999-2007

Notes:

- (a) Figures are for the calendar year and are based on all funding sources.
- (b) Student Contact Hours (SCH) is a key measure designed to enable the reported quantum of VET activity in Victoria to be reliably measured each year and to enable comparisons to be made against previous years.
- (c) Student Contact Hours collected by Skills Victoria refers to the hours of teaching activity (including assessment times) that the provider schedules for a module or unit of competency enrolment.

The natural environment sustains every aspect of our lives. Victoria must actively conserve and manage it in order to achieve our social and economic goals. The State has magnificent alpine, desert, rainforest, grassland, wetland, marine and coastal environments – all of which are critical for the survival of our precious native plants and animals and must be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

The health of Victoria's rivers will improve significantly by 2010. In particular, the Snowy River will be returned to 21 per cent of its original flow by 2011, and 28 per cent over time.

Waterway health

River health in Victoria is measured using an integrated monitoring tool known as the Statewide Index of Stream Condition (ISC). The ISC assessment was conducted in 1999 and 2004 and found that deterioration in stream condition appears to have been controlled, with approximately 21 per cent of major rivers and tributaries in good or excellent condition. The ISC program occurs every five years to assess the long-term effectiveness of the river health rehabilitation programs in Victoria. The next ISC is scheduled for 2010.

Snowy River

Under the Snowy Intergovernmental Agreement the progressive target for the Snowy River is for a long-term average annual flow of 142 000 megalitres (equivalent to 15 per cent of its original flow) to be returned immediately below Lake Jindabyne by June 2009 and 212 000 megalitres (equivalent to 21 per cent of its original flow) by June 2012. As of June 2008, the total contribution of water entitlement towards the target for the Snowy River was 101 254 megalitres, jointly met by Victoria (23 496 megalitres) and New South Wales (77 758 megalitres).

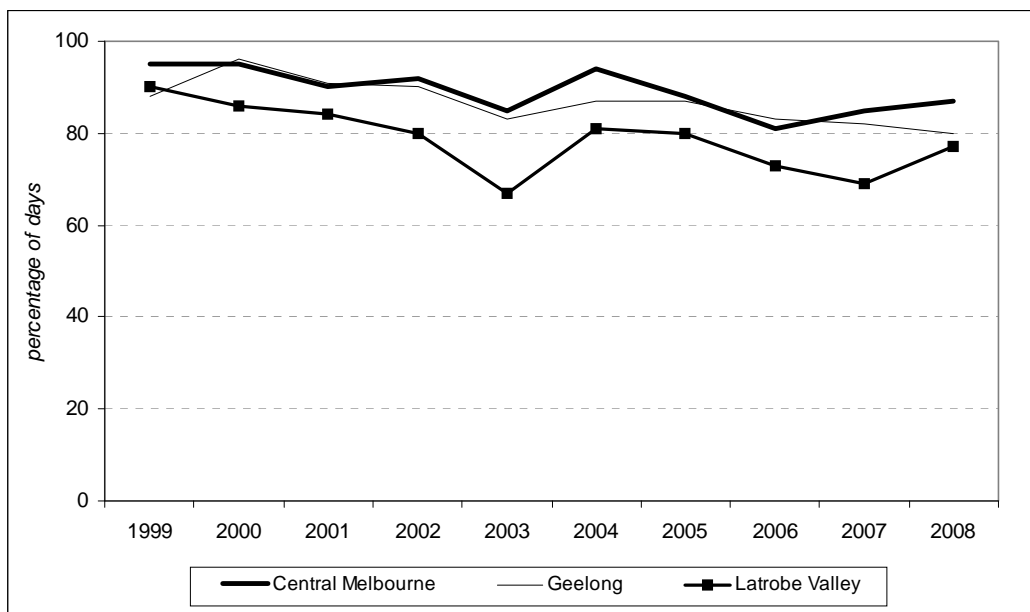
The Snowy River's environmental allocation for the 2008-09 water year was 57 877 megalitres. Under the Snowy Intergovernmental Agreement, water is provided at the reliability of its source based on allocations in the source valley in the previous year. As such, the allocation for environmental flow was less than the total entitlement due to current drought conditions. The volume available for release to the Snowy River from Lake Jindabyne for the 2008-09 water year was equivalent to 5 per cent of the long-term annual natural flow.

The quality of air and drinking water will improve

Air quality

The Air Quality Index produced by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria indicated an overall improvement in air quality in 2008 compared to 2006 and 2007, and this is mainly a reflection of the absence of major bushfires that year. Non-urban issues, however, continue to have an impact on air quality across Victoria and have led to numerous days of 'poor' quality (2008 was affected by dust storms and increased levels of planned burning to help mitigate the effects of uncontrolled bushfires). Despite these events, air quality in Central Melbourne, Geelong and the Latrobe Valley was rated 'good' to 'very good' on the great majority of days (Chart B.32).

Chart B.32: Percentage of days with 'good' to 'very good' air quality in Central Melbourne, Geelong and the Latrobe Valley



Source: EPA Victoria Air Quality Index

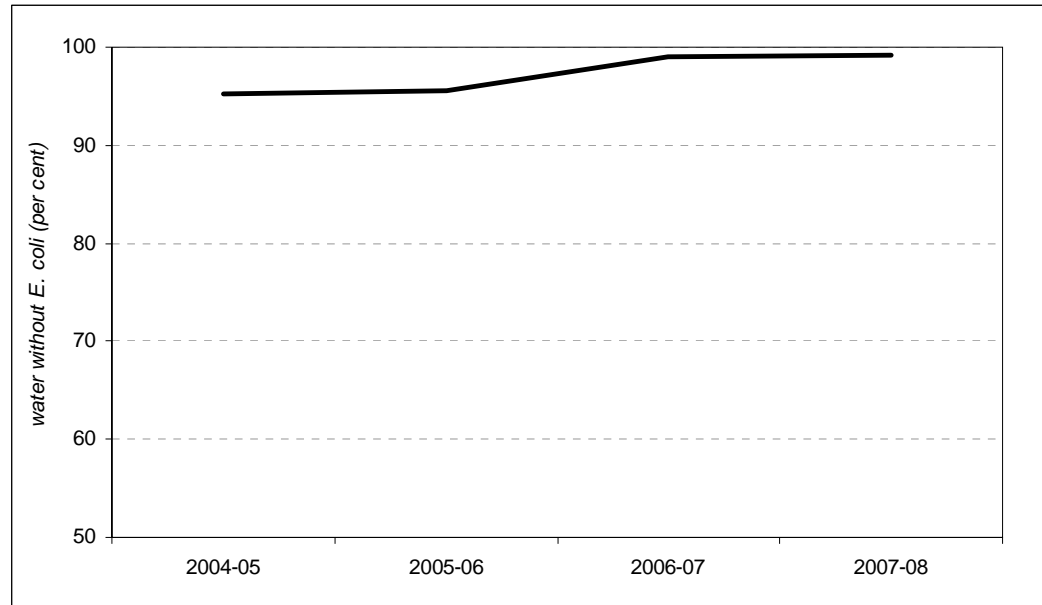
Drinking water

The quality of drinking water is usually determined by measuring the incidence of the faecal indicator bacterium *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*). This is a direct indicator of the public health risk associated with drinking water. Performance is measured by looking at the percentage of water sampling localities that complied with the State's water quality standard for *E. coli*. In July 2005 the Safe Drinking Water Regulations commenced, which require that at least 98 per cent of drinking water samples collected over any 12 month period in each water sampling locality be free of *E. coli*.

In the 2007-08 reporting period compliance across the State's 484 water sampling localities with the E. coli water quality standard improved from 99.0 per cent to 99.2 per cent (in 2005-06 reporting period, 95.5 per cent of 493 localities where drinking water was supplied met the standard).

Chart B.33 illustrates the proportion of compliant water localities over the last three reporting periods and illustrates a gradual improvement in compliance over time.

Chart B.33: Escherichia coli compliance 2004-05 to 2007-08



Source: Department of Human Services, Drinking Water Regulation Program

The extent and quality of native vegetation will increase

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) 2008 Native Vegetation Net Gain Accounting: First Approximation Report provided the baseline (as at 2005-06) from which estimates of the net average annual rate of change in native vegetation extent and quality will be measured. These baseline data indicated the situation on both public and private land, and the relative contributions of various sources of loss and gain, as summarised in Table B.2.

Table B.2: Baseline data of the net average annual rate of change in native vegetation extent and quality

Average annual rates of change	Public Land	Private Land
Gains sub total	+8,760 Habitat Ha /yr	+4,560 Habitat Ha /yr
Losses sub total	2,860 Habitat Ha /yr	14,550 Habitat Ha /yr
Net Outcomes 2005 06	+5,900 Habitat Ha /yr ^(a)	9,990 Habitat Ha /yr ^(a)

Source: DSE (2008) Native Vegetation Net Gain Accounting: first approximation report

Given the inherently fluctuating dynamics of vegetation quality, the relatively slow underlying rate of change, and the cost of acquiring and processing field data and satellite imagery, a realistic period between statewide assessments is in the order of five years. However, some components of the accounting are recorded annually and broadly indicate the trend for clearing of remnants/forest is stable, and for improvements of private land remnants through government incentives is positive (see Table B.3).

Table B.3: Annually reported components, Net Gain Accounting

	<i>For remnant vegetation clearing applications processed by DSE</i>	<i>For incentives to improve private land remnants (through BushTender and related projects)</i>
2005-06	Not reported	~ 12 100 ha yielding ~ 200 Habitat Ha /yr improvement (as reported in DSE 2008)
2006-07	~ 260 ha lost through approved clearing ~ 1 500 ha improved through offsets (as reported in DSE 2008)	~ 14 300 ha yielding ~ 440 Habitat Ha /yr improvement
2007-08	~ 290 ha lost through approved clearing ~ 1 780 ha improved through offsets	~ 21 800 ha yielding ~ 720 Habitat Ha /yr improvement

Source: DSE (2008) Native Vegetation Net Gain Accounting: first approximation report, Native Vegetation Programs, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Division, DSE and Statewide Services, DSE.

The condition of our land will improve as the impact of salinity and soil degradation is reduced

Measuring changes in the condition of Victoria's land is a major challenge. The Land and Biodiversity at a Time of Climate Change Green Paper (a discussion paper), released on 6 April 2008, proposed a set of headline indicators. One of those indicators is the land health index. This index brings together different measures of the condition of soil and land (e.g. erosion, invasive plants and animals, land management). It will be used to detect changes in land condition over a relatively short time period (a few years). This means it will be useful for measuring progress towards goals like decreasing the impact of salinity and soil degradation, which tend to operate in much longer time frames. Trials of the index will be completed to coincide with the release of the Land and Biodiversity at a Time of Climate Change White Paper (a policy paper), which is due to be released in 2009.

