



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday, 14 March 2018

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 14 March 2018

The SPEAKER (The Hon. Shelley Elizabeth Hancock) took the chair at 10:00.

The SPEAKER read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to the students and teachers in the gallery from St Vincent's College, Potts Point, who are guests of the member for Sydney. I hope they enjoy the morning. I also welcome Dr Mike Freeland, MP, the Federal member for Macarthur.

[Notices of motions given.]

Bills

LIQUOR AND GAMING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

CASINO CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2018

GAMING MACHINES AMENDMENT (LEASING AND ASSESSMENT) BILL 2018

REGISTERED CLUBS AMENDMENT (ACCOUNTABILITY AND AMALGAMATIONS) BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from Tuesday 13 March 2018.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (10:11): I support the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. These four bills are cognate bills. The four cognate bills introduce a legislative framework to reform the regulation of liquor, gaming and club industries in New South Wales. In his second reading speech Minister Paul Toole noted that the bills make a number of amendments to 16 pieces of legislation and build on the Government's existing measures designed to protect those most impacted by gambling-related harms.

The bills implement recommendations from a review of the registered clubs accountability amalgamation frameworks under the Registered Clubs Act 1976. This includes implementing a co-regulatory approach for a club's accountability with the industry body and streamlining a club's merger and demerger process. I am referring to the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. I will focus on that bill in my speech today. Recent investigations into failures of corporate governance of registered clubs has highlighted the need to strengthen the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority's disciplinary powers to take action against individual club officials.

Under current arrangements the Act only allows the disciplinary action to be taken against the club itself, including monetary penalties and the payment of the investigation costs, both of which must be borne by the club. In one case the authority disqualified the former secretary from holding office as a secretary or director in any club in New South Wales for the maximum three-year period currently available under the Act. However, as the authority does not have the disciplinary powers to take any other action against the individual the club was ordered to pay the costs incurred in the investigation.

This has effectively resulted in penalties being imposed on the club and its members even though the former secretary had acted alone and outside of the club's governance safeguards. As such, this imposes an unfair burden on a club and its members and will mar public confidence in club governance. It could also deter club members from reporting on the misconduct of their club officials for fear of action being taken against the club. This bill will enable the authority to take disciplinary action directly against the club's secretary or director where they have acted alone and outside of the club's control or influence. The authority can impose monetary penalties of up to \$11,000 for an individual, as well as disqualify them from holding office as a secretary or director for a period of time the authority thinks fit.

The changes proposed in this bill will equalise the disciplinary powers under the Registered Clubs Act with those provided under the Liquor Act 2007. That Act already allows monetary penalties to be imposed on individuals as well as disqualify club officials for a period of time that the authority thinks fit. This complements the changes proposed in the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, which is currently before the House and seeks to standardise regulatory powers across liquor and gaming legislation to promote consistency for the industry. In particular, the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 will enable the authority to declare that a person is ineligible to stand for election, hold a position of club secretary or be a member of the governing body of a club for longer than the current statutory three-year limit. These changes will act as a greater deterrent to unlawful conduct by individual club officials and better protect the interests of the club members and the community.

The Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill will amend the Registered Clubs Act 1976, and the Registered Clubs Regulation 2015, to strengthen the Act so disciplinary action can be taken directly against a club director or secretary to ensure that clubs and their members are not inappropriately punished for the unlawful actions of individuals acting outside of the club's control. The amendments will implement a co-regulatory approach for low-risk accountability offences with the clubs industry body by moving these provisions from the Act and regulation into a code of practice, while preserving the power of the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority to intervene where appropriate. The amendments create a new offence for breach of the code of practice, with a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units. The amendments also streamline the process for clubs to merge and de-merge by enabling clubs to look beyond their local areas to find suitable merger partners and adjusting the existing cap on number of mergers permitted. The amendments will improve transparency on unsolicited merger offers and merger risks as well as clarify treatment of major assets of dissolved clubs to strengthen safeguards for members. The Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill makes a number of other consequential amendments.

The Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 enhances the enforcement powers under the Betting and Racing Act 1998, the Public Lotteries Act 1996 and the Totalizator Act 1997 and provides greater consistency with the way liquor and gaming legislation is enforced under part 4 of the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007. The bill standardises and increases penalties for certain offences committed by corporations and other persons under the Betting and Racing Act 1998, the Casino Control Act 1992, the Gaming Machines Act 2001, the Liquor Act 2007, the Public Lotteries Act 1996 and the Totalizator Act 1997 and makes other minor changes to penalty levels. Further, the bill includes the general counsel of the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority within the definition of "key official" for the purposes of the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007 and updates and provides greater flexibility in relation to employment restrictions applying to former key officials.

The amendments also strengthen provisions prohibiting the offering of inducements to gamble and certain forms of gambling advertisements and totalisator advertisements under the Betting and Racing Act 1998 and Totalizator Act 1997. The amendments provide for first instance review by the casino operator of voluntary exclusion orders and exclusion orders made by the operator in relation to problem gamblers instead of by the authority under the Casino Control Act 1992 and to omit an unnecessary requirement for the casino operator to notify the authority in writing of the making of an exclusion order. The bill also removes unnecessary regulatory provisions from the Gambling (Two-up) Act 1998, Gaming Machines Act 2001 and Liquor Act 2007.

The amendments enable approved gaming machines to be destroyed with the authorisation of the authority under the Gaming Machines Act 2001. The amendments also decrease the maximum penalty that may be imposed for an offence against the regulations under the Gaming Machines Act 2001 and Liquor Act 2007 from 100 penalty units to 50 penalty units and to transfer from the Gaming Machines Regulation 2010 and Liquor Regulation 2008 to their respective parent Acts certain regulations with increased penalties and to make other provisions with respect to the imposition of penalties and sanctions. The amendments that have been made to these Acts certainly streamline the provisions and help those areas that are most at risk, and also helps country pubs and clubs to lease machines. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (10:21): I support the Government's Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018. This bill amends the Casino Control Act 1992 to introduce a modernised and efficient approach to casino regulation including: removing redundant and outdated legislative and administrative requirements and introducing a risk-based, intelligence-led regulatory approach defined by outcome-focused internal controls; a new offence against a casino operator for breaching an internal control; and streamlining the approach to special employee licensing. While this bill also reduces red tape for the casino operators it does not diminish the quality of the regulatory framework established by the Act.

Since the Casino Control Act was last reviewed in 2007 the commercial and regulatory landscape facing New South Wales casino operators has changed significantly. There has been a boom in the international casino

tourism market in which Australian operators must compete. Interstate, existing casinos are being significantly expanded and new integrated casino resorts are in the pipeline, such as Queens Wharf in Brisbane. Regulators in Australia and overseas have been moving away from prescriptive and interventionist regulation to an outcomes-based approach that balances regulatory risk with the level of oversight and penalties for breaches of the law.

Approval of the Crown Sydney Hotel Resort's restricted gaming facility at Barangaroo in 2013—Crown Sydney—presented an opportunity for the New South Wales Government to undertake a review and realignment of the regulatory environment with an aim of modernising the regulatory approach. This bill introduces several changes to make casino regulation and casino operations more efficient and appropriately risk-based. The changes provide for greater flexibility for meeting requirements by facilitating more use of internal controls instead of putting everything in the law. Internal controls can be quickly updated to reflect changes in community standards, industry circumstances, compliance and enforcement practices or the level of risk presented by a given practice.

The special employee licensing scheme under the Casino Control Act is a key element in protecting the probity and integrity of casino gaming and meeting the Act's objective to ensure that a casino remains free from criminal influence or exploitation. The casino special employee licensing scheme is being updated and made more efficient by: allowing the automatic granting of a special employee licence to a security guard who has already passed probity and been issued a licence under the Security Industry Act; requiring the authority to advise the Commissioner of Police if it takes disciplinary action against a casino special employee licensed under the Security Industry Act; extending the licence period from five years to seven years; making it easier for licensed employees to transfer their employment between The Star and Crown Sydney; and setting the special employee identification requirements using internal controls approved by the authority.

In regard to the changes to gaming area layouts and reduction of red tape, a significant red tape reduction will be achieved by removing the requirement for a casino operator to submit plans, diagrams and specifications to the authority for approval every time it wants to change the layout of its gaming areas. Instead, changes to gaming areas can be addressed using internal controls, which is common sense. Currently the operator has to seek authority approval for every piece of equipment it uses for monitoring and surveillance. Under changes proposed in this bill, the operator will only have to ensure that the equipment it uses meets the standards set by the authority. Casino operators will be able to seek efficiencies in the way they operate their monitoring equipment because this bill makes it possible for operators to have closed-circuit television [CCTV] monitoring and information storage located offsite, subject to appropriate internal controls and regulatory access.

This bill removes red tape regarding the conduct of gaming at casinos. For example, information about minimum bet limits displayed electronically on a table game will not have to be duplicated on a sign. Player funds with an operator's related properties in Australia will be available for use at The Star or Crown Sydney, removing the current need for the player to withdraw and re-deposit them. To reduce administration relating to self-exclusion schemes, the licensees will no longer be required to send their list of self-excluded patrons to the authority every day. Instead, the list can be viewed by Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority inspectors on request. With regard to gaming equipment controlled contracts and red tape reduction, finally, significant red tape will be eliminated in relation to purchasing gaming-related equipment by allowing for low-risk contracts to be exempted from the requirements for controlled contracts.

In conclusion, this Government is ensuring the regulatory environment is responsive to changing circumstances. The proposed changes in the bill provide a sensible and balanced approach to casino regulation. The changes will see a closer alignment between regulatory risk and the level of regulatory oversight, while reducing the regulatory burden for low-risk matters, allowing the regulator to focus on where more serious problems may arise. However, handing more responsibility to the casino operator will be accompanied by a new offence with graduated penalties for failing to comply with an internal control. The amendments to the Casino Control Act will deliver better casino regulation to the licensees and the people of New South Wales. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (10:29): I speak in support of the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills. I will comment mainly on the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. The bill was introduced by the Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing, who is present and following the passage of these bills through the House. The liquor, gaming and clubs industries are somewhat difficult areas that require a balancing act. The bills before the House are a credit to the Minister and his great ability to deal with the various stakeholders that work in this environment. Dealing with stakeholders takes a lot of discussion and requires a lot of listening. The Minister, with his great experience, is not only a member for his local area but also a previous mayor—and I believe even a schoolteacher. He is certainly well entrenched in his local community. The Minister understands what communication and stakeholder engagement is all about, including at the Blayney soccer club.

The bill amends the Registered Clubs Act 1976 to introduce a co-regulatory approach to the oversight of accountability requirements for the club industry. The proposed co-regulatory approach is part of the Government's commitment to ensuring that regulatory burdens reflect regulatory risks. That is the balancing act that I referred to in my opening comments. Under this model, the industry will take on co-regulatory responsibilities for some low-risk accountability activities. This enables a more targeted model for Liquor & Gaming NSW to regulate the accountability of clubs in that, while it will retain step-in powers to intervene and take over any investigation or complaint resolution when required, it will now be able to focus its attention on high-risk accountability matters.

The bill transfers some low-risk accountability requirements from the Registered Clubs Act into the Registered Clubs Accountability Code. However, the current accountability benchmarks will continue to be required of clubs. These changes include updates to disclosure requirements, restrictions on entering into contracts, remuneration of directors and executives, and the reporting on financial statements. The code will be prescribed in the Registered Clubs Regulation and, therefore, any accountability requirements imposed on clubs can only be changed by the Government. ClubsNSW already performs regulatory-type functions for its member clubs including developing a code of practice and enforcing it through its arms-length review panel, the Code Authority. The Code Authority currently mediates and resolves complaints relating to its member clubs, which is about 87 per cent of all clubs in New South Wales, some of which are in my electorate of Seven Hills.

My electorate is home to the Seven Hills RSL club—a fantastic organisation run by a great group of people. I was recently there with the Minister for Veterans Affairs and we observed the club and its facilities. It is constructing a historical display of items, including memorabilia, that have been collected and donated by its members. Now it is liaising with the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and organising for some displays to be transferred between both organisations, making great use of the club facility. That is an example of some of the great work being done by clubs.

As many members have said during this debate, clubs are at the heart of any community. This is true of the electorate of Seven Hills, with the Toongabbie sports club and the Northmead sports club coming together to provide great facilities for the heart of the community. The member of Prospect yesterday commented that his diverse electorate is splintered in some respects by not having a clear centre of the community, and that his clubs provide that heart of the community. I can say the same for the Seven Hills electorate, where it is obvious, particularly on a weekend or a Friday or Saturday night, that all kinds of community members come together—the young, the old and the in-between—to make use of the great facilities of clubs. When the catchphrase "the heart of the community" is used, there is no doubt that that truly represents what clubs provide.

Today we are focusing on accountability and risk, and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill is aimed at getting the balance right. The proposed co-regulatory model gives the Code Authority new responsibilities to monitor and resolve accountability requirements under the new Registered Clubs Accountability Code for ClubsNSW member clubs. The benefits of this model for the clubs and their members will be an improved dispute resolution process as it leverages the existing industry complaint resolution mechanism. Club members are familiar with the Code Authority, which will be well placed to intervene early to prevent breaches of accountability requirements.

The proposed co-regulatory model will also have the ability to bring together clubs, club officers and club members to resolve complaints more quickly. For example, under the proposed changes, a club member may lodge a complaint with the Code Authority about a club board not disclosing relevant conflicts of interest or entering into a contract with a business in which they have pecuniary interests. The complaint would be explored by the Code Authority, and ideally resolved through mediation or through directions given by the Code Authority based on its existing powers under the ClubsNSW constitution. This means that clubs, individual club officials and club members can identify and resolve potential breaches of accountability requirements before they escalate to become high-risk breaches requiring intervention by the regulator. That may seem to be common sense, and that is because it is. The legislation reduces the burden on organisations by making their processes and procedures simpler and fairer, and the resolution of complaints quicker. It also provides for a consistent approach across the industry.

The proposed co-regulatory approach will not impact the oversight of non-ClubsNSW clubs, with Liquor & Gaming NSW continuing to be responsible for non-ClubsNSW clubs. ClubsNSW and the Code Authority will continue to only assist its member clubs in resolving complaints. While ClubsNSW will assist its own members, under the proposed co-regulatory approach Liquor & Gaming NSW will still maintain overall oversight of the accountability requirements and will retain its capacity to intervene where required. In particular, high-risk accountability breaches will continue to be investigated and prosecuted by the regulator. This will provide the community with that confidence and reassurance that regulation and oversight remains strong.

The changes proposed in this bill create a more targeted model to regulate club accountability by increasing the regulator's capacity to focus on and more effectively resolve high-risk accountability breaches. During the past two financial years, the regulator investigated nearly 150 complaints affecting 122 clubs. More than 99 per cent of these complaints were resolved through compliance action notices and/or regulatory education. Only less than 1 per cent were sufficiently serious to warrant prosecution.

Under the changes proposed in the bill, the regulator can now focus more time on high-risk accountability breaches, allowing them to be resolved faster. As well, the changes will enable more proactive investigations of potential high-risk breaches. The overall effect of these amendments in the bill is to provide a more efficient resolution of complaints without losing safeguards that protect members and their clubs. This is important legislation, on which I have commended the Minister. I commend the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018 and cognate bills to the House. This is great legislation.

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (10:38): I support the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills. I will address, in particular, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018. This bill updates the way pubs and clubs consult the community when applying for new gaming machine entitlements, and it introduces a gaming machine entitlement leasing scheme to improve the way that pubs and clubs manage their entitlements. Pubs and clubs are very much the lifeblood of New South Wales communities, offering so much more than the beloved chicken schnitty. Clubs also provide regional areas with crucial jobs and essential social benefits for locals.

My local club at Coleambally is no different. It provides a venue for twenty-first birthday parties, football presentation nights, Can Assist lunches, debutante balls, funerals, wakes, community meetings, seminars, annual general meetings, training days, fundraisers and mothers group meetings. It is so much more than a place for just drinking alcohol and gambling. Amendments in the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 are an important part of helping small pubs and clubs to continue doing what they do best—supporting their communities.

The bill aims to help small clubs in a number of ways including—for the first time in New South Wales—allowing small country pubs and clubs to lease their entitlements. Despite playing an important role as a focal point of a community, some clubs and pubs are struggling financially. The Government has heard the concerns of small pubs and clubs and will offer those venues a new pathway to allow them to keep doing what they do best. This has been an issue for many small pubs and clubs in my area. I have seen firsthand the members of a struggling club debate the sale of poker machines to deal with financial difficulties. The argument has been about whether they should do it to fix a short-term problem or whether it will cause more problems down the track. Those venues will now be able to lease their entitlements to other venues.

Many small hotels and clubs are required to retain their gaming machine entitlements to underwrite loans that help the venue to remain open. In recent years many venues across the State have had to close their doors for good. A venue closing does not just impact the licensee and staff; it also deprives the community of a place to come together for the huge range of events that I have outlined. Leasing provides an alternative by allowing a venue to lease an entitlement to another venue and derive an ongoing income stream.

The Government makes no apologies for its commitment to small pubs and local clubs. It hopes that the bill gives a much-needed helping hand to some of the small, struggling venues that are the lifeblood of their towns. Once an entitlement has been leased many small pubs and clubs will be able to use the space and the upkeep costs of gaming machines to offer improved services to their members and patrons. For many venues, the bill will provide a greater incentive and a mechanism to go pokie-free without losing the future value of their entitlements.

In addition to the proposed leasing scheme, the bill also makes some changes to the transfers and local impact assessment schemes that will benefit small venues. Communities in my electorate will warmly welcome the change from using local government area [LGA] boundaries to statistical areas level 2 [SA2] boundaries. A local government area may take in a number of communities. Each of them may be unique and vary greatly from others in the same LGA. The SA2 footprints better align with individual communities and will allow for better management of gaming machines in places with widely varying Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas [SEIFA] within the one LGA. That is much better than the blunt instrument that used the average SEIFA of a local government area.

The changes the bill proposes to the local impact assessment scheme ensure that the Government is taking a risk-based approach to regulation that is about ensuring that there are appropriately rigorous safeguards and controls in place for higher risk areas, while recognising that lower risk areas should benefit from reduced red tape. The changes will open up the market to which smaller venues are able to buy, sell and now lease their entitlements. For example, the bill eases the restriction on country hotels trading gaming machine entitlements of no more than three entitlements to a metropolitan hotel. The limit of one block of entitlement was introduced to

protect country areas from losing benefits of gaming machines to metropolitan venues. However, the predicted flood of entitlements from country to metropolitan areas has not occurred.

In keeping with the Government's ongoing commitment of helping small clubs and pubs by giving them greater flexibility in generating revenue, the bill recommends that country hotels be able to trade up to six entitlements every 12 months to metropolitan hotels. Furthermore, small country hotels will be able to sell up to their final six gaming machine entitlements without forfeiture applying, if the entitlements are sold in one transaction and the sale will result in its gaming machine threshold being reduced to zero. The changes are by no means a panacea for all issues facing small clubs and pubs, but they are a valuable starting point from which to assist struggling venues and the communities that depend upon them. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills) (10:44): I am very pleased to support the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills. During my brief contribution to this debate I will confine my remarks to discussing the importance and value of amendments to the Gaming Machines Act 2001, particularly for small pubs and clubs. At the outset I commend the Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing, who is present in the Chamber, for introducing this wonderful legislation. As the member for Murray quite eloquently pointed out, this legislation is a huge win for small country pubs and clubs that are the lifeblood of so many communities. In smaller centres, they are often the only place where people can gather socially. They are the only place that offers any form of services, but particularly essential services such as supplying bread and milk as well as posting and receiving mail. In times of natural disaster or unfortunate loss to families—incidents that are felt very strongly in the community—they are the centre around which people congregate.