Soil erosion is particularly important to land condition because it poses a threat to both farmland and native flora and fauna. For example, soil erosion is an imminent threat to important natural assets like Mallee and Wimmera farmland (wind erosion), the Ovens River (gully erosion), the Mitchell River and the Gippsland Lakes (tunnel erosion). Across the State there are at least 17 large scale projects working with landholders to specifically prevent and manage soil erosion.

One example of this work is the East Gippsland tunnel erosion project in the Bairnsdale foothills. Around 15 000 hectares in the area north-west of Bairnsdale are prone to a form of soil erosion called tunnel erosion, which can severely damage land, sometimes rendering it unusable for farming or any other use.

Over the last four years, the Department of Sustainability and Environment, the Department of Primary Industries and the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority have worked with local landowners to develop a viable long term treatment. Using earth works, soil treatments (like gypsum), pasture replanting and revegetation with locally indigenous plants, they have now rehabilitated some 445 hectares, built 37 kilometres of fences and planted some 10 500 native trees. The real value of this work to the community is that it has prevented approximately 712 tonnes of soil from entering the Mitchell River and the Gippsland Lakes. The land was out of production for at least a year, but it is now a picturesque mix of healthy productive pastures and native vegetation.

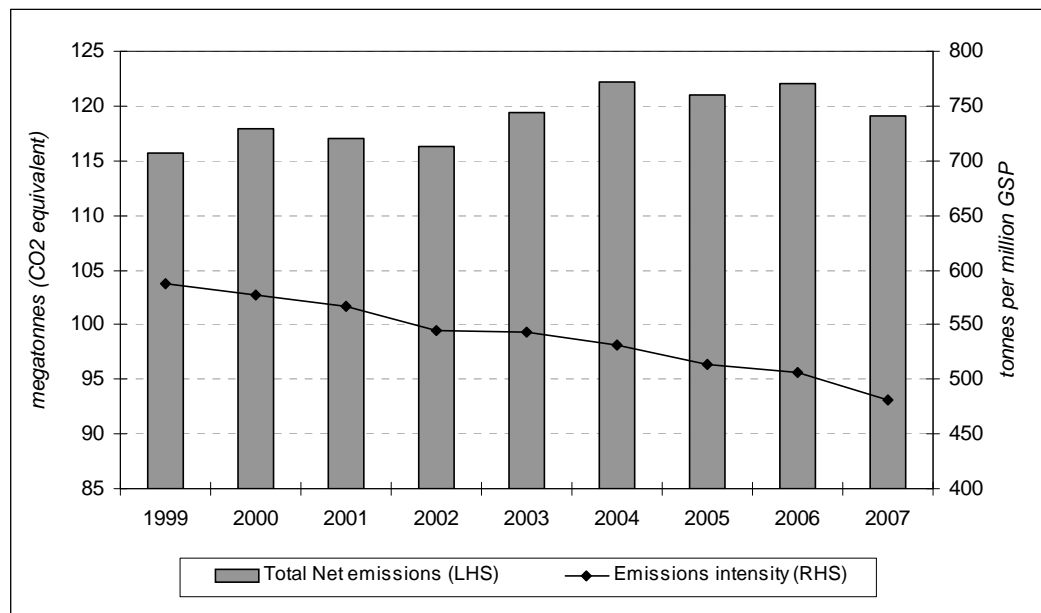
A better quality of life for Victorians now and in the future relies upon the community's ability to use Victoria's natural resources, such as water, coal, timber and gas, wisely and effectively. Protecting the environment and the long-term health and prosperity of the Victorian community depends on efficient and sustainable use of natural resources.

Greenhouse gas emissions from the production and use of energy will be reduced

Greenhouse gas emissions

Victoria's greenhouse gas inventory is compiled on an annual basis by the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change (previously the Australian Greenhouse Office). Total Victorian greenhouse gas emissions are measured by CO₂ (carbon dioxide) equivalent released into the atmosphere, enabling comparisons of emissions of various greenhouse gases by their global warming potential. During 2007, total greenhouse gas emissions in Victoria were 119.16 mega tonnes of CO₂ equivalent, a 3 per cent increase since 1999, but a 2.3 per cent decrease from the previous year's level. The energy industries sub sector is the largest contributor of the total Victorian greenhouse gas emissions. The greenhouse gas emissions intensity of the Victorian economy can be determined by relating total emissions to the value of GSP. The emissions intensity of the Victorian economy declined 18 per cent between 1999 and 2007. That is, for each dollar of GSP created, less greenhouse gases were emitted across this period.

Chart B.34: Victorian greenhouse gas emissions^(a)



Source: Department of Climate Change

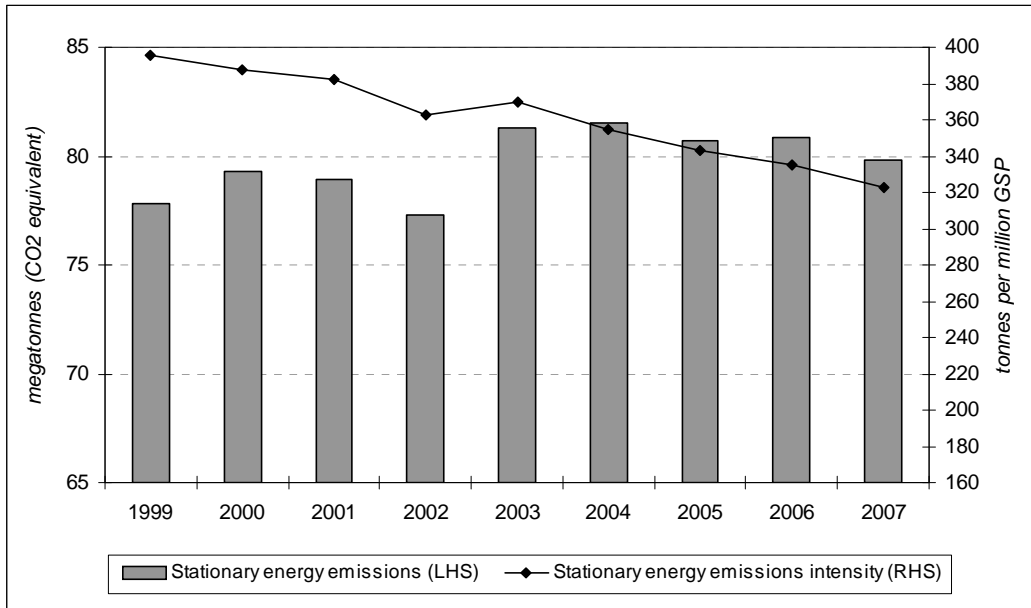
Note:

(a) Department of Climate Change has advised that the emissions data are preliminary and subject to change when the final data is released in mid 2009.

Stationary energy greenhouse gas emissions

In 2007, stationary energy (total energy minus transport energy) contributed to 67 per cent (79.85 million tonnes) of Victoria's total net greenhouse gas emissions. Stationary energy emissions increased by 2.03 million tonnes between 1999 and 2007. The stationary emissions intensity of the Victorian economy declined 18.5 per cent between 1999 and 2007. That is, for each dollar of GSP created, fewer stationary energy related greenhouse gases were emitted across this period.

Chart B.35: Stationary energy greenhouse gas emissions per unit of GSP^(a)



Source: Department of Climate Change

Note:

(a) Department of Climate Change has advised that the emissions data are preliminary and subject to change when the final data is released in mid-2009.

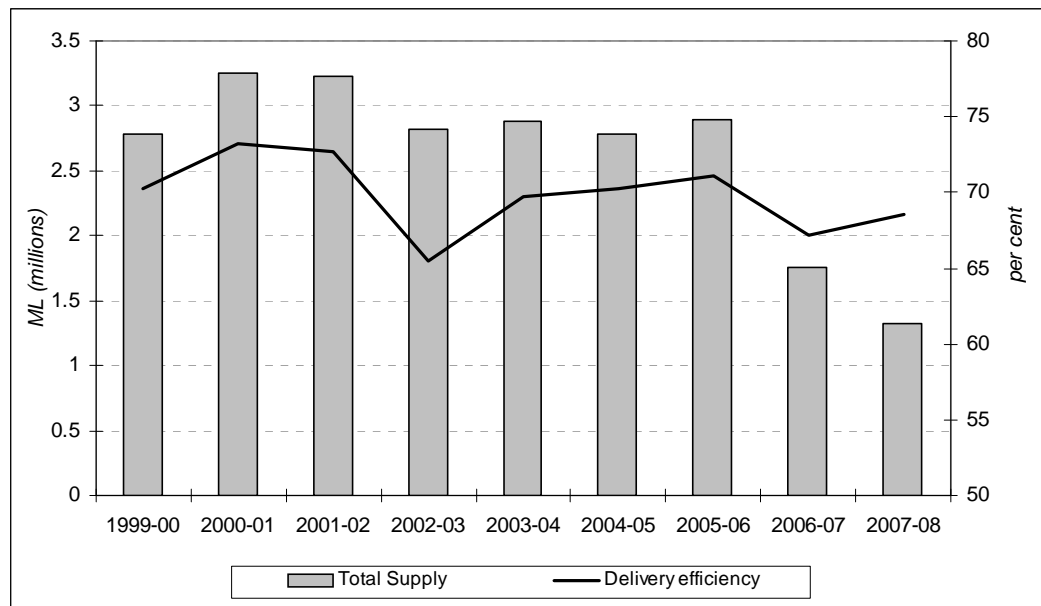
More efficient use of water in agriculture

Efficiency in the use of water in Victorian agriculture can be measured by examining both the water delivery systems and the on-farm water use.

Delivery system efficiency

Chart B.36 shows the delivery system per cent efficiency against the gross water supply available. The variations in 2006-07 and 2007-08 can be attributed to the significant change in available water for these two years. As fixed losses in delivery systems remain constant from year to year, lower percentage efficiency is expected in years of low allocations. Efficiency of delivery systems is expected to improve in the next four years as government initiatives such as the Northern Victorian Irrigation Renewal Project are completed.

Chart B.36: Delivery system efficiency^(a)



Source: Annual report of water corporations, Goulburn Murray Water, First Mildura Irrigation Trust and Lower Murray Water for irrigation systems and Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water for domestic and stock system in the Wimmera Mallee district

Note:

(a) Goulburn Murray Water systems exclude any losses incurred through harvesting to Waranga Basin.

On-farm water use

The irrigation areas benchmarked to date demonstrate that, in most cases, Victorian farming enterprises are conservative water users in relation to the commodities being irrigated.

The majority of dairy properties in the Nambrok-Denison Area supplied total water (excluding diversions) equivalent to or less than the pasture water requirement for both the 2000-01 and the 2005-06 irrigation seasons. Similarly, a reduction in irrigation intensity was observed over the same period as was the amount of water applied to dairy pastures.

Horticulture properties assessed in the Shepparton Irrigation Region are depicted as largely supplying water at or above the crop water (median – 1.1) requirement. No trend data are available.

Horticulture properties assessed in the Red Cliffs area depict water supply in excess of water requirement for most properties, with a drying trend over time. However, these results should be used with caution due to significant data limitations.

Table B.4: Median values of farm indicators for four irrigation areas in Victoria^{(a)(b)(c)}

	<i>Efficiency of irrigated dairy and horticultural industries measuring whether more or less water is applied to a crop than is required for maximum yield if significantly greater than 1, water has been applied in excess of crop requirement (megalitres per megalitre)^(b)</i>		<i>Irrigation intensity the amount of water applied to a crop per area of land sowed with that crop (megalitres per hectare)^(c)</i>	
Central Goulburn Irrigation Area (dairy only)	1996-97 0.9	2003-04 0.6	1996-97 9.1	2003-04 7.1
Red Cliffs Irrigation District (horticulture and viticulture)	1996-97 1.8	2002-03 1.4	1996-97 10	2002-03 8.9
Macalister Irrigation District (Nambrok-Denison Area) (dairy only)	2000-01 0.9	2005-06 0.6	2000-01 7.4	2005-06 6.3
Shepparton Irrigation Region (horticulture)		2003-04 1.1		2003-04 6.9

Source: 'Irrigation Water Use Efficiency Benchmarking-Final Report (Draft for Comment)' Department of Primary Industries, Victoria

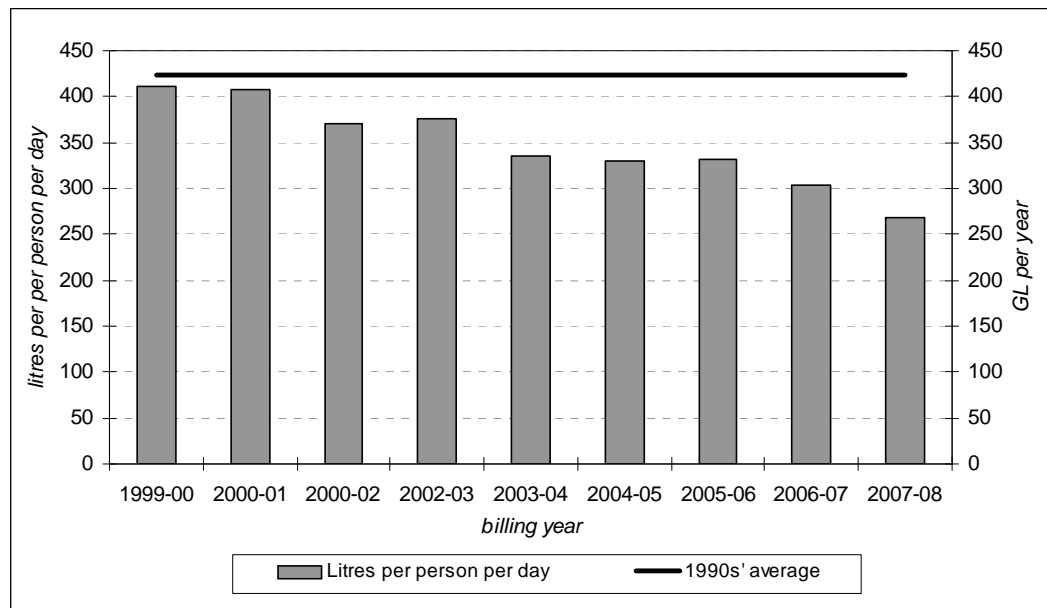
Note:

- (a) During 2006-07 the efficiency of on-farm water use was reported for the first time and provided benchmark data for future three-yearly reports.
- (b) Efficiency of irrigated industries (ML/ML): the Red Cliffs indicator values have changed from those previously reported to GVT due to modifications in the way crop water use estimates were derived.
- (c) Irrigation intensity (ML/ha): pers. comm. Andy McAllister DPI Project Manager for the Irrigation Water Use Efficiency Benchmarking Project.

Melbourne's water usage will be reduced by 15 per cent on a per capita basis from the 1990s' average by 2010

A reduction of 15 per cent in water usage on a per capita basis from the 1990s' average consumption requires a permanent reduction from 423 to 360 litres per person per day. In the year ending June 2008, Melburnians consumed an average of 269 litres of water per person per day, a 35 per cent reduction in consumption on a per capita basis from the 1990s' average (Chart B.37).

Chart B.37: Melbourne's water consumption per capita per day



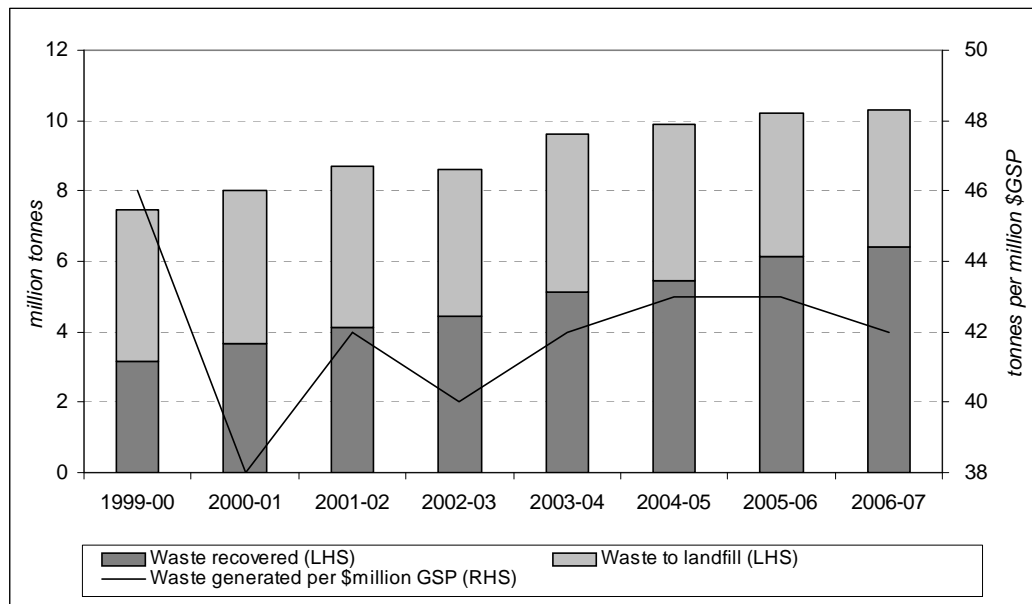
Source: Melbourne Water

The quantity of solid waste generated will be reduced, and the amount recovered for reuse, recycling and energy generation will increase

Total solid waste generated in Victoria includes waste that goes to landfill and materials recovered via recycling. Total waste generated in 2006-07 was 10.28 million tonnes which is an increase of 0.7 per cent from the previous year (10.2 million tonnes). However, despite the increase in the overall volume of waste generated, the Victorian economy is actually producing less waste per unit of GSP (46 tonnes per \$ million GSP in 1999-2000 down to 42 tonnes per \$ million GSP in 2006-07).

Waste generation per capita continues to increase over the long term. On average Victorians generated just over two tonnes of waste per person in 2006-07, a marginal increase of 9 kilo grams per person on 2005-06. The amount of material recovered from the solid waste stream in Victoria has steadily increased from 43 per cent in 1999-2000 to 62 per cent in 2006-07 (Chart B.38).

Chart B.38: Total waste production and waste generated per \$ million GSP^(a)



Source: Sustainability Victoria and ABS Cat 3218

Friendly and confident communities have strong support networks, services and infrastructure to meet the needs of the people who live and work in them. Safety in communities depends on good communication, excellent policing and emergency services, and effective measures to address the causes of crime.

Crime will be reduced by 5 per cent from 2003 to 2008, and Victorians will feel safer

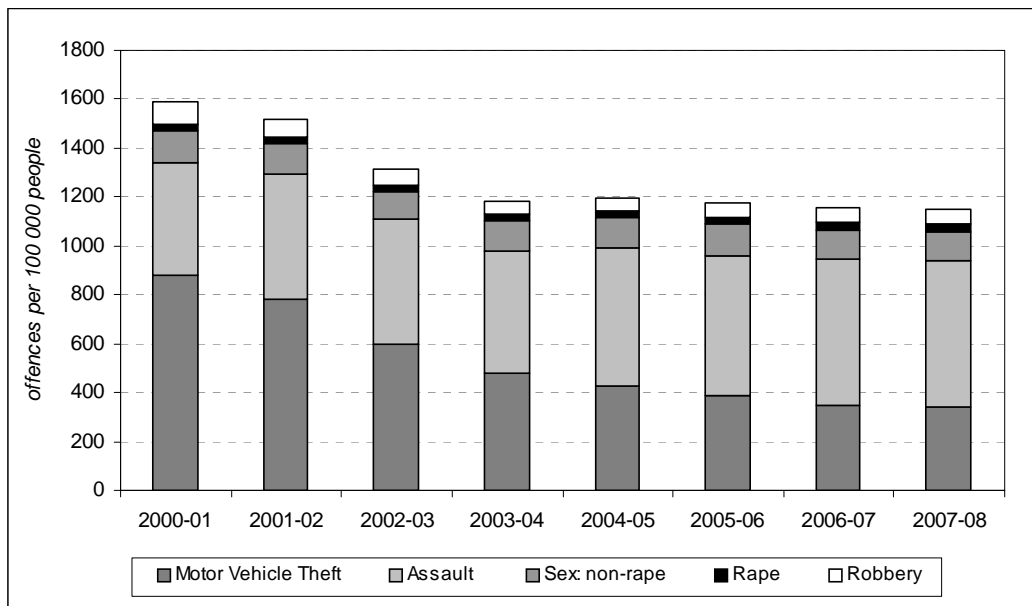
Progress towards increased community safety is measured by both reported crime rates and Victorians' sense of personal safety. This report uses a selected set of crime statistics and surveys of people's perceptions of crime to determine progress against this measure.

Rates of crime

Victoria Police collects a range of statistics on recorded crime that are used to analyse trends (in rates per 100 000 population) for 27 broad offence categories. These statistics indicate that the actual total reported rate of crime has fallen by 16.5 per cent during the period 2003 to 2008, against a targeted reduction in the rate of crime of 5 per cent during the same period. Since 2000-01, Victoria's crime rate has reduced by 24.5 per cent.

Chart B.39 focuses on trends in recorded rates of crime against the person (including the subcategories of assault, sex (non rape), rape, robbery and motor vehicle theft) between 2000-01 and 2007-08.

Chart B.39: Rates of recorded crime in Victoria



Source: Victoria Police 'Crime Statistics' 2000-01 to 2007-08

The chart shows a declining trend in several crime categories over the period 2000-01 to 2007-08. The rate of reported motor vehicle theft has declined by 61.4 per cent, the rate of reported robbery has declined by 30.1 per cent, and the rate of reported sex (non rape) offences has declined by 11.2 per cent.

Relative to 2006-07, the rate of reported rape has decreased by 9.6 per cent; however, there has been an increase of 14.3 per cent over the period 2000-01 to 2007-08.