The Minister has struck a very neat balance with this legislation, which is not easy to do. Dealing with gaming machine issues is akin to passing thread through the eye of a small needle. Emotion and feeling are evoked in dealing with issues such as problem gambling—but those issues are far removed from issues that confront many smaller regional communities, which is why, in my view, this amending legislation is so important. Schedule 2, part 3, division 2A to the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 will insert new section 24 and new section 25 to set out clearly the eligibility of pubs and clubs with a gaming machine threshold of not more than 30 and a hotel with not more than 10 to lease any or all of their entitlements to another club or hotel. Importantly, the bill clearly states that, for good reason, any movement of those machines will remain subject to an overarching local impact assessment scheme, which not only is an important safeguard but also is not—as the member for Murray pointed out and with whose remarks I wholeheartedly agree—a blunt local government area instrument. In rural areas, local government areas are vast and cover many different communities, each with its own culture and issues.

Those communities must be considered individually instead of applying a cumulative impact assessment that existed under the previous regime. Hence, there will not be a proliferation of machines in sensitive areas and areas that are fully saturated with machine entitlements. However, in areas where there is little or no risk of exacerbation, which would include many communities I represent, red tape will be removed and they will be able to lease and trade machines. For the information of all members of this House, that is crucial for three reasons. The first that springs to mind immediately concerns the North Star Sporting Club, which is located in the small township of North Star in the northern part of my electorate.

The sporting club is operated solely by volunteers. Not a single person derives any income from the running of that facility. It is the only licensed facility in the North Star community and in an area 100 kilometres from that community. I confidently state the club's entitlement to be three machines, of which one is used. This legislation will enable the club, if it so chooses, to lease the remaining two entitlements to another club. The club will be able to use the additional income to undertake necessary repairs and enhancements. The North Star Sporting Club is an older facility. In a few years time the roof will need to be replaced and the bar will need to be upgraded to comply with regulations. The additional income will meet expenditure on modernising the club's facilities as well as making the place more presentable for the community.

The Croppa Creek Bowling Club is not far from North Star. The Croppa Creek community is very proud. It has a few houses, a great general store, a school, a few silos and, of course, the Croppa Creek Bowling Club. I give a shout-out to Todd and Caroline Bellman who run the Croppa Creek general store. Anyone who visits Croppa Creek should try the Caroline burger and Todd's world-famous chocolate milkshakes. The Croppa Creek Bowling Club is essential to the fabric of that community. It is not only a recreational facility but also a place where people gather. Local clubs and associations hold meetings there. Indeed, it is a place where the community celebrates its highs and lows.

Over the past few years that community has been the recipient of some Community Building Partnership funding but it needs approximately \$55,000 to \$60,000 to replace the club's leaking roof—the leakage is starting to impact on the structural integrity of the club's building. The Croppa Creek Bowling Club is run by volunteers

and I can say with absolute certainty that it does not have the financial ability to find that sort of capital. These amendments will give the club an opportunity that it has never had before—namely, to lease some of its poker machines to another club and to use that revenue to make those necessary improvements.

The Uralla Golf Club is also cash-strapped. Recently I was talking to Kevin Ward, a local councillor and board member, about the need to modernise the club's toilets and amenities. The club uses any money it has to keep the water up to the golf course because it has been dry. It needs to access some capital to put back into the clubhouse. These amendments will allow the club to do that. I again commend the Minister. He has consulted widely and listened to people in rural and regional areas. These amendments are sensible. They recognise that small country clubs are vital to the fabric of their communities. These amendments will allow clubs to make sensible financial decisions to lease machines in low- or no-risk areas, not in high-risk areas. I note they will also be subject to the new Local Impact Assessment scheme and strict eligibility cap.

Venues will still be required to pay an additional levy to the Responsible Gambling Fund, so they will still be making a contribution to harm minimisation right across the State but it will give them the ability to unlock much-needed capital. These venues are not run for profit; they are run for the benefit of the community. Everything they do is returned to the community. As I have said, they are often run solely by volunteers. This will be a huge boon for them and it will ensure that they can remain open. It is well known that, when small communities lose their clubs—the last facilities they have—they do not get them back and the communities fold. I encourage all members to support this bill because of the benefits it will bring not only to the communities of North Star, Croppa Creek and Uralla but also to the hundreds of communities across this State—whether in the electorates of Murray, Bathurst or elsewhere. I commend the bills to the House.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (10:53): I contribute to debate on the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills. The Government recognises that the majority of Australians gamble responsibly. However, gambling can present real individual and social challenges for a small segment of the population. The object of the legislation is to improve the Government's response to gambling-related harms by beefing up its harm minimisation tools for gaming machines. Many of the submissions to the 2017 review of the Local Impact Assessment [LIA] scheme noted that, whilst local impact assessments are useful tools to manage gaming machine movements, more could be done to ensure that the scheme is equipped to tackle the risk of gambling-related harms.

The bills propose a number of changes to the LIA scheme that ensure harm minimisation remains at the forefront of all gaming machine decisions. The improved LIA scheme will change how communities are classified, shifting from local government areas [LGAs] to local statistical areas in order to better understand and analyse how communities are directly impacted by gaming machines. Under the proposed changes, the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority will now rank all communities in New South Wales according to their statistical area level 2—known as SA2—which is a statistical boundary developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. SA2s are medium-sized statistical areas which are smaller than LGAs and are designed around whole gazetted suburbs or rural localities. These local statistical areas will provide more relevant and detailed insight into the way that communities interact socially and economically with gaming machines so that harm minimisation measures can better be targeted to respond to gambling-related harm within that SA2.

As part of the reform package announced by the Government, there will be an increased focus on an area's relative socio-economic disadvantage. This change is aimed at giving the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority the tools that it needs to more accurately assess the likely risk of gambling-related harms in the community. The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas—otherwise known as SEIFA—are generated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, based on an area's relative socio-economic advantage or disadvantage. The updated LIA scheme has incorporated the SEIFA scores of all SA2s in New South Wales to more accurately identify those areas where correlative factors associated with problem gambling are highest—including unemployment and average incomes—in order to offer greater protections to the areas that need it most.

For the first time, the New South Wales Government will prevent any additional machines moving into areas with the highest risk of gambling-related harm through the Local Impact Assessment process. A regional cap will be introduced for all SA2s classified by the Independent Liquor and Gaming Board as band 3, which are the areas with the highest risk of gambling-related harms, as well as the Fairfield Local Government Area. The cap will mean that no more gaming machines can be introduced into those areas through the Local Impact Assessment scheme and will ensure that the numbers of gaming machines in band 3 areas can only go down.

The improved LIA scheme will double the community consultation period from 30 to 60 days to ensure that the community has more opportunities to have its say, allowing decision-makers to be better informed. The enhanced community consultation process is designed to give community members more opportunity to comment on the potential impacts of gaming machines on a community. That will allow the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority to better understand the likely consequence of introducing additional gaming machines into an area.

The bills create a new function for the Responsible Gambling Fund, which will now manage the allocation of all community contributions made through the LIA process. For the first time, hotels and clubs will contribute funding to the Responsible Gambling Fund, which currently allocates funding to gambling harm minimisation activities from funds contributed by The Star Sydney casino. Under the current LIA scheme, venues can choose where the funds go when they make a contribution to the community as part of their threshold increase application; there is no requirement that this money goes to harm minimisation. The new centralised distribution of contributors through the Responsible Gambling Fund will ensure that funds generated through the Local Impact Assessment process will be specifically targeted at gambling harm minimisation, health and social-related services for local communities. This change not only reflects the Government's commitment to reducing gambling-related harm but also increases the benefit to the community by investing more into helping people affected by problem gambling.

The introduced gaming machines leasing scheme will also have additional harm minimisation features. While the proposed leasing scheme will not be subject to forfeiture, the impact of leasing on the overall forfeiture scheme will be limited by restricting lessor venue eligibility to small venues. The overall statewide cap on the number of gaming machines will continue to be applied. Lessee venues will be required to pay an additional annual levy to the Responsible Gambling Fund, which will be used to fund gambling harm minimisation and treatment services around the State. Those measures show the Government's ongoing commitment to reducing gambling-related harm while ensuring that venues with gaming machines continue to make a positive contribution to the New South Wales community.

I commend the Minister for introducing the bills and for the work undertaken throughout 2017, including the thorough and extensive consultation. The Government has a very strong focus on harm minimisation and on getting the system right while ensuring that we can target more directly the harm minimisation work we need to undertake. It is crucial that this Government ensures that the funds being pooled from gaming machines are directed where they are most needed. Harm minimisation activities and support for our local communities are most important. I commend the bills to the House. I again congratulate the Minister, his office and the department.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services) (11:00): It gives me great pleasure to speak in debate on the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and cognate bills: the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. I acknowledge the Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing for the diligent work he has undertaken on a significant number of amendments to 16 pieces of legislation. It was certainly not an easy task. I commend his work and the wonderful work undertaken by his office and Liquor & Gaming NSW. That work represents the most significant set of reforms to gambling regulation in New South Wales in more than a decade.

This legislation streamlines regulatory complexity where risk of harm is low. At the same time, the reforms tighten certain legislative provisions and, in some areas, places additional constraints on industry. In short, the reforms ensure that regulators have the right tools to intervene to address misconduct where it arises and to minimise gambling-related harms. The legislation reflects a number of review processes conducted over the past year involving input from the community, local government and industry. It is important to note that due to the forfeiture requirements contained in these bills, the number of gaming machine entitlements in New South Wales can only ever decrease.

To build on the introduction of a stronger method of classifying communities based on risks of gambling-related harms, for the first time the bill will create gaming machine "red zones". These will be no-go areas for additional gaming machines. Item [8] inserts a new section 32A into the Act to provide a new power to further restrict the movement of gaming machines into high-risk areas. It is clear that this Government has taken a diligent approach to addressing the needs of the industry whilst ensuring that we are minimising harm for the community, particularly for problem gamblers.