Similarly, relative to 2006-07 the rate of reported assault has decreased by 0.8 per cent; however, over the period 2000-01 to 2007-08, the rate of reported assault has increased by 32 per cent. In August 2004, the Victoria Police Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence was implemented. Since the introduction of the Code of Practice, assaults attributed to family violence have risen from 15 per cent to 23.7 per cent of the total rate of assault, as reported in the Victoria Police Annual Report.

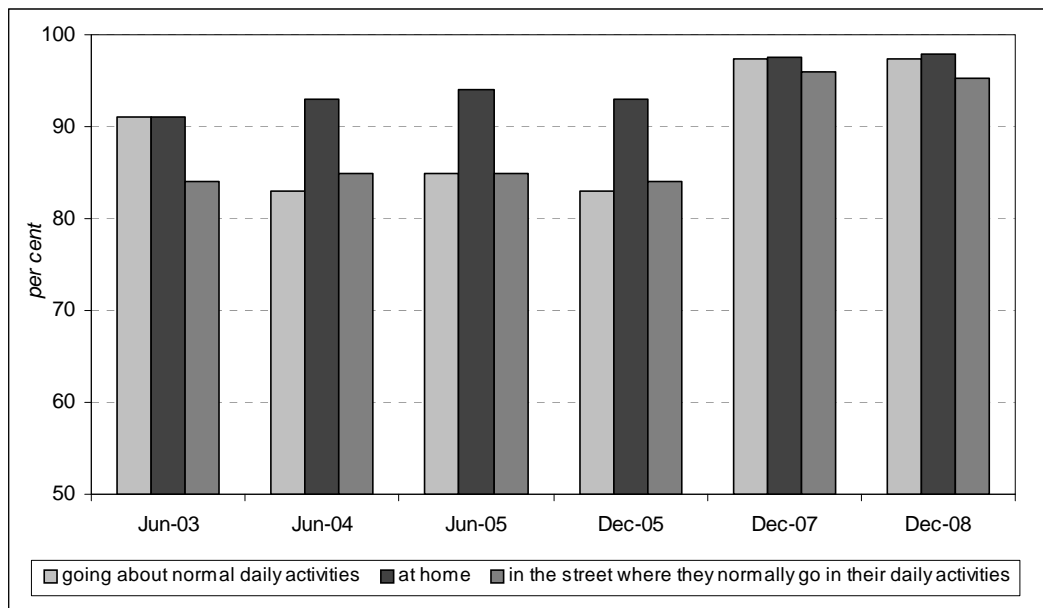
The rate of reported robbery, down by 30.1 per cent relative to 2000-01, has increased by 13.9 per cent relative to 2006-07. Cash monies still remain the most recorded property type stolen during robberies. Young people are often the victims and offenders. In 2007-08, 18.3 per cent of reported robbery victims were under 18 years of age, while 48.2 per cent of alleged offenders were under 18 years of age.

Homicide offences occur at a much lower rate than the other categories of crime included in this report and are not included in the above chart. Over the period 2000-01 to 2007-08, the rate of homicide has decreased by 26.1 per cent.

Perceptions of safety

People's perceptions of personal safety do not always reflect recorded crime rates, and as such are treated separately in this report. The Department of Justice conducts a Perceptions of Justice Survey to gather information on community perceptions of personal safety and fear of crime. The survey commenced in April 2002 and continued until December 2005. During 2006, the survey was revised and implemented in October 2006. Due to changes in the survey methodology, any comparisons or analysis of trends between the two surveys should be treated with caution. Chart B.40 shows a summary of results for the period June 2003 to December 2008. It shows that Victorians' feelings of personal safety remained at high levels, with most people feeling 'safe' or 'very safe' throughout 2008.

Chart B.40: Victorians' feelings of personal safety

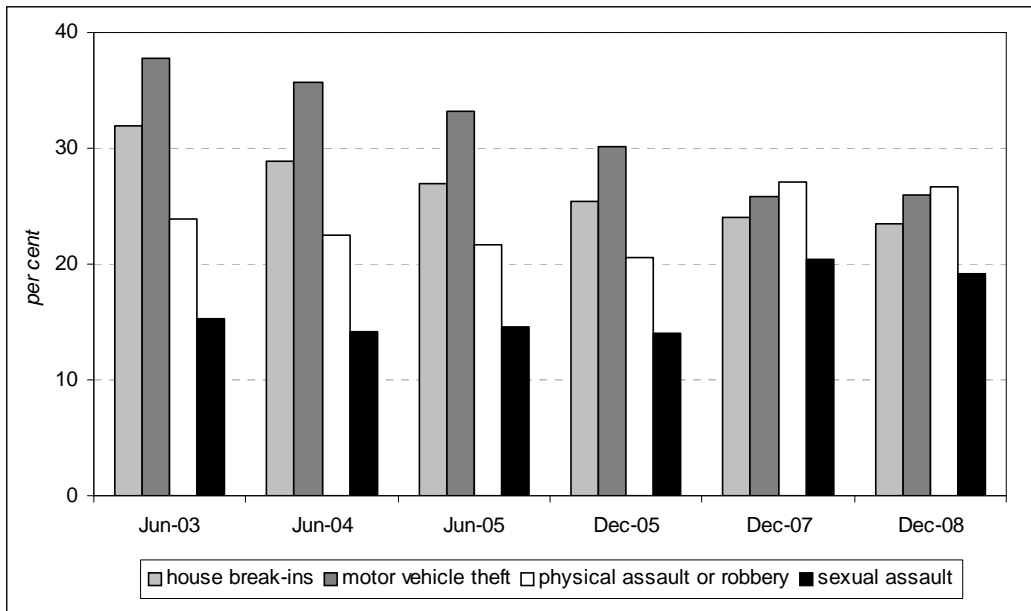


Source: Department of Justice, Perceptions of Justice Survey, June 2003, December 2008

The closest comparative results from the previous survey, (June 2003 to June 2005) also show consistently high levels of feelings of personal safety.

The Perceptions of Justice Survey also reports on the community's level of worry about being a victim of crime. Generally, these results are consistent with the high levels of feelings of personal safety reported above. The closest comparative results for the period June 2003 to December 2005 against results from 2007 and 2008 show that fewer Victorians are worried about being victims of crime.

Chart B.41: Community's level of worry about being a victim of crime

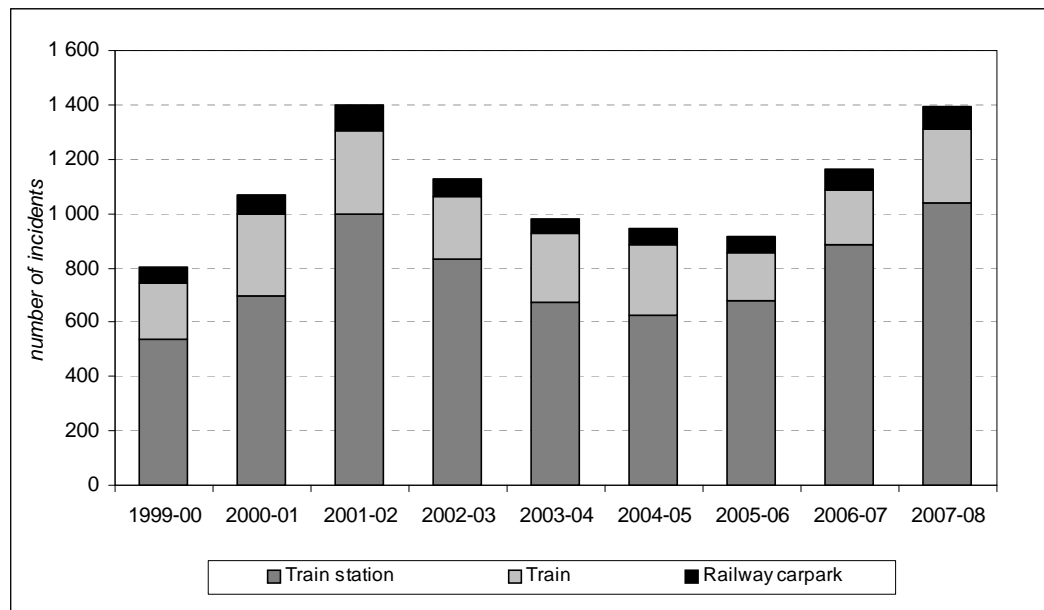


Source: Department of Justice, *Perceptions of Justice Survey June 2003, December 2008*

Reported crime on the Victorian train network

The number of reported incidents of crime against the person (including robbery and assault offences) on the Victorian train network increased to 1 395 reported incidents in 2007-08. The increase in reported crime by 19.8 per cent should be viewed in the context of a surge in patronage across the metropolitan train network of 12.7 per cent over the same period. Other factors that may have contributed to this increase in reported crime include the increased staff at stations resulting in more incidents being reported, and longer operating hours for the train network including at night and on weekends.

Chart B.42: Reported crime against the person on the Victorian train network

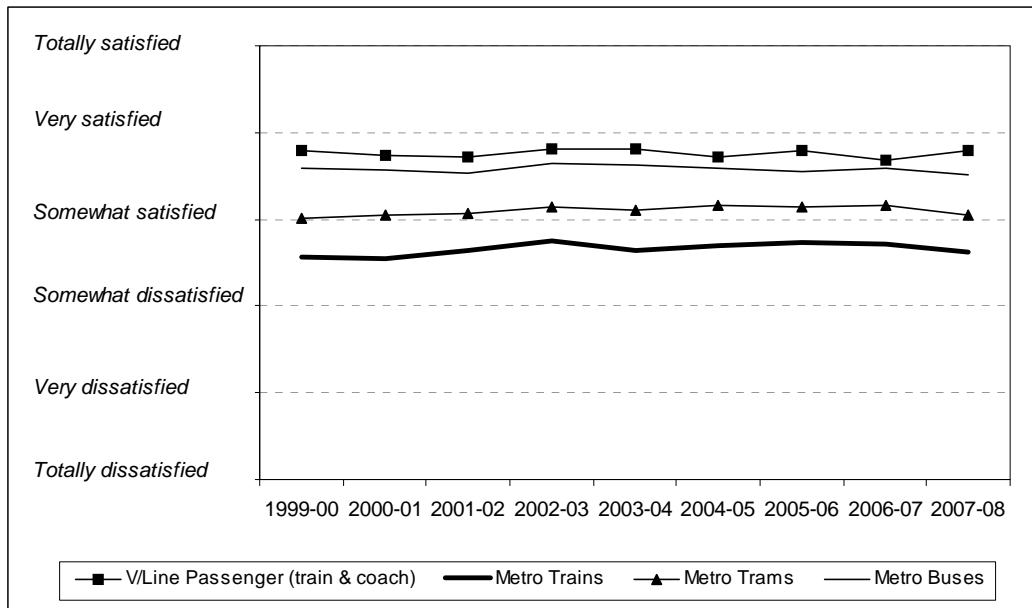


Source: Victoria Police

Satisfaction concerning personal safety on public transport

Perceptions of safety on public transport are measured by the Department of Transport through the *Customer Satisfaction Index*. Satisfaction concerning personal safety on public transport has remained relatively stable since 1999-2000.