I have never been a fan of poker machines. Although I have been involved in the thoroughbred racing industry all my life, my family and I have never been gamblers; rather we are participants working in an industry that we love. I recognise the inherent dangers that gambling addiction can have on people and their families and I always urge caution to anyone having a bet. However, I acknowledge that many people love to have a punt and that the majority of people do not have a gambling addiction; they just enjoy going to their local clubs and pubs and putting a few dollars through the poker machines. Indeed, my mother and my wife enjoy doing that. Even though I urge them against it, they still put \$5 or \$10 through the poker machines.

Many people enjoy having a bet, even if it is only on Melbourne Cup day—I acknowledge that is a very Australian thing to do. Many people enjoy visiting their local clubs. They can enjoy facilities that would not be available if it were not for the profits from gambling and poker machines being returned to the community, such

as fine dining, comfortable surroundings or wonderful events that are held in large clubs. For instance, the Castle Hill RSL club in my electorate returns every cent of profit it makes to the community. I take the opportunity whenever I can to brag about my past, although I should not. I spent 10 years in the live music industry in the late 1970s and early 1980s, particularly in my last band known as The Media.

I acknowledge my former guitarist Brent Taylor, bass player Kevin Adams, keyboard player Joe Priot and, sadly, the late Bo Lalic, our drummer. I had the privilege of playing with that wonderfully talented group of musicians in every venue across New South Wales and some in Queensland. Our band performed in just under 200 gigs and played with some of the great bands at that time. It was an incredible experience. Sadly, whilst there were hundreds of bands and the industry encouraged and nurtured great talent in New South Wales and across Australia, it was almost stopped in its tracks in the 1980s when poker machines were legalised in hotels. No longer was there a live band venue on every street corner in Sydney as there was in the late 1970s and early 1980s—I know because I was in most of them.

Ms Trish Doyle: Too much information.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: That is exactly right, and I will cease digressing into my seedy past. No longer did publicans and hotels need live bands to attract crowds into their venues; they could simply rely on a handful of people pulling the levers on poker machines. That is just one reason I have never been a fan of poker machines. The wonderful band The Whitlams is best remembered for its song *Blow up the Pokies*, which was a particular favourite of mine and summed up perfectly the sadness of an addicted poker machine player and how governments were prepared to overlook the problem of gambling addiction to ensure that trains ran on time, as went one of the verses of that song.

What an irony in the path my life has taken that I find myself now supporting a gambling bill. But I am mindful that several factors also need to be taken into account as we go through and assess these bills. First, and importantly, our trains predominantly run on time. We have our budget back in check. We do not rely on funds from gambling, but it is recognised that we receive profits from gambling. Hopefully the diligent processes this Government provides will ensure that our taxpayers' funds and those gambling dollars are spent very wisely.

Our clubs especially are not-for-profit organisations. Therefore, every cent of profit they make goes back to our communities. There is no greater example of a club that has delivered significant outcomes for my area of The Hills, than Castle Hill RSL club. I acknowledge my great friend the president, Major-General Warren Glenney, and Colonel Don Tait of the sub-branch. If Castle Hill RSL was not returning those profits to our community we would not have the incredible Waves swimming centre next door to the club or the enormous athletics centre in the grounds of the club. Each week thousands of people enjoy those swimming facilities, which helps them achieve greater fitness and also nurtures wonderful sporting talent in our community. The athletic centre is something to behold. Each night hundreds of people—especially young people undertaking healthy physical activity—enjoy the benefits of those facilities that can only be provided by the club returning its profits to the community.

These reforms represent the most significant change in the manner in which the liquor, gaming and clubs industries are regulated across New South Wales, and the changes are the most significant in more than a decade. The amendments give the regulator stronger powers and tools to intervene to curb concerning industry behaviour while also allowing the regulator to continue to work with responsible industry participants to tackle harm collaboratively. This Government is ensuring that the regulatory environment is responsive to changing circumstances. It wants to encourage responsible behaviour that minimises harm.

There is no doubt that clubs and hotels make a significant contribution to the New South Wales economy. A large number of them are based in regional and rural areas. They create jobs for tens of thousands of people and contribute billions of dollars to our economy. They also give back to our community and provide much-needed facilities and amenities to people who would otherwise not have access to those services. With those comments, I commend the bills to the House.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (11:09):

In reply: It gives me great pleasure to respond to the contributions to the second reading debate on the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and the cognate Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018, Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018, and Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018. I thank members representing the electorates of Maroubra, Tweed, Charlestown, Sydney, Lake Macquarie, Cootamundra, Prospect, Balmain, Tamworth, Gosford, Lakemba, Ku-ring-gai, Terrigal, Myall Lakes, Drummoyne, Seven Hills, Murray, Northern Tablelands, North Shore and Castle Hill for their contributions. The issues they raised are indicative of the importance of these bills. However, I foreshadow that the Government will move some amendments.

I turn now to a number of the issues raised. First, I address the calls for additional time for these bills to be considered, including for debate on these bills to be deferred. The Government has undertaken extensive public consultation in the development of a set of changes that balance the concerns of the community and industry. Changes made by these bills enhance the level of protections that are offered to problem gamblers and more actively deal with gambling-related harms. The Government supports putting in place these better harm minimisation changes as soon as possible. The Government has agreed to implement the recommendations of the Local Impact Assessment [LIA] Review to ensure that gambling harm minimisation remains at the forefront of gaming machine decisions.

The Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 proposes a number of new and improved harm minimisation tools, including moving from local government areas [LGAs] to statistical area level 2, known as SA2s, to better identify and protect areas in New South Wales at highest risk of harm; adding more weight to an area's relative socio-economic disadvantage to more accurately assess an area's likely prevalence of gambling-related harms; preventing more machines going into high-risk areas through the LIA process by prescribing a cap on all band 3 areas, which will cover more than 20 per cent of the State's SA2s; and increasing community say in the LIA process by involving a number of community organisations in the LIA process and extending the class 1 LIA consultation period from 30 days to 60 days so that the community has more time to have a say and to enable decision-makers to be better informed about the impact of additional gaming machines on the community.

I will dispel some of the irresponsible and incorrect commentary on how the caps will work. A venue in an area that has been declared subject to a cap will no longer undertake a LIA to acquire additional gaming machines. This means venues within those areas cannot increase their gaming machine threshold by acquiring gaming machines from other areas of the State. They will only be able to acquire additional gaming machines from other venues in their local area that are in band 3. To be clear: No gaming machines—through either trading or leasing—can move from a band 1 or band 2 area into an area that is subject to a cap.

The Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 strengthens the Government's resolve to deal with irresponsible behaviour by industry that creates gambling-related harms. I note the concerns of the member for Lake Macquarie about the proliferation of advertisements for online betting. Let me be clear: These reforms are designed to put a stop to the appearance of advertisements offering free and bonus bets. This bill increases penalties for betting service providers that publish unlawful advertising, including offering inducements to gamble. Those kinds of advertisements are designed specifically to encourage people to gamble more money more often. This is unacceptable. The bill will now increase the penalty to \$55,000 for corporations as well as expand directorial liability for those offences. It will not be good enough for a director to say that they were unaware that the company was not complying with the regulatory requirements and harm minimisation responsibilities.

I note that wagering operators have criticised the proposed changes. However, the New South Wales Government's policy on the gaming industry is very clear: advertisements for products like bonus bets that induce people to gamble are not acceptable. The member for Lakemba noted concerns of members of his community with respect to gambling advertising by wagering operators on television, radio and in newspapers. The proposed amendments contained in this bill are intended to address those community concerns and create a corporate culture that does not encourage or tolerate these kinds of behaviours.

Importantly, these changes are only part of the Government's response to dealing with problem gambling. In 2017-18 the changes will include significant funding from the Responsible Gambling Fund including: \$2 million allocated to education and awareness programs that build community resilience, responsible gambling behaviours and encourage help-seeking behaviour for those experiencing problems, including the highly successful Betiquette campaign that targets problem gambling behaviours amongst young males; \$14 million allocated to phone, online and face-to-face counselling services in more than 250 locations in New South Wales; and \$1.5 million directed to research to inform the development of gambling harm reduction programs and services to ensure that the New South Wales Government continues to progress evidence-based policy.

This funding will now be complemented by additional funding that will be required to be made by pubs and clubs to the Responsible Gambling Fund. This new funding will allow targeted funding to provide harm minimisation and treatment services in the communities into which the additional gaming machines are moving. This is a new change, and is one of several examples of how these bills improve the way in which the Government responds to gambling-related harms. I note the member for Balmain has acknowledged that there are some good changes in these bills that improve harm minimisation efforts, which is a reflection that these changes build on this Government's commitment to addressing gambling-related harms.

I am pleased to inform the House that the Government has already committed to undertake a review of the prohibited features register in 2018 to determine whether further changes are required to the regulation of gaming machines in New South Wales. This review will specifically look at research and evidence on the kinds

of risks associated with different gaming machine features. The Government will look also at technological innovation more generally, including the potential for technology to promote harm minimisation objectives. I address some specific points made by members on the proposed change under the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 to move from local government areas to statistical areas level 2.

The move away from local government areas to smaller statistical boundaries was supported by a number of community and local government organisations, including Wesley Mission, Newcastle City Council and Public Health Association of Australia. Under the proposed changes, the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority will now rank all communities in New South Wales according to their statistical area level 2, which is a statistical boundary developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. SA2s are medium-sized statistical areas that are smaller than LGAs and are designed around whole gazetted suburbs or rural localities.

SA2s are designed to reflect how communities interact economically and socially and to be a more focused tool for understanding the local community's profile than local government areas. The Government has committed to move from local government areas to SA2s to create a more nuanced and sophisticated way of assessing the impact of gaming machines on a community. By using a smaller boundary the relative impact of new machines will be easier to understand for venues, the community and government. This addresses concerns raised during the extensive public consultation process. Pockets of significant disadvantage exist in local government areas that are currently considered low risk and are not being appropriately dealt with. The proposed change means the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority now has the power to intervene to reduce the risk of gambling-related harms.