Chart B.43: Customer Satisfaction Index – satisfaction concerning personal safety on V/Line passenger trains and coaches, metropolitan trains, trams and buses



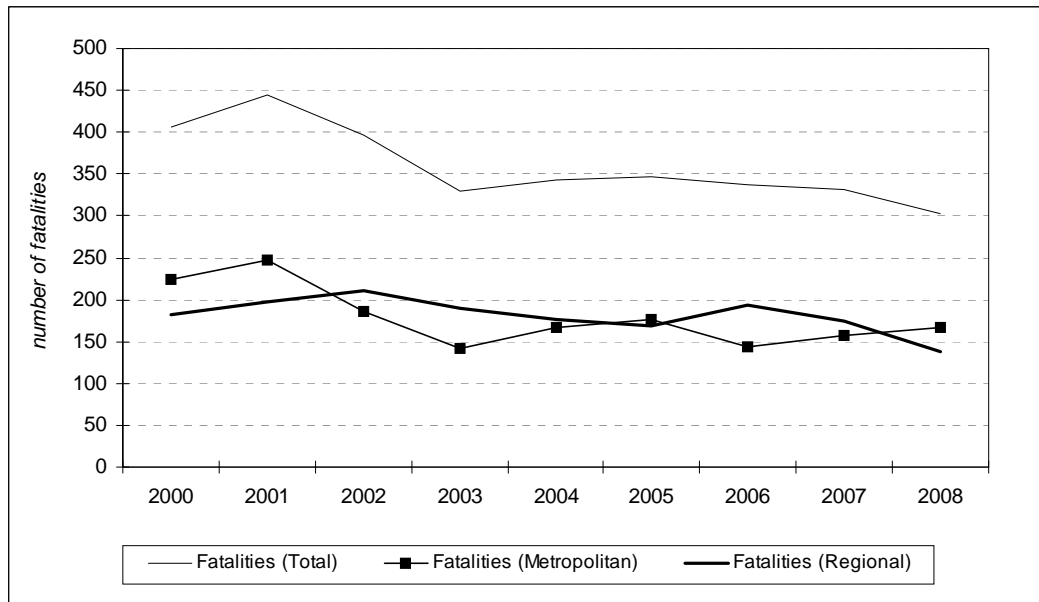
Source: Department of Transport

Annual deaths and serious injuries from road crashes will be reduced by 20 per cent over the period 2002 to 2007

The annual road toll decreased by 25 per cent between 2001 and 2007. In 2001, the road toll was 444, compared with 332 in 2007.

Road safety encompasses not only road deaths, but also the serious injuries sustained in road crashes. The road toll in 2008 was 303, of which 166 deaths were in metropolitan Melbourne and 137 deaths in regional Victoria. The 2008 road toll was the lowest road toll since comprehensive records began in 1951. The 2008 road toll represents a decrease of 10 per cent from the three year average of 338 fatalities recorded between 2005 and 2007 which is the baseline for the 30 per cent reduction target in *arrive alive 2*.

Chart B.44: Fatalities in Victoria from road crashes



Source: VicRoads

A serious injury is defined as an injury which requires a person to be admitted to a hospital for at least one night. In 2007 there were 7 840 serious injuries. Of these, 2 230 occurred in regional Victoria and 5 610 occurred in metropolitan Melbourne. Serious injury data for 2008 are not yet available. Since 2006, serious injury data has been sourced from the Traffic Incident System (TIS). Data prior to 2006 is not directly comparable with data for 2006 and beyond.

The extent and diversity of participation in community, cultural and recreational organisations will increase

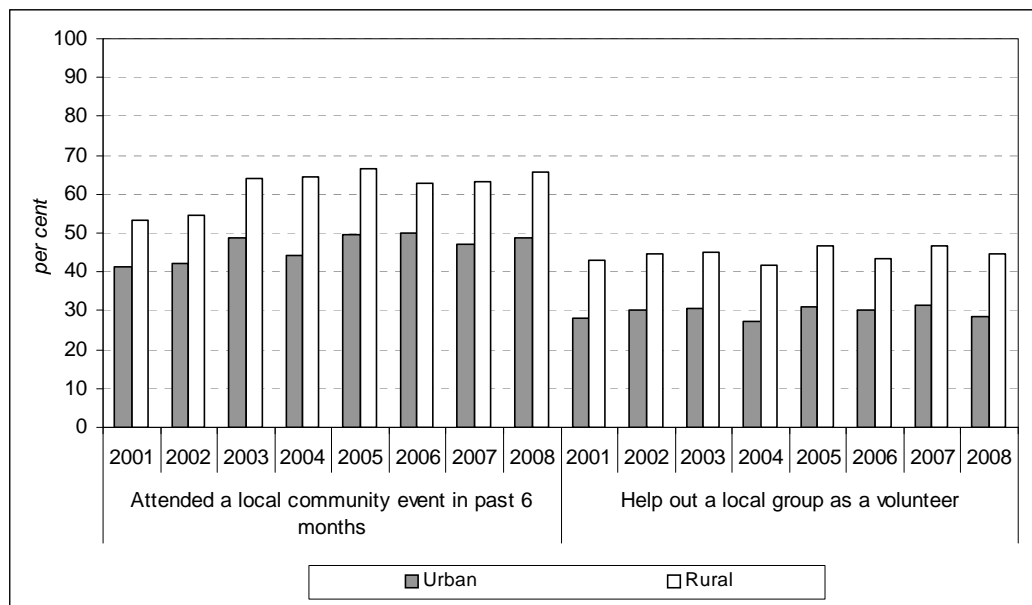
Active, confident and resilient communities show greater participation in community activities. The VPHS collects information on volunteering and participation across a range of community organisations.

Chart B.45 shows the proportion of Victorians who answered ‘definitely’ or ‘sometimes’ to the questions ‘Have you attended a local community event in the past six months?’ and ‘Do you help out a local group as a volunteer?’ Participation in community events and volunteering is substantially higher among rural/regional

respondents. Community participation has risen since the survey started in 2001 and volunteering has increased across all groups since 2001 (see Chart B.45). Since 2002, the survey has also asked respondents about groups and organisations in which they participate. Between 2002 and 2008, participation in:

- professional/academic groups (21.2 to 22.3 per cent) and sporting groups (28.9 to 26.2 per cent) has remained relatively constant; and
- schools (15.1 per cent to 11.3 per cent), church groups (18.7 per cent to 16.4 per cent) and community or action groups (25 per cent to 19.1 per cent) has declined.

Chart B.45: Levels of community participation and volunteering in Victoria



Source: Department of Human Services Victorian Population Health Survey

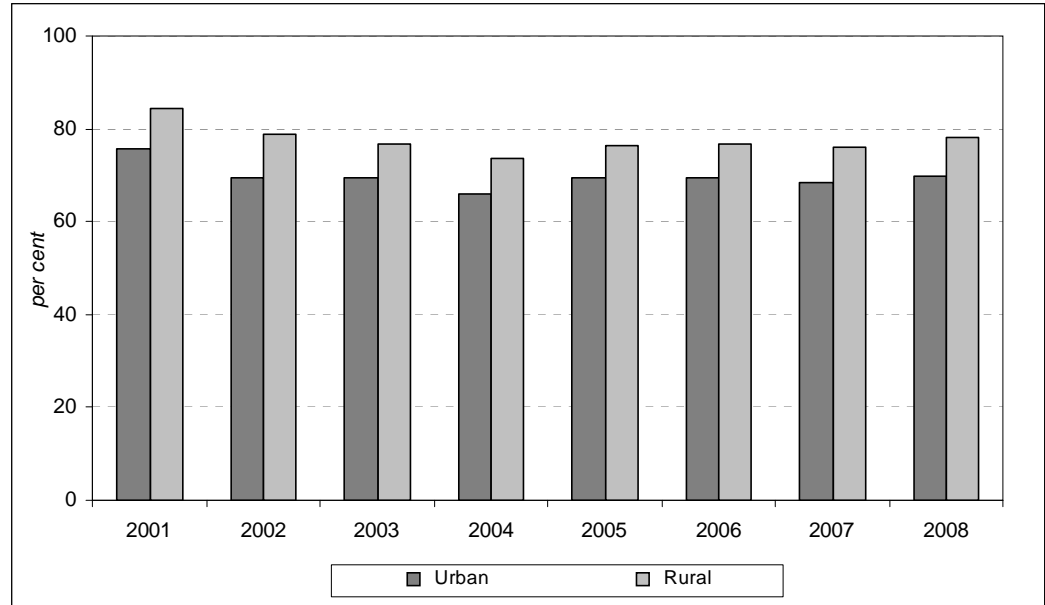
More Victorians will be able to get help from friends, family or neighbours when they need it

Strong social networks are vital to assist those Victorians who feel socially isolated or lack adequate support networks. The VPHS includes the question: ‘Can you get help from friends/family/neighbours when you need it?’ The proportion of respondents answering ‘yes, definitely’ or ‘sometimes’ has remained relatively stable between 2001 and 2008. In 2008:

- 94.4 per cent of respondents reported that they could get help from family;
- 94.4 per cent of respondents reported that they could get help from friends; and
- 71.9 per cent of respondents reported that they could get help from neighbours.

While rural/regional respondents reported similar levels of support from family and friends as urban respondents, they were more likely to answer 'yes, definitely' or 'sometimes' when asked if they could get help from neighbours (see Chart B.46).

Chart B.46: Proportion of Victorians who can get help from neighbours when needed



Source: Department of Human Services Victorian Population Health Survey

CARING COMMUNITIES

A fairer society that reduces disadvantage and respects diversity

Two of Victoria's great strengths are its commitment to giving everyone a fair go, and its rich cultural and social diversity. Opportunities in education, health and housing are not currently distributed evenly throughout the community – and for children and young people lack of opportunity in any of these areas can have serious repercussions throughout life.

Disadvantage in health, education and housing among communities will be reduced

Progress towards this goal will be seen through improved outcomes for disadvantaged groups and communities in areas such as health, education and housing. Improvement in outcomes for disadvantaged Victorians can be gauged by looking at key risk factors for different groups in our community such as low birth weight, non-completion of year 12 or equivalent, housing stress, and imprisonment rates.

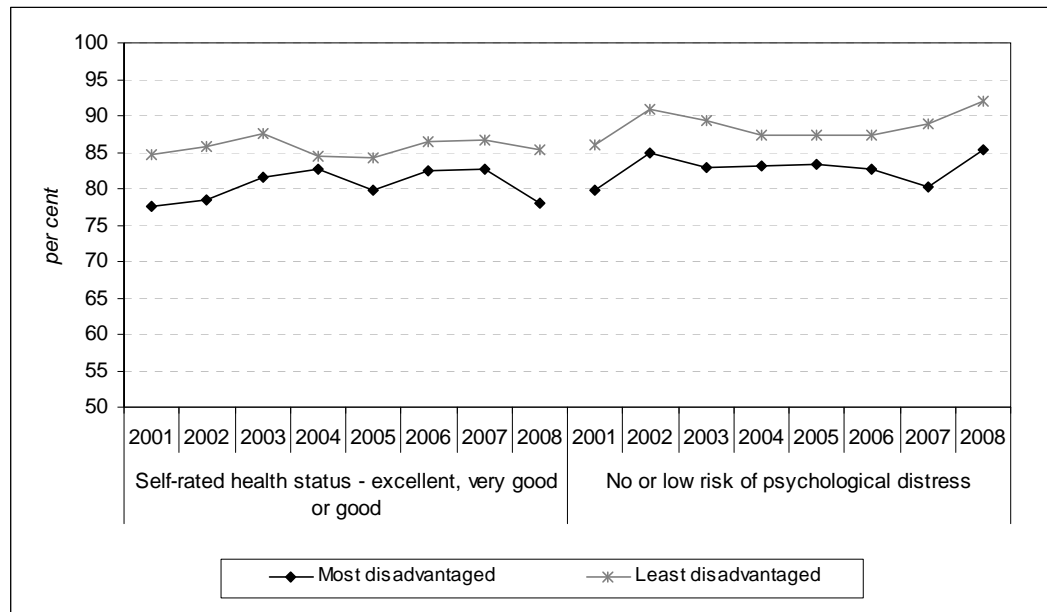
Self-rated health status

The self-rated health status and the level of psychological distress of Victorians vary according to socio-economic disadvantage. The ABS defines areas of high socio-economic status as locations where the population is the least disadvantaged. Conversely, populations which are most disadvantaged are defined as having low socio-economic status. According to the Victorian Population and Health Survey, over the period 2001 to 2008, a higher percentage of Victorians living in high socio-economic status areas reported their health status as 'excellent', 'very good' or 'good' compared to Victorians living in areas of low socio-economic status (see Chart B.47).

Psychological distress

Similarly, a higher proportion of Victorians living in high socio-economic status areas report their level of psychological distress (Kessler 10) as 'no or low risk' rather than 'middle' or 'high risk' compared to low socio-economic status areas. However the gap between the two groups decreased between 2007 and 2008 (see Chart B.47).

Chart B.47: Self-rated health status and psychological distress (Kessler 10) scores by socio economic status

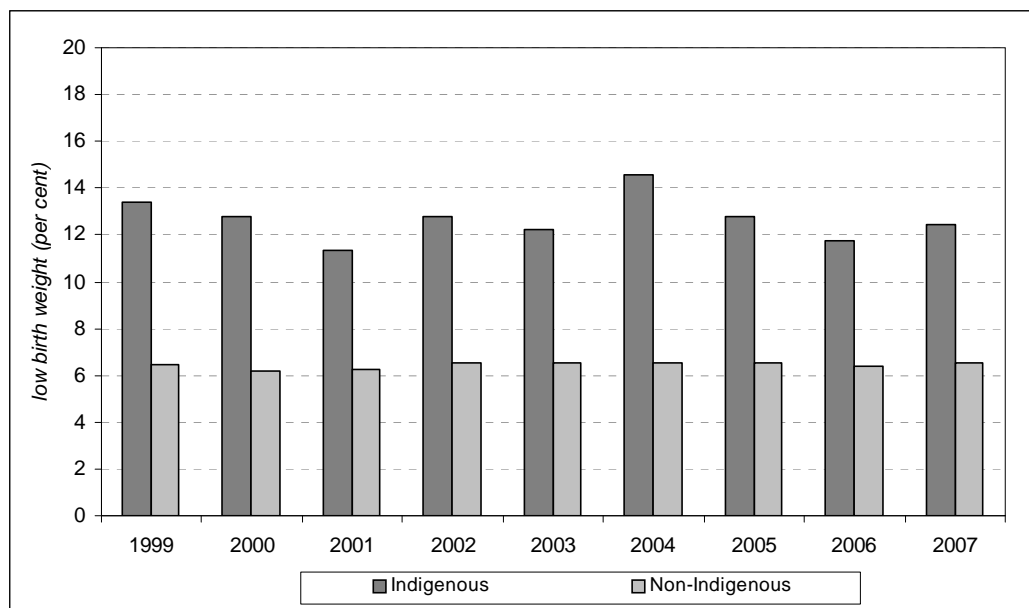


Source: Department of Human Services Victorian Population Health Survey and Australian Bureau of Statistics (Cat. No. 2033.2.30.001)

Birth weight

Low birth weight (less than 2 500g) is an important indicator of health and wellbeing in both infancy and later life. It is a risk factor not only for infant mortality and morbidity, but also for adult development of cardiac disease, diabetes and kidney failure. The Department of Human Services records the number of low birth weight babies born in Victoria. The proportion of low birth weight babies born to non-Indigenous mothers has varied little since 1999, and was 6.5 per cent in 2007. Because of the small number of Indigenous mothers, the proportion of low birth weight babies varies from year to year but is on average approximately twice the rate to non-Indigenous mothers. It was 12.5 per cent in 2007.

Chart B.48: Percentage of babies with low birth weight, 1999-2007 (<2 500 grams)



Source: Department of Human Services, Perinatal Data Collection Unit

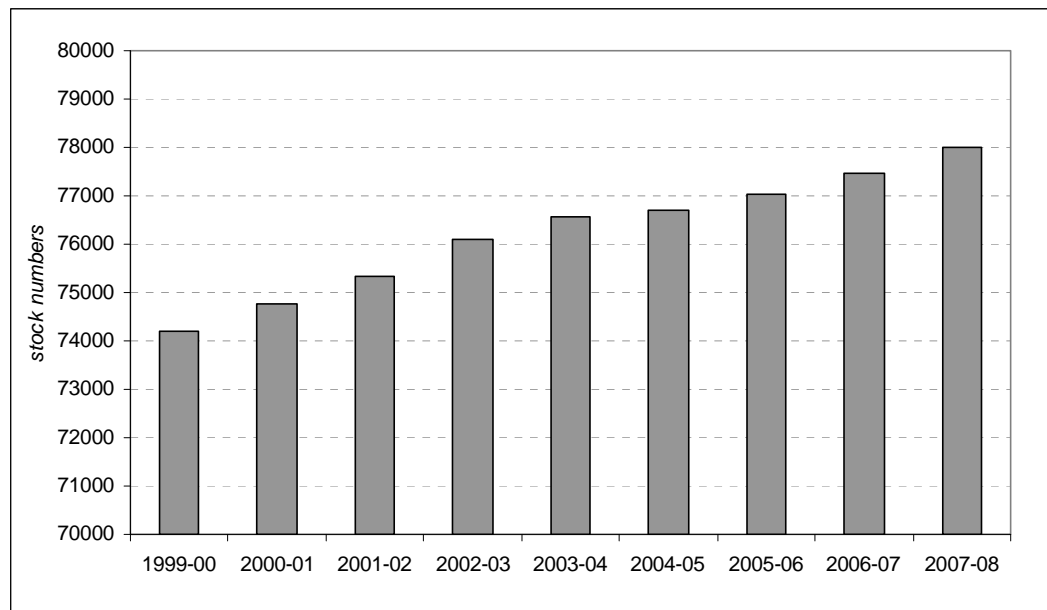
Housing affordability

The biannual ABS Survey of Income and Housing defines low income households that spend 30 per cent or more of their gross household income on housing costs as experiencing housing stress. The proportion of households experiencing housing stress was 7.3 per cent in 2005-06. Statistics for 2007-08 will be released in late 2009.

Social housing

The provision of affordable social housing plays an important role in the reduction of housing stress. Increasing the total number of social housing properties enables a greater number of people to live in affordable housing. This is measured by the total number of social housing stock provided for low income Victorians. Chart B.49 shows that social housing stock numbers have been steadily rising since 1999.

Chart B.49: Total social housing stock numbers

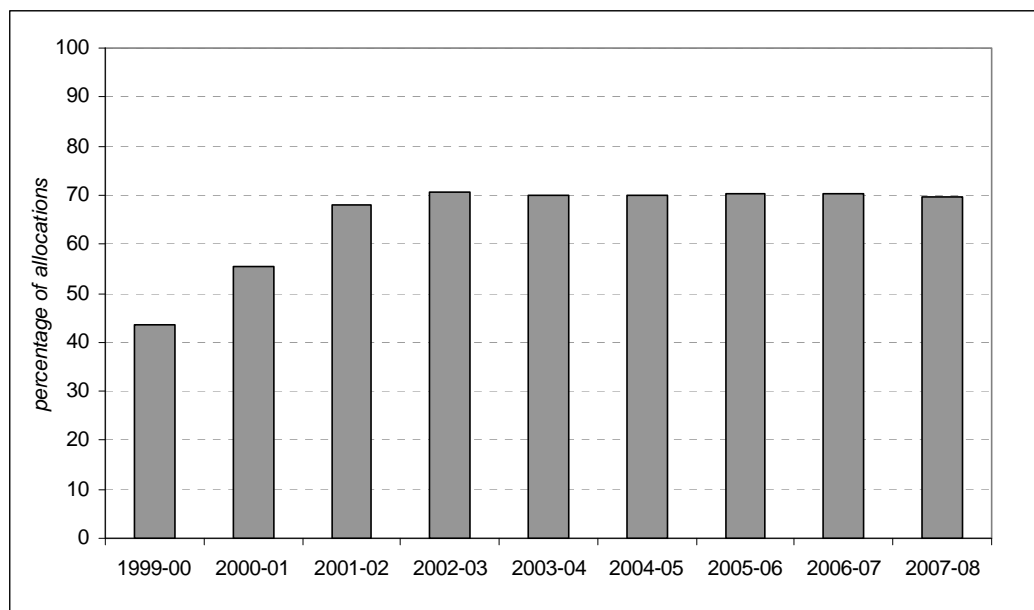


Source: Department of Human Services, *Summary of Housing Assistance 2007-08*

Housing allocations

With large numbers of Victorians trying to access public housing, it is necessary to identify people that are most disadvantaged and target allocations towards this group. This is done via a segmented waiting list that prioritises applicants in greatest need first. The Chart B.50 shows that the proportion of allocations to people in greatest need has reached around 70 per cent in 2002-03 and has since remained broadly stable since 2002-03.