I will deal briefly with changes to key officials' post-employment restrictions. The proposed changes to the restrictions on the post-employment activities of former key officials of liquor and gaming are intended to ensure that restrictions address actual and perceived conflicts of interest associated with the movement of employees from the regulator to sectors they regulate. The existing arrangements have become outdated and are not operating effectively to manage risk, resulting in a decline in the use of the provisions. The proposed changes represent a more risk-based approach to addressing potential conflicts of interest. Individual circumstances will be assessed against guidelines that take into consideration both real and perceived risks and transparency in the decision-making process will be promoted. In addition, new safeguards will be introduced to ensure that key officials are unable to work for peak bodies or lobby groups representing industry interests during the exclusion period. This will assist in maintaining public confidence in the regulator by removing any suggestion of favourable treatment.

The proposed changes will mean more people at Liquor & Gaming NSW will be captured by the provision for key officials, which will foster public trust in the regulator. The Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018, Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 and the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018 are the most significant set of reforms to the liquor, gaming and clubs industries in the past 10 years. These reforms make changes that strengthen transparency on liquor and gaming decisions by Government, provide more data to the public to inform debate on liquor and gaming policy and ensure the Government and industry undertake more consultation with the community on decisions and actions that affect them.

The New South Wales Government remains committed to ensure that regulatory burdens reflect regulatory risks. This means ensuring that rigorous safeguards are in place where high-risk activities are occurring while allowing for a proactive program of risk-based assurance activities and intelligence-led inquiries by the regulator. The bills provide that balance by allowing the regulator to consider and respond to liquor-related and gambling-related harms on a more granular level with the benefit of more targeted interventions. The Government is ensuring that the regulatory environment is responsive to changing circumstances. These changes build on existing measures to protect those most impacted by gambling-related harms and reinforces this Government's commitment to addressing gambling-related harms.

The bills allow this added focus on higher-risk activities by providing strengthened regulatory levers to redirect compliance resources away from prescriptive, administrative and low-risk activities. The bills create further incentives for industry, including pubs and clubs, to take more responsibility for how they manage risks and meet their social obligations. It does so by recognising the valuable contribution pubs and clubs make to their communities. Increasing transparency is another theme underpinning these bills. This Government is committed to ensuring that it is accountable for the decisions it makes in the liquor and gaming industries.

This package provides the New South Wales community with the tools necessary to participate fully in the decision-making process as well as understand why decisions have been made. In short, this reform package is not only about making what members opposite have identified as sensible changes but also about ensuring that regulators have the right powers to intervene to address misconduct when it arises and minimise gambling-related harms. I commend the bills to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that these bills be now read a second time. A division has been called for. There being fewer than five members against the question, the question is resolved in the affirmative.

Noes

Mr Alex Greenwich
Ms Jenny Leong
Mr Jamie Parker
Ms Tamara Smith

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Mr Paul Toole.

Consideration in Detail

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): By leave: I will deal with the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (11:30):

By leave: I move Government amendments Nos 1 and 2 on sheet C2018-010A in globo:

No. 1 Gambling-related advertisements

Page 6, Schedule 1.1 [17] (proposed section 33H (6)), lines 26-31. Omit all words on those lines. Insert instead:

- (6) A person (other than a betting service provider) does not commit an offence under this section in respect of the publication or communication of a gambling advertisement if:
 - (a) the gambling advertisement was in the form provided (directly or indirectly) or approved by or on behalf of a betting service provider for the purposes of its publication or communication, and
 - (b) the person has not been notified by or on behalf of the Minister that the publication or communication of the gambling advertisement may contravene this section.

No. 2 Totalizator advertisements

Page 33, Schedule 1.14 [5] (proposed section 80 (6)), lines 40-44. Omit all words on those lines. Insert instead:

- (6) A person (other than a licensee) does not commit an offence under this section in respect of the publication or communication of a totalizator advertisement if:
 - (a) the totalizator advertisement was in the form provided (directly or indirectly) or approved by or on behalf of a licensee for the purposes of its publication or communication, and
 - (b) the person has not been notified by or on behalf of the Minister that the publication or communication of the totalizator advertisement may contravene this section.

The first amendment will amend the Liquor and Gaming Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 to clarify the operation of a defence for broadcasters. Under the proposed amendment to section 33H of the Betting and Racing Act 1998 and section 80 of the Totalizator Act 1997 it will be an offence if a betting service provider publishes or communicates a prohibited gambling advertisement. This prohibition includes an advertisement that is an inducement to gamble or to open a betting account. This change to the rules governing gambling advertising is aimed at encouraging behavioural change amongst betting service providers. The Government believes that these operators have been given enough warnings. The changes before the House today give Liquor & Gaming NSW the necessary powers to prevent betting service providers from offering prohibited inducements. While the Government is steadfast in its commitment to crack down on prohibited advertising, it has undertaken consultation with broadcasters about how the changes impact on a broadcaster's liability under the proposed offences.

The current exemption for broadcasters allows a publisher to be exempt from the operation of the offence when they have been provided the advertisement by the wagering operator. This will ensure that liability for publishing a prohibited advertisement is borne by the wagering operator who produced and approved the advertisement. The provisions also recognise that under current business practice the broadcaster or publisher often receives an advertising booking and content from a media agency or from another person on behalf of the betting service provider. The proposed amendment to these provisions clarifies that broadcasters will continue to be exempt, except where they have been notified by the Minister or by a person on behalf of the Minister, that the advertisement is a breach of the Act. This amendment will ensure that in the first instance betting service providers

will be held liable and that broadcasters have an obligation to not publish or communicate the advertisement when they are notified that it is an unlawful advertisement.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (11:32): The Opposition takes no exception to these amendments. We agree that the initial provisions are worthy of support and recognise that if the amendments had been enacted there would have been an inadvertent problem with advertisers, publishers and the like. We do not object to these amendments.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that Government amendments Nos 1 and 2 on sheet C2108-010A be agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that schedule 1 as amended be agreed to.

Schedule 1 as amended agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): By leave: I will deal with the Casino Control Amendment Bill 2018 in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 be agreed to

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that schedules 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Schedules 1 and 2 agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I will deal now with the Gaming Machines Amendments (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (11:34): By leave: I move Government amendments Nos 1 to 6 on sheet C2018-012A in globo:

No. 1 **Classification of local statistical areas**

Page 5, Schedule 1 [9], proposed section 33 (1), line 17. Omit "Division". Insert instead "Act".

No. 2 **Classification of local statistical areas**

Page 5, Schedule 1 [9], proposed section 33 (2), line 22. Omit "Division". Insert instead "Act".

No. 3 **Local impact assessment**

Page 6, Schedule 1 [14], proposed section 35 (2) (c), line 15. Omit "lower". Insert instead "higher".

No. 4 **Local impact assessment**

Page 6, Schedule 1 [14], proposed section 35 (2) (d), line 21. Omit "lower". Insert instead "higher".

No. 5 **Local impact assessment**

Page 9, Schedule 1 [27], proposed section 37C (1) (a1), line 20. Omit "lower". Insert instead "higher".

No. 6 **Local impact assessment**

Page 9, Schedule 1 [27], proposed section 37C (1) (a2), line 26. Omit "lower". Insert instead "higher".

The amendments to the Gaming Machines Amendment (Leasing and Assessment) Bill 2018 remedy some drafting errors. I have been advised that these changes amend mistakes that were made during the preparation of the bill and will ensure that the bill is consistent with the explanation that I gave to this House during my second reading speech as well as the explanatory material provided by Liquor & Gaming NSW.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (11:35): The Opposition wholeheartedly supports these amendments, in particular, amendments Nos 3, 4, 5 and 6. Amendments Nos 1 and 2 are unexceptional garden variety drafting measures. If amendments Nos 3 to 6 had slipped through the net the central provisions in the bill which will ensure that gaming machine entitlements do not flow into the most disadvantaged areas of Sydney would have been turned on their head. That is the last thing that anyone wants. We are glad that the Government proposed these amendments before the legislation is enacted. The Opposition supports the amendments.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that Government amendments Nos 1 to 6 on sheet C2108-012A be agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that schedules 1 to 4 as amended be agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 4 as amended agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): By leave: I will deal with the Registered Clubs Amendment (Accountability and Amalgamations) Bill 2018 in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that schedules 1 to 3 be agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 3 agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I move:

That these bills be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Second Reading Speech

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (11:38): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018. The bill seeks to amend the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to implement recommendations arising from a statutory review of the Act and to accommodate police responses to active armed offender incidents. The reforms are intended to make workers and business owners safer. They will also assist the police when acting in the interests of the general public. These changes support the New South Wales Government's reform agenda to protect workers from harm whilst increasing the competitiveness and confidence of businesses in New South Wales. The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 commenced in New South Wales on 1 January 2012. The Act aims to secure the health and safety of workers in workplaces by providing them with the highest level of protection against harm to their health, safety and welfare from hazards and risks. The Act is based on national model laws which provide a balanced and nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces.

The New South Wales Work Health and Safety Act 2011 incorporates the terms of the work health and safety model law, in addition to some State-specific variations. The model law allows for limited variation by each jurisdiction to enable local matters to be addressed and ensures that the model provisions are able to operate successfully without affecting harmonisation. The work health and safety model law is being reviewed at the national level in 2018. To avoid duplicating the activities of the national review, agreement was reached with stakeholders to focus the New South Wales statutory review on whether the New South Wales-specific provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 remain appropriate for securing its statutory objectives. The New South Wales-specific provisions are largely those where the national scheme for work health and safety legislation has explicitly permitted limited jurisdictional variations from the model to provide for State matters.

Public consultation was conducted in November and December 2016. The statutory review report was tabled in the New South Wales Parliament on 22 June 2017. The review received 39 public submissions and involved broad public consultation with unions, workers, businesses, employer associations, and government agencies. SafeWork NSW and the Resources Regulator, who are the New South Wales work health and safety regulators, were also closely involved in the review. Within the limited scope of the New South Wales specific provisions, and based upon the comments of respondents, the review found that overall the objectives of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 remain valid and its terms remain generally appropriate to secure those objectives.

The review also made 11 recommendations to strengthen the work health and safety regime to better reflect business practices in New South Wales, decrease regulatory costs for businesses, and improve compliance and enforcement outcomes. The bill before the House will implement six of these recommendations to amend the Work Health and Safety Act. The other five recommendations include consultation and amendments to regulations, and are currently underway. Such amendments include the insertion of new provisions related to the extraterritorial application of the Work Health and Safety Act, recording of interviews, and addressing challenges to the validity of regulator appointments and delegations. Other minor amendments are also included to address a drafting error and to align the Work Health and Safety Act with current practices related to the service of documents.

In addition to the amendments arising from the statutory review of the Work Health and Safety Act, the bill also addresses concerns raised by the NSW Police Force. These concerns relate to how the Act may apply in circumstances where a police officer needs to prioritise public safety over compliance with work health and safety duties when responding to an active armed offender [AAO] incident. The bill addresses this by providing an exemption from certain offence provisions under the Act for New South Wales police officers in such circumstances. This will ensure that police officers can prioritise public safety and focus on saving lives in responding to active armed offender incidents without fear of potential prosecution under that Act.

I turn now to the substance of the bill. The Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018 makes the following specific amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act. The bill inserts a new section 34A in part 2, division 5, to the Work Health and Safety Act, which will provide an exemption from prosecution for individual members of the NSW Police Force when responding to particular active armed offender incidents. A member of the NSW Police Force includes the commissioner, NSW Police Force senior executives, and all other police officers and NSW Police Force administrative officers, including special constables.

All members of the NSW Police Force as workers hold duties under work health and safety legislation. These duties include a requirement for members of the NSW Police Force to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and to take reasonable care to ensure that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. When a police officer is responding to an active armed offender, or an AAO incident, he or she may have to balance prioritising the safety and security of members of the public with seeking to secure their safety and the safety of their fellow officers. It is unreasonable to expect police officers responding to such incidents to face potential criminal liability under the Work Health and Safety Act because they have prioritised public safety over the duties imposed by that Act. It is also unreasonable for police officers within the chain of command to risk personal liability under the Work Health and Safety Act when meeting legitimate community and government expectations by prioritising public safety during these incidents.

New section 34A states that a member of the NSW Police Force does not commit an offence under the Act for a failure to comply with a health and safety duty that occurs while the member is responding to a particular active armed offender incident. A member of the NSW Police Force will be regarded as responding to a particular active armed offender incident if each of the following are satisfied: First, that an offender armed with an offensive weapon or instrument has attacked, or is attacking, or attempting to attack another person; secondly, that the member of the NSW Police Force, or one or more members of the police force, who are commanding, authorising actions by, or directing, the member, reasonably believes the offender will continue attacking or attempting to attack, or will attack or attempt to attack again, the same or a different person unless prevented from doing so; and, thirdly, that the member is acting, whether alone or in combination with other members of the NSW Police Force, to prevent the offender from doing so.

It should be noted that the relevant work health and safety duties will still apply to police officers involved in active armed offender incidents, but what the bill ensures is that if an officer fails to comply with those duties in the course of responding to the incident, it will not constitute an offence by the officer under the Act. It should also be noted that the bill does not affect the duties of the State as the person conducting the relevant business or undertaking for the NSW Police Force under the Work Health and Safety Act. It also does not affect the State's liability for prosecution under that Act if the State breaches those duties.

Items [2] and [5] of schedule 2 to the bill insert a new section 155 (8) and a new section 185A to permit the recording of interviews conducted by work health and safety inspectors when exercising their powers. A recording can be made without the consent of the interviewee but only if the interviewee is first informed that he or she is to be recorded. As the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 is silent on the matter of reporting interviews, the work health and safety inspectors currently obtain the interviewee's consent before recording an interview. If the interviewee does not consent to the interview being recorded, current practice is for the work health and safety inspector to make a written record of the interview while it is in progress. As can be appreciated, this is time-consuming for all parties concerned and results in time lost and an increase in cost to both the regulators and business. Instead, allowing for the recording of interviews regardless of whether the interviewee consents to the recording, will reduce the potential for disputes during legal proceedings. It will ensure that the regulators, the defendant and the courts have a reliable and objective recording of the interview. It is a safeguard for both inspectors and interviewees.

New sections 155 (8) and 185A do not increase any of the work health and safety inspector's current powers to require a person to provide information. They simply provide a statutory framework for the recording process, and facilitate the capturing of clear, accurate and objective records of interviews. The protections afforded to individuals under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 will not be reduced. The Act will continue to provide that an answer to a question by an individual is not admissible as evidence against that individual, other than in proceedings arising out of false or misleading information being provided by the individual. It should be noted

that several New South Wales Acts already include a specific power for an authorised officer to use sound recording or audiovisual apparatus to record questions and answers, provided notice has been given.

The bill also clarifies the extraterritorial application of the information gathering power in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 by inserting a new section 155A into the Act. Workplace incident investigations are at times hampered, as the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 currently does not give the regulators a clear power to require the production of documents from outside New South Wales during an investigation. The only alternative option currently available to the regulators to obtain such information is to subpoena the information after court proceedings have commenced. This is an inefficient use of court resources as the regulators do not know prior to bringing proceedings whether information that is held interstate will be relevant.

It is far more desirable and a better use of resources of both the regulators and the courts for the regulators to gather this information during an investigation. The need for this provision is even more pressing as, due to technological advances, the number of businesses operating in New South Wales that have their head office, data centres, or control rooms located outside the State is growing. This means that the operations of mines and other workplaces can be controlled or monitored remotely from another jurisdiction. There has also been an increase in the number of businesses operating in New South Wales that have their registered address outside New South Wales and fly-in fly-out workers coming into New South Wales due to the construction boom.

It is intended that the new section 155A will ensure that the regulators can issue notices outside New South Wales related to incidents which have occurred in New South Wales in order to: obtain information of which a person located outside New South Wales has knowledge; obtain documents located outside New South Wales; and require a person located outside New South Wales to give either oral or written evidence and produce those documents. The national work health and safety model law expressly permits States and Territories to insert local provisions relating to extraterritoriality, including the extraterritorial reach of offences. Several jurisdictions have already implemented extraterritoriality clauses within their local work health and safety legislation, including South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Commonwealth.

The bill also addresses the concerns of stakeholders regarding technical arguments raised during criminal proceedings about the validity of regulator appointments and delegations. Schedule 2 [8] inserts a new section 233A in the Work Health and Safety Act. It is not uncommon for defendants to challenge the validity of appointments and delegations of the regulators in order to avoid a conviction and/or reputational damage on the basis of a technical defect in the prosecution process. To date all such challenges have been unsuccessful as the regulators have not brought proceedings without being properly authorised, and they have been able to prove this in court when required. However, challenges of this nature add significant time and cost to proceedings and only serve to distract from the core issues in contention.

The insertion of new section 233A in the Work Health and Safety Act will enable documents certifying the status of persons as inspectors or members of regulator staff to be tendered as prima facie evidence in legal proceedings. This is intended to have the effect of minimising unnecessary challenges to the validity of regulator appointments and delegations in future. Schedule 2 [1] and [6] omit the term "facsimile" from the note in section 38 (3) and from section 209 (1) (a) of the Work Health and Safety Act in order to reflect current practice, as SafeWork NSW generally ceased the use of facsimiles as a form of notification from December 2015.

It is not intended that these amendments will preclude the regulators from using this facility under the Work Health and Safety Act if required. The relevant provisions still refer to "electronic transmission" or transmission by "other electronic means", which will allow for faxes. The bill further proposes two minor technical amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act to remedy an incorrect reference to a provision in section 166 (1), bringing the Work Health and Safety Act into line with the work health and safety model law, and insert a reference to "the Attorney General" in section 230 (5), which will remove ambiguity as to whether the Attorney General may commence Work Health and Safety Act prosecutions.

As previously mentioned, the Work Health and Safety Act is part of a model scheme, the development and maintenance of which is shared jointly by the State, Territory and Commonwealth governments. These amendments to the New South Wales specific provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 will enhance the operation of the national model work health and safety laws in New South Wales. SafeWork NSW and the Resources Regulator will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure that businesses and workers are aware of and understand their responsibilities once the bill is enacted. The Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018 will help the regulators to improve public safety and assist in making the lives of workers and business owners in New South Wales healthier, safer and more productive. I commend the bill to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (11:53): I am pleased to lead for the Opposition in debate on the Work Health and Safety Bill 2018 and say at the outset that the Opposition supports the bill. Labor supports legislation that aims to make workplaces safer. In fact, a key focus and *raison d'être* of the labour movement in New South Wales, nationally and internationally has been to make workplaces fairer and safer. The bill arises from the statutory review of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Tabled last year, the review focused on the aspects of the bill specific to New South Wales. It must be understood that State legislation is enabling legislation, and much of the focus of efforts will be on reviewing the model law developed federally through SafeWork Australia and implemented across the nation by States and Territories. I will address that aspect later.

The review of the 2011 Act made 11 recommendations, six of which are contained in this bill. Recommendation No. 6 has already been addressed through the recent statute law revision process. Recommendation Nos 9, 10 and 11 will be addressed when the associated regulations of the Work Health and Safety Act are remade. The Centre for Work Health and Safety is still looking at the final and important recommendation No. 8 regarding tripartite consultation. I will also talk about that at a later stage.

The bill introduces amendments that address a specific issue that members of the NSW Police Force face when dealing with armed offender incidents. The bill amends the Act to exclude members of the NSW Police Force from an offence under the Act if they are responding to, issuing authorising actions, receiving or providing information, or preparing a response to an active armed incident. That amendment makes sense. No-one in the community would tolerate a situation where an officer responding to an armed offender could somehow breach work health and safety legislation. The amendment acknowledges that in those fortunately rare events matters of public safety must and can override work health and safety matters. The shadow Minister for Police has sought feedback from the Police Association of NSW and I am pleased to say that it supports the amendment wholeheartedly. The Opposition believes that the limited scope and the associated provisions including setting out the precise circumstances are well thought out and should be supported.