Chart B.50: Proportion of public housing allocations to clients in greatest need^(a)



Source: Department of Human Services, Summary of Housing Assistance 2007-08

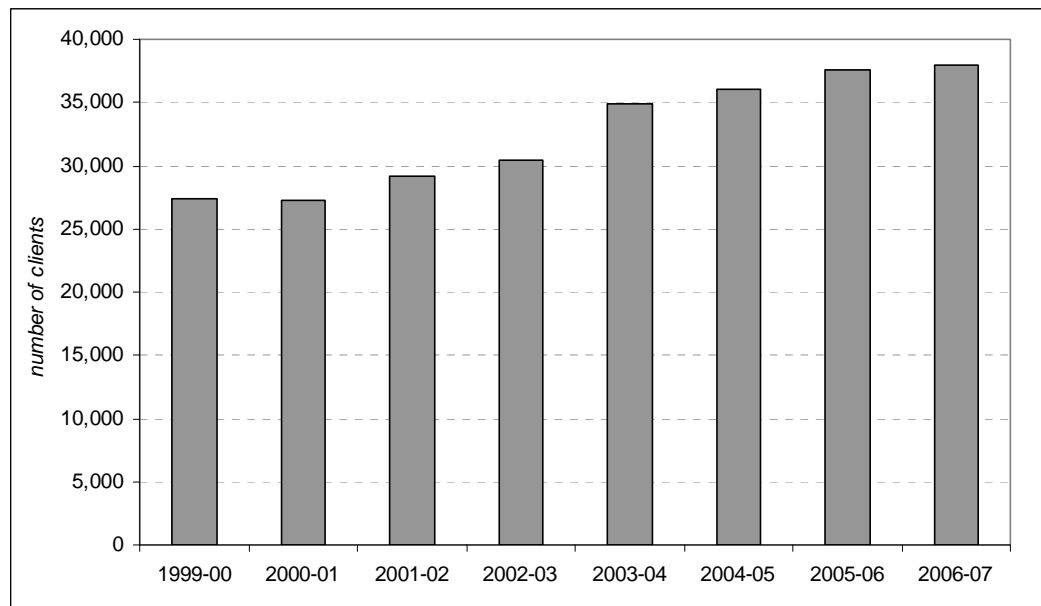
Note:

(a) The Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement defines greatest need as low income households that at the time of allocation were subject to one or more of the following circumstances: they were homeless, their life or safety was at risk in their accommodation, their health condition was aggravated by their housing, their housing was inappropriate to their needs and/or they had very high rental housing cost.

People who are homeless

People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are among the most disadvantaged in Victoria. Availability of services to this group is necessary in reducing disadvantage and increasing opportunity. Provision of these services has been historically provided through the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), which from 1 January 2009 has been incorporated into the National Affordable Housing Agreement. This measure is the total number of clients who have been assisted by homelessness support services (formerly known as SAAP services). Chart B.51 shows that the number of clients assisted with homelessness support has increased from 1999 to 2006-07.

Chart B.51: Number of clients assisted with homelessness support^(a)



Source: Department of Human Services, *Summary of Housing Assistance 2006-07*

Note:

(a) The National Data Collection Agency has discontinued reporting on the measure 'support periods of more than one day' (Chart B.48 in the 2008-09 Budget Papers). An appropriate substitute is to use the total number of homeless clients assisted with homelessness support as per the above graph.

The number of early school leavers who are unemployed after six months will decline

Early school leavers, particularly those from disadvantaged groups, are a difficult cohort to measure. The most suitable data currently available is collected through an annual telephone survey of school leavers known as *On Track*, conducted by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Early school leavers are defined as students who have left the school system prior to completing year 12.

The number of early leavers included in the sample varies from year to year. The sample of early school leavers includes only those young people who could be identified, contacted and consented to participate in the study. Therefore, while the results provide an indication of the proportion of young people who reported that they were not in any form of education or training and were looking for work at the time of the survey, it should be treated with care.

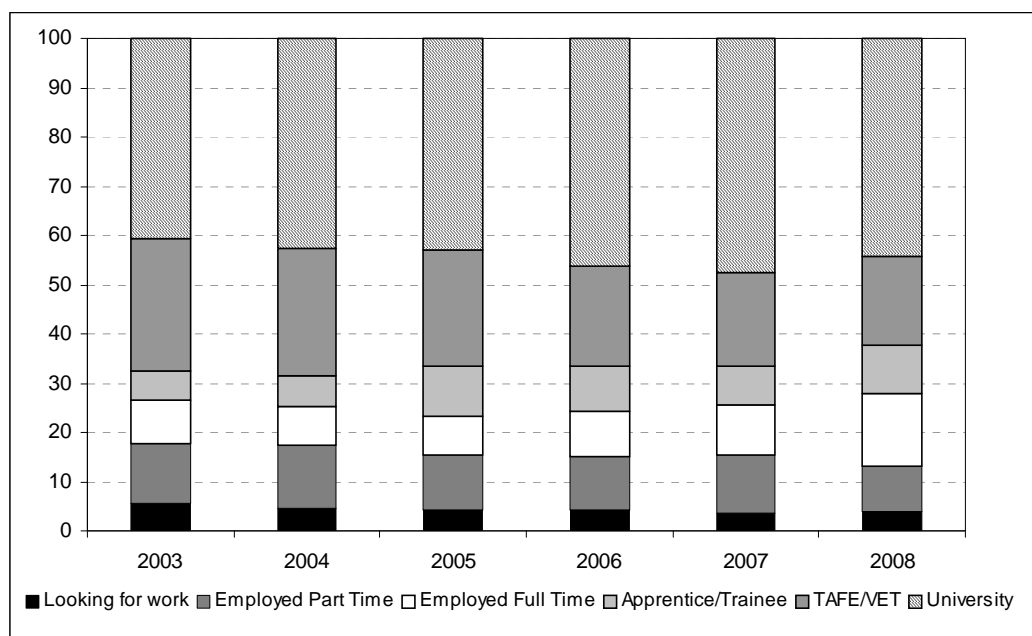
Table B.5: Number and proportion of early school leavers who were looking for work at the time of survey

	<i>Number of early school leavers who were looking for work</i>	<i>Proportion of early school leavers who were looking for work (per cent)</i>
2003	590	18.5
2004	696	15.0
2005	683	14.3
2006	593	14.6
2007	683	15.3
2008	638	14.0

Source: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, *On Track Early Leaver Surveys 2003-08*.

Research confirms the value that a year 12 or equivalent qualification has in providing young people with a good foundation to engage in work or further education. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development *On Track Survey* provides a snapshot of destinations of school leavers in Victoria.

Chart B.52: Year 12 completer destinations 2003-08^{(a)(b)}



Source: *On Track Year 12 Completer Surveys 2003-08*, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Notes:

- (a) Year 12 or equivalent completion is defined as completion of the Victorian Certificate of Education, the International Baccalaureate or the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning Intermediate or above.
- (b) Students who deferred a tertiary offer have been attributed to their destination at the time of the interview.

The prison population will not grow as quickly and reoffending will be reduced

When measuring disadvantage, improved outcomes of the Victorian criminal justice system such as reduced imprisonment and recidivism rates are important, as people from disadvantaged backgrounds are over-represented. Previously, Victoria's prison rates were presented in calendar years; however, since 2005-06 Corrections Victoria has preferred to report daily average prisoner numbers over a full financial year wherever possible.

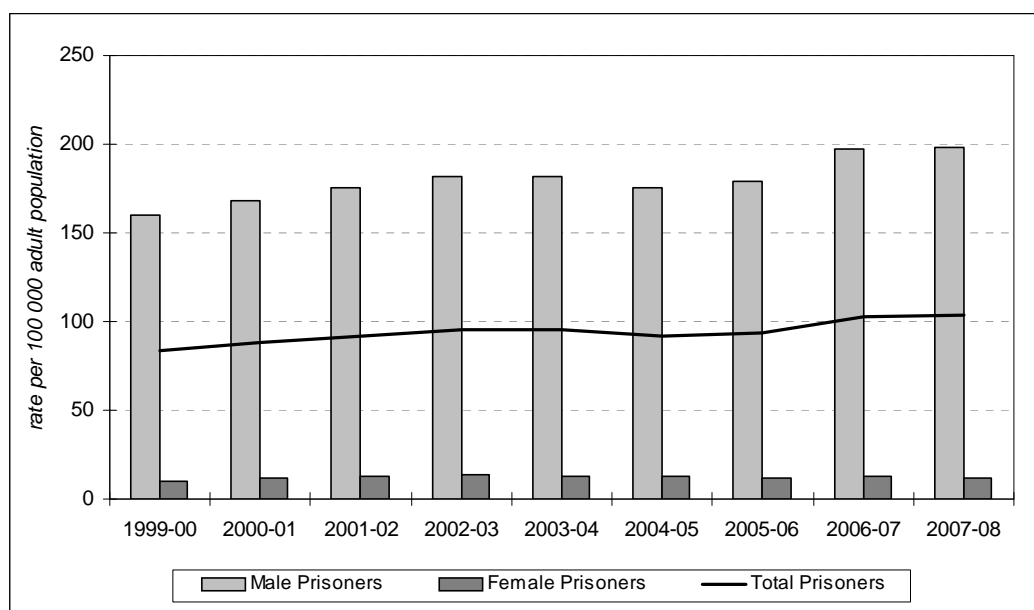
Victoria's imprisonment rate increased from 92 prisoners per 100 000 adult population in 2004-05, to 93.7 in 2005-06, 101.6 in 2006-07, and 103.2 in 2007-08. The growth in the prison population can be attributed to a number of factors such as population growth, changes in sentencing practices for serious offences, and a tougher breach policy within community corrections.

Imprisonment rate by gender

The average daily prison population for 2007-08 was 4 177. Relative to 2006-07, the male prisoner population has increased, while the female prisoner population has decreased.

In 2007-08, males continue to make up the overwhelming majority, with an imprisonment rate of 198.5 per 100 000 adult male population compared to the female rate of 11.8 per 100 000 adult female population (see Chart B.53).

Chart B.53: Imprisonment rate by gender^(a)



Source: Report on Government Services (Productivity Commission)

Note:

(a) The annual daily average best reflects prisoner numbers over the entire reporting period, and because the 30 June figures do not always accord with the annual daily average, imprisonment rates (wherever possible) are calculated using annual daily average data.

Imprisonment of disadvantaged people

A point-in-time ‘snapshot’ of prisoners from the Corrections Victoria prisoner database is used to measure the proportion of prisoners with two or more characteristics of disadvantage.

At 29 January 2009, 50.4 per cent of prisoners had two or more characteristics of serious disadvantage. The characteristics of ‘serious disadvantage’ are where the prisoner is (or was prior to admission): unemployed; homeless; their ethnicity is Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both; drug/alcohol status is abuse/offend/support; they have an intellectual disability or are flagged as having had a psychiatric admission. This percentage is down from the January 2008 figure of 54 per cent and the January 2007 figure of approximately 52 per cent.