The other amendments in the bill addressing the six recommendations from the statutory review are fairly straightforward and are supported. The first amendment inserts a new section 155A into the Act to provide authorised officers with the power to obtain records and other information as well as issue notices outside New South Wales. The current processes require subpoenas after court proceedings have commenced, which wastes the time of both the court and the regulator. The amendment is common sense and addresses the fact that businesses often have parts of their operations outside New South Wales.

The next amendment allows for an inspector to record questions and answers given orally. The current Act presents a grey area when it comes to recordings, especially if consent is not given by the interviewee. In such a situation the investigator must resort to a written record, which again is time consuming and a waste of resources. The amendment allows for the recording of interviews regardless of consent. Given the seriousness of breaches to work health and safety, the amendment is supported. The next amendment enables the regulator to certify certain matters such as appointments and provides that in proceedings under the Act such a certificate is *prima facie* evidence of those matters. As the Parliamentary Secretary noted in the second reading speech, the amendment aims to minimise unnecessary challenges to appointments and delegations.

The final three amendments are minor in nature. The first is to remove the reference in the 2011 Act to facsimile transmissions as a means for an inspector to issue notices. That is about time. The second amendment clarifies that the provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act regarding prosecutions do not affect the ability of the Attorney General to prosecute offences against the Act. The third amendment clarifies a reference in section 230 (5) to the Attorney General as well as corrects a technicality in section 166 of the Act, bringing it into line with the Federal work health and safety model law. As I said, most of the focus of reforming work health and safety legislation in New South Wales and the nation will be on the upcoming review of the national laws, which we expect to see in December this year.

I understand that Ms Marie Boland has been appointed by Safe Work Australia to undertake these consultations with various industry stakeholders. The national model laws are the most appropriate way to lift the bar when it comes to work health and safety in this country, while ensuring a consistent approach across the nation. As I said, the Labor movement holds a safe workplace as one of its central tenets, and it will maintain a close watching brief over the progress of these consultations. The Opposition has been discussing this very important matter with Unions NSW and will seek a strong commitment from the New South Wales Government to strengthen tripartite consultation at the State level. Given this context of the review of work health and safety legislation, and the central importance of getting the national model laws right, the Opposition supports this specific set of amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. I am pleased to commend the bill to the House.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (12:00): The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 is one of the important reforms of this Coalition Government. Its predecessor, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, was an outlier compared to the legislation in other States of the Commonwealth. It was unfair and its strict liability was unduly onerous upon business. The new Work Health and Safety Act 2011 is, by and large, working in a much fairer and better way, while still providing robust protections to ensure safe places of work. I speak in support of improvements to the Act proposed to be brought through the Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018.

The bill will help the work health and safety regulators to administer the Work Health and Safety Act, including by allowing work health and safety inspectors to require interviews to be recorded under section 185A, giving work health and safety inspectors power to obtain information from outside New South Wales where relevant to a work health and safety investigation or the Work Health and Safety Act under section 155A, and reducing challenges to the validity of regulator appointments and delegations during court proceedings under section 233A.

These amendments will assist the regulators in their vital roles of monitoring and enforcing compliance with the Work Health and Safety Act, resulting in workers and businesses being better protected against harm, and safety standards being upheld. The approach of SafeWork NSW to work health and safety regulation considers the level of risk, public interest and due diligence efforts when monitoring and enforcing work health and safety compliance with businesses and workers. This approach acknowledges the different capacities of businesses and workers, and enables SafeWork NSW to respond effectively to work health and safety matters on a case-by-case basis.

The bill will assist SafeWork NSW in its regulatory approach to work health and safety, as the amendments contained in the bill encourage an improvement in compliance and enhance the regulator's investigative powers. In particular, the amendments will strengthen the ability of SafeWork NSW to respond effectively and enforce compliance for high-risk work health and safety incidents where there is a possibility of serious harm, the case is of high public interest, or where due diligence efforts may be lacking. For example, investigations into high-risk matters involving death and/or lifelong injury, illness or disability involve interviewing relevant parties.

The amendment to enable the recording of interviews on notice, provided that the person being questioned is informed of the recording, but regardless of whether or not the interviewee consents to the interview being recorded, will facilitate the collection of accurate, timely and objective data. This data will assist SafeWork NSW in determining and improving compliance and enforcement approaches going forward. Interview recordings will also reduce the chances of interview content being disputed and thereby delaying investigations or court hearings. This will help SafeWork NSW to improve enforcement practice. This brings the legislation in alignment with the general criminal proceedings process where recordings of interview have been made for many years.

The amendment to provide the regulator power to issue notices across State and Territory borders to obtain information and documents will assist SafeWork NSW in investigation and enforcement measures, particularly for some high-risk sectors and workers. As we have heard, technology has changed the way we work. In recent years there has been an increase in fly-in fly-out construction and mining workers employed in New South Wales. There is also a growing number of businesses operating in New South Wales that have their head office, data centres or control rooms located outside the State. The investigation of incidents in both of these scenarios is difficult. Without having a clear power to obtain documents and evidence outside of New South Wales, the admissibility of records obtained from interstate as evidence in legal proceedings may be challenged, and the ability of the regulator to compel a person located interstate to give evidence is unclear.

A practical example of this may occur when, following an incident where a worker has received several fractures after falling from a height at a workplace located in New South Wales, the owners of the businesses return to their interstate headquarters and refuse to return to New South Wales to be interviewed. As there is no clear power to serve notices interstate, the matter may not be able to be investigated properly. This is simply not acceptable. Giving the regulators powers to obtain records and information located outside New South Wales will help them identify and follow up on high-risk incidents, which in turn will assist in keeping workers in New South Wales safer. It will also assist workplaces understand their work health and safety obligations, improve compliance and encourage due diligence for low-risk work health and safety matters. Again, an analogy can be drawn with civil litigation where processes and subpoenas can be served interstate under the Service and Execution of Process Act.

I now turn to the last major amendment arising from the statutory review: preventing challenges to the validity of regulator appointments and delegations. This amendment also addresses high-risk work health and safety matters. Where matters are being prosecuted in court, this amendment reduces the risk of proceedings being

delayed or dismissed due to businesses challenging the prosecution on the grounds of technical arguments of validity of regulator delegations or appointments. It will reinforce SafeWork NSW and the resources regulator as being credible and reduce the avenues for large businesses to dispute liability based on such technical arguments. It will further improve businesses' due diligence and compliance, and the effectiveness of regulator enforcement practices. The national work health and safety model law expressly permits States and Territories to insert local provisions relating to extraterritoriality, including the extraterritorial reach of offences.

I understand that several jurisdictions have already implemented such clauses in their work health and safety legislation. Other regulators also have the power to require interviews to be recorded regardless of whether consent has been given. As members have already heard, these amendments will help SafeWork NSW respond appropriately to work health and safety matters by encouraging and improving business compliance for low-risk work health and safety matters, and enhancing SafeWork NSW enforcement powers for high-risk work health and safety matters. I am confident the bill will improve compliance and enforcement outcomes, resulting in work health and safety improvements for the New South Wales community and ultimately save lives. As this is a very important legislative regulation, it is important that these changes are being brought forward to Parliament. I commend the Minister for this legislation and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (12:07): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018. I note the comments of the shadow Minister, the member for Swansea, that the New South Wales Labor Opposition will not oppose the bill. As we are all aware, the bill has come to this place as the result of a statutory review into the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, which set out 11 recommendations to be adopted. Schedule 1 to the bill proposes to amend the Act to provide greater legislative protections for our State's police officers in the event that they are involved in an active armed offender scenario. This section has arisen out of a perceived risk of liability for our police officers should they find themselves involved in the response to an active armed offender incident.

Given the extreme danger involved in such a response, it is great to see additional legislative protections being provided to our brave men and women in blue. Stakeholders have indicated that they are also happy with the inclusion of additional legislative protections being provided to New South Wales police officers. This will be achieved by the inclusion of schedule 1 to the bill. New section 34A in schedule 1 sets out the exception for police responding to particular active armed offender incidents.

New section 34A (1) provides that a member of the NSW Police Force is not liable for an offence under the division for a failure to comply with a health and safety duty that occurs while they are responding to a particular active armed offender incident; in command of, or is otherwise authorising actions by or providing directions to, other members of the NSW Police Force responding to a particular active armed offender incident; receiving information from, or providing information to, other members of the NSW Police Force for the purposes of assisting them in responding to a particular active armed offender incident; or participating with other members of the NSW Police Force in preparing or planning for responding to a particular active armed offender incident.

New section 34A (2) prescribes the numerous situations that can be considered when responding to an active armed offender incident. These situations include where a person armed with an offensive weapon or instrument—the offender—is attacking or has attacked, or is attempting to attack or has attempted to attack, another person—the victim; and the member reasonably believes, or one or more other members of the NSW Police Force who are commanding, authorising actions by or directing the member reasonably believe, that the offender will do any of the following unless prevented from doing so: continue attacking, or attempting to attack, the victim; attack, or attempt to attack, the victim again; and attack, or attempt to attack, another person apart from the victim; also, if the member is acting, whether or not in combination with, or at the command or direction of, other members of the NSW Police Force to prevent the offender from doing so. Proposed new section 34A (3) states:

To avoid doubt, this section does not affect the duties of the State or the Crown under this Part in connection with responding to a particular active armed offender incident.

I note that "offensive weapon or instrument" mentioned in this section has the same meaning as in the Crimes Act 1900. We on this side of the House will always be supportive of any legislation to provide additional protections for our police officers. The bill makes a number of changes to provide further protections in the event of an armed offender scenario, which has been supported by stakeholders. As the shadow Minister for Justice and Police I consulted with the Police Association of NSW about this bill and the response I received from the association stated, in part:

The Police Association of New South Wales (PANSW) supports the bill.

The PANSW has been consulted throughout the drafting of the bill in relation to the amendment contained in schedule 1. We were also notified to the intent of schedule 2.

It is our understanding schedule 1 arose out of a perceived risk of liability for NSW police officers involved in the response to an active armed offender (AAO) incident, given the extreme danger involved in such a response.

The PANSW sought to ensure the bill only protected *individual officers* from liability under the WHS Act, and did not in any way affect the WHS obligations the NSW Police Force owes its officers and members of the public, nor the liabilities in the event the NSW Police Force breaches those obligations.

I repeat, that was an excerpt of a response provided to me by one of the stakeholders, the Police Association of NSW, in my capacity as the shadow Minister for Justice and Police. As I said in my opening remarks, the Labor Opposition does not oppose this bill.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (12:14): I speak in support of the Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018. I commend the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation for introducing this bill, which will give effect to six of the recommendations of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 statutory review. The bill will make workers and workplaces in New South Wales safer and decrease the regulatory burden for business, while ensuring that the Work Health and Safety Act reflects the current operating environment in New South Wales. It also supports the Work Health and Safety Roadmap for NSW 2022 initiatives and the vision of healthy, safe, and productive working lives. The roadmap drives activities for improvement in work health and safety, and supports the New South Wales Government's reform agenda of protecting workers from harm, while increasing the competitiveness and confidence of business. An improvement in work health and safety in New South Wales is essential as the human and economic impact of workplace harm is too high.

In 2015 there were 60 worker fatalities in New South Wales, and in the 2015-16 financial year more than 30,000 workplace injuries and illnesses resulted in at least one week of workers compensation benefit claimed. In 2012-13 the economic cost of work-related injury and illness in New South Wales was estimated to be a staggering \$17.3 billion, or 3.7 per cent of the Gross State Product. The Work Health and Safety Roadmap for NSW 2022 addresses these safety, productivity and economic costs by providing targets against which to measure success, and has a three-pronged framework focused on key areas for improving work health and safety in this State. Its targets include a 20 per cent decline in worker fatalities in New South Wales due to injury, a 30 per cent decline in the incidence rate of claims in New South Wales for serious injuries and illnesses, and a 30 per cent decline in the incidence rate of claims for serious musculoskeletal injuries and illnesses by 2022. The first roadmap key area to embed a health and safety landscape in New South Wales workplaces will entrench the idea that everyone is responsible for work health and safety.

Since the Work Health and Safety Roadmap for NSW 2022 was launched, great achievements in embedding a health and safety landscape have been made. For example, the highly publicised Safety Starts With You campaign, which encourages a culture in which people can talk openly about safety, has been very effective in raising awareness around risk-taking behaviour in the workplace. The Quad Bike Safety Improvement Program provides free training, rebates and educational materials to reduce the unacceptable rates of injuries on farms. We know that more work is needed in this area, but these amendments will support that work going forward.

The second roadmap key area is to prioritise high-risk sectors, harms, workers and workplaces, and focuses efforts where they are most needed. The Hunter region's residential construction industry has one of the highest rates of workplace injuries. Each year an average of 730 construction workers are injured in the Hunter region, which costs approximately \$7.5 million in workers compensation claims. The TradieSafe project launched last year is also helping to reduce injuries in this high-risk sector and region through SafeWork NSW visits to identify and address safety risks on residential construction sites.

The third roadmap key area is focused on building exemplary regulatory services by being customer-focused, data-driven and innovative, and by positioning SafeWork NSW as a credible regulator. This bill supports these key roadmap initiatives. Allowing the regulators to record interviews after giving notice, and to obtain records and evidence from workers and businesses located interstate, will provide the regulators with accurate data to better assess, investigate, prioritise and address concerns where higher work health and safety risks exist.

When high-risk matters end up in court, the amendment to prevent challenges to the validity of regulator appointments and delegations will not only prevent large businesses from avoiding their obligations but also reinforce SafeWork NSW as a credible regulator. With a greater focus on data, clarifying legislative requirements and improving compliance and enforcement outcomes, SafeWork NSW will become a smarter and more influential regulator. Providing a safe workplace is not just good for workers; it reduces a business's liabilities and costs, and improves worker productivity. For those reasons, I have no hesitation in asserting this bill improves the health and safety of workers and workplaces within New South Wales by reducing risks to workers and others. It will assist in achieving the targets set out in the roadmap to decrease the number of work-related fatalities, and serious injuries and illnesses in New South Wales, and supports the roadmap's vision of "healthy, safe and productive working lives". I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (12:20): I commend the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation for bringing the Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018 to the House. He is a very hardworking Minister, and I look forward to welcoming him to Manly in a couple of days to host a seminar on scams and other important issues for senior citizens at our senior citizens centre. I will be pleased to see him visit the electorate of Manly and continue his good work. The bill will implement six of the recommendations from the recent statutory review of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, and strengthen work health and safety protections for the community of New South Wales.

The bill further complements the harmonised work health and safety laws upon which the New South Wales Work Health and Safety Act is based. The introduction of harmonised work health and safety laws in January 2012 was a significant reform to workplace health and safety laws. The harmonised work health and safety model law provides for the protection of the health and safety of workers and improvement in safety outcomes in workplaces, and a reduction in compliance costs for businesses and improved efficiency for regulatory agencies.

The New South Wales Work Health and Safety Act 2011 incorporates the work health and safety model law with some State-specific variations. One such variation is having two regulators for work health and safety in New South Wales—SafeWork NSW and the Resources Regulator. SafeWork NSW is responsible for regulating work health and safety at all New South Wales workplaces except for mining workplaces. The Resources Regulator is the New South Wales work health and safety regulator for mines and petroleum sites. SafeWork NSW and the Resources Regulator work together to discuss policy and legislation issues, but they work independently to regulate work health and safety in New South Wales.

With New South Wales consistently being the nation's leading economy, the work undertaken by the regulators to assist in making workplaces safer, healthier and more productive is very important. Their work not only reduces injuries and saves lives but also assists in ensuring that New South Wales workplaces are safer and healthier so that they are more productive and build on the New South Wales economy, which is going incredibly well. That is achieved in many ways including providing advice on improving work health and safety; licensing high-risk and potentially dangerous work; registering plant and machinery; and providing testing services for electrical, chemical and mechanical work.

Another major function of the regulators is to investigate workplace incidents and enforce work health and safety laws through prosecutions, proactive advisory visits, programs, campaigns and partnership—some of which the member for Drummoyne spoke about earlier. The bill supports the regulators in their important role of reducing the number of workplace illnesses, injuries and fatalities in several ways. Enabling the regulators to record interviews where notice has been given to the interviewee will save significant time and cost for both the regulators and businesses. Written records of interviews while they are in progress will no longer be required, which will result in great time saving and significant efficiencies. Facilitating proof of regulator appointments and delegations through certificates of evidence will mean that regulators will not waste their resources gathering evidence to prove that regulator appointments and delegations are valid when they are challenged by defendants in legal proceedings.

The extraterritoriality provision will allow the regulators to obtain documents or information located outside of the State during an investigation, rather than having to subpoena the information after court proceedings have commenced, as is currently the case. This amendment will directly help the regulators to reduce injuries and save lives as it will enable the regulators to thoroughly investigate incidents where records and evidence are located outside of New South Wales. The bill further aligns the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 with the current business practice of SafeWork NSW by removing reference to the use of facsimiles for the issuing and giving of notices. I fully support the Minister in introducing this bill to assist the regulators in their vital role of securing the health, safety and welfare of workers in New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (12:26): I support the Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018. The purpose of the bill is to amend the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to bring into effect six of the recommendations arising from the recent statutory review of the Act. The purpose of the statutory review, which is generally required of all new legislation in New South Wales, was to determine whether the policy objectives of the Work Health and Safety Act remain valid and whether the terms of the Act remain appropriate for securing those objectives. The Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation conducted the statutory review through the Better Regulation Division of the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation.

As members have heard in this debate, the review found that, overall, the objectives of the Work Health and Safety Act remain valid and its terms remain generally appropriate to secure those objectives. The review also made 11 recommendations to strengthen the Work Health and Safety Act to better reflect the operating environment in New South Wales, to decrease regulatory cost for business and to make the lives of workers and business owners healthier, safer and more productive. Work health and safety has an impact on the lives of all

New South Wales community members, whether it is those conducting a business or undertaking, workers and visitors to workplaces, or friends and family members of those who participate in the workforce.

I commend the Minister on the manner in which the statutory review was conducted. The review included extensive consultation with stakeholders and provided all members of the New South Wales community with an opportunity to have their say on whether or not they thought the work health and safety laws were working well. Consultation occurred from the outset, with input sought from more than 230 key stakeholders during the initial planning stages of the review. Feedback received during this process informed the scope and final terms of reference for the review. A period of public consultation on the New South Wales specific provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act, the Work Health and Safety Regulation and the current pre-work health and safety laws codes of practice was also undertaken between 11 November and 20 December 2016.

To aid this consultation, a discussion paper was developed and made available to the public to guide feedback. It provided a brief background to the statutory review and included 83 questions to prompt consideration and stimulate discussion. The discussion paper was posted on the New South Wales Government's Have Your Say website, along with a SurveyMonkey questionnaire to assist potential respondents in making submissions. In addition, the Government distributed the discussion paper by email to more than 200 stakeholders, with an invitation to participate in the review. The Government received 39 public submissions to the statutory review from a broad cross-section of the community including businesses, workers, industrial organisations, employer associations, community associations and government agencies.

The scope of the review was limited to the provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act and Work Health and Safety Regulation which specifically apply to New South Wales. Each submission was analysed against the provisions of the New South Wales Work Health and Safety legislation and the model laws to determine whether the submission was within, partially within or outside the scope of the review. Rather than ignoring feedback deemed outside the scope of the review, submissions related to the model laws rather than to those State-specific provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act have been collated and forwarded to the national model law review, which is being undertaken in 2018. Further, comments deemed out of scope—as they related to operational solutions or interventions rather than legislative amendments—have been forwarded to the New South Wales Work Health and Safety regulators for their consideration.

In addition to stakeholder and public consultation, the New South Wales Work Health and Safety regulators were consulted on an ongoing basis throughout the period of the review. To complement these consultative mechanisms, the Work Health and Safety Act Statutory Review Steering Committee was formed to provide high-level advice and oversight of the project and to endorse the review recommendations. The membership of this committee was comprised of representatives