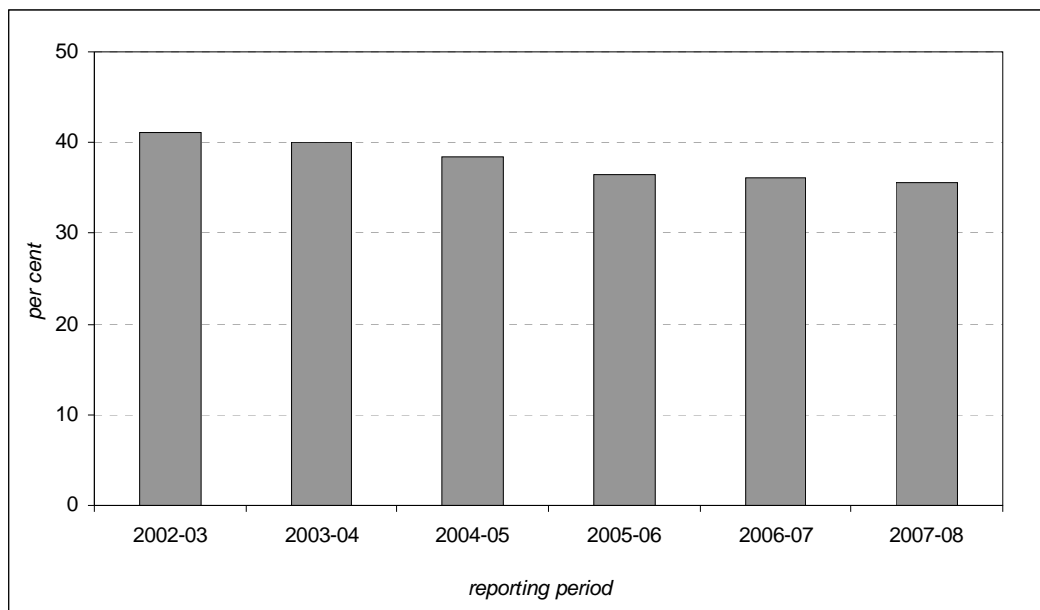
Imprisonment of Indigenous people

The Indigenous imprisonment rate remains significantly higher than the overall Victorian imprisonment rate, with Indigenous persons being 13 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-Indigenous persons. As with the non-Indigenous prisoner population, males comprise the vast majority of Indigenous prisoners, and the gender proportional difference between male and female rates of imprisonment is broadly similar for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians.

Reoffending

The Department of Justice records the rate at which Victorian prisoners return to prison, as an indicator of the rate of recidivism. The proportion of Victorian prisoners who return to prison within two years of being released has been decreasing since 2002-03 (see Chart B.54). As this measures the period for two years from prisoner discharge, the most recent data are for prisoners discharged from prison in 2005-06 who had returned to prison by the end of 2007-08.

Chart B.54: Percentage of Victorian prisoners released who returned to prison under sentence within two years^(a)



Source: Report on Government Services 2008 (Justice Preface)

Note:

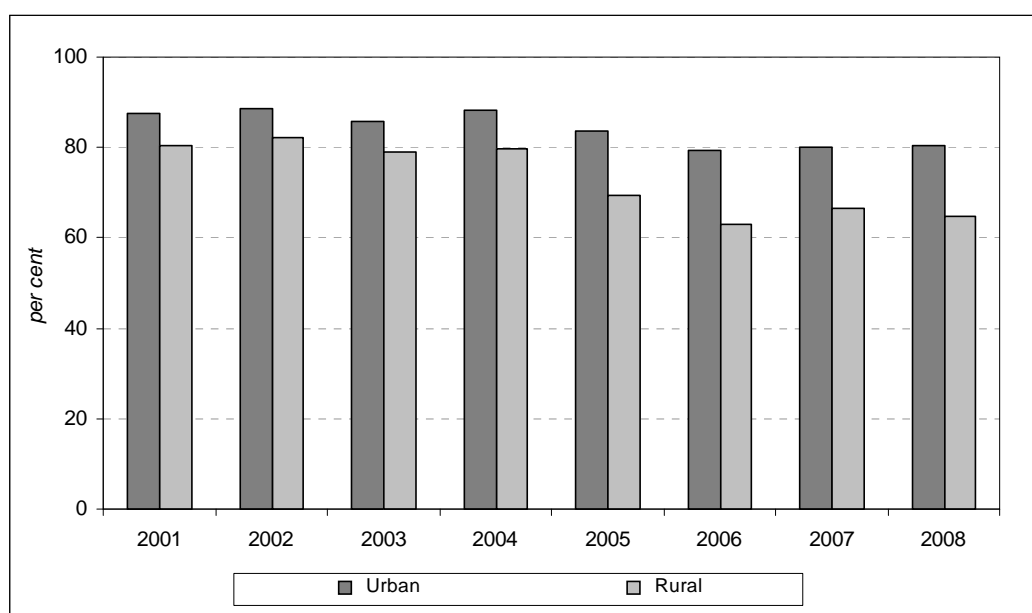
(a) Figure relates to all sentenced prisoner discharges, including those discharged to parole.

The appreciation of diverse neighbourhoods and communities will increase

The VPHS collects information on the proportion of Victorians who think that multiculturalism makes life in their area better, and the proportion that enjoy living among people of different lifestyles.

More than 75 per cent of respondents think that multiculturalism makes life in their area better. Chart B.55 shows that urban areas consistently report a more positive response to this question than rural/regional areas. However a higher percentage of rural/regional respondents, (18.5 per cent compared to 4 per cent of urban respondents) selected the 'not applicable' option indicating that they did not believe the question to be relevant to the area they were living in. Current trends show a small decline, in respondents who think that multiculturalism makes life better in their area, from 79.9 per cent in 2005 to 76.3 per cent in 2008.

Chart B.55: Proportion of Victorians who think multiculturalism makes life better^(a)



Source: Department of Human Services Victorian Population Health Survey

Note:

(a) An extra category was added from 2005 onwards to enable respondents to answer 'not applicable' if they felt that was the more appropriate response, for example, that multiculturalism was not a feature of their area.

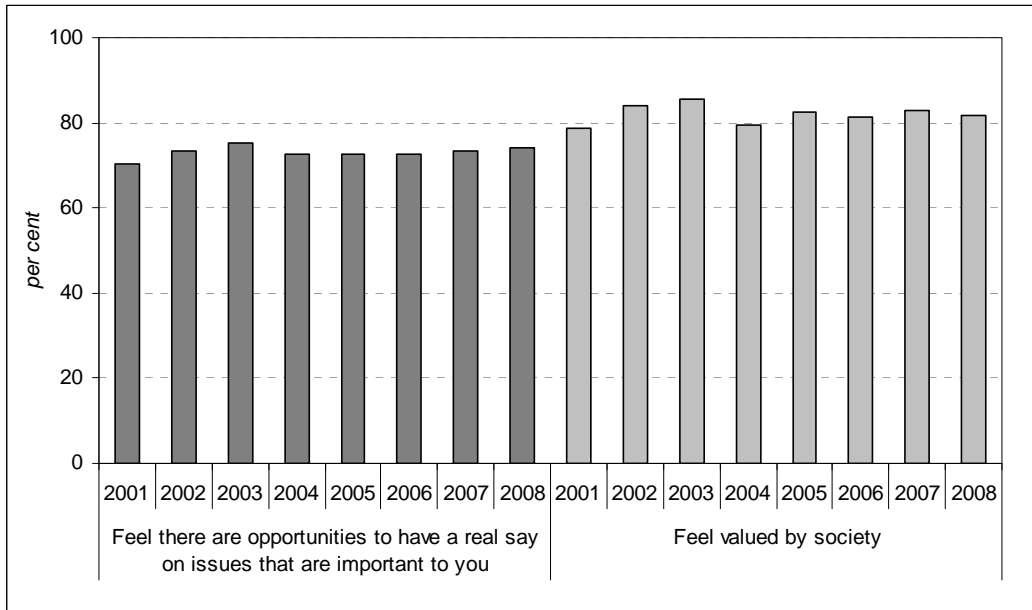
Open and accountable Government is one of the fundamental commitments the Government made to the people of Victoria. It is the right of all Victorians.

More Victorians from all backgrounds will have the opportunity to have a say on issues that matter to them

Greater involvement in decision making signifies growing democratic participation. The VPHS records the proportion of Victorians who feel that there are opportunities to have a real say on issues that are important to them. The proportion who feel they have a say remained fairly constant between 2001 and 2007 but increased slightly to 74.2 per cent in 2008 (see Chart B.56). Females responded positively more often between 2001 and 2007. In 2008, the gap between the sexes decreased with 73.1 per cent of males and 75.1 per cent of females responding positively. Rural/regional respondents have slightly higher levels at 76.6 per cent than urban respondents at 73.3 per cent.

The VPHS also collects information about the proportion of Victorians who feel valued by society. The proportion who feel valued by society has remained stable since 2001 (see Chart B.56) and was 81.7 per cent in 2008. Similar levels of males and females report feeling valued by society at 81.6 per cent and 81.9 per cent respectively. Rural/regional respondents also had similar levels to urban respondents (82.2 per cent versus 81.6 per cent respectively).

Chart B.56: Proportion of Victorians that feel there are opportunities to have a real say on issues that are important to them and feel valued by society



Source: Department of Human Services Victorian Population Health Survey

There will be regular reports on progress in improving the quality of life for all Victorians and their communities

One important demonstration of accountability is the continued publication of regular reports on progress against the ten goals outlined in *Growing Victoria Together*. This is the seventh report to Victorians and is in line with this commitment.

Victoria's ability to attract people, investment and new jobs, to provide better services, and to protect the environment, depends on a strong and secure financial base.

An annual budget surplus of at least \$100 million

Continued sound financial management can be illustrated by the budget bottom line. The 2009-10 estimated budget surplus is \$165 million.

Victoria's triple-A credit rating will be maintained

The State's credit rating provides an independent assessment of the State's financial position against international benchmarks. It is an indicator of the Government's financial management performance.

The State of Victoria is rated by two international rating agencies (Standard & Poor's and Moody's Investors Service). Both rating agencies conduct an annual review of the State's financial performance and outlook, balance sheet positions, liquidity and debt management strategy, and the fiscal outlook and strategy given the State's economic structure and prospects.

Victoria's triple-A local and foreign currency debt ratings were reaffirmed by Standard & Poor's in November 2008 and Moody's Investors Service in January 2009.

Victoria's taxes will remain competitive with the Australian average

The competitiveness of Victoria's tax regime plays an important role in underpinning economic growth and investment. Consistent with the Government's strategic priority of promoting growth across the whole of the State, the Government aims to ensure that Victoria's taxes remain competitive with the Australian average.

The Government's preferred measure of tax competitiveness is state taxation expressed as a share of Gross State Product which relates the level of taxation revenue to economic capacity. In 2007-08, the latest full year for which actual data are available, Victoria's taxation revenue was 4.80 per cent of nominal GSP. This ratio is above the Australian average of 4.69 per cent, and between New South Wales' ratio of 5.16 per cent and Queensland's 4.46 per cent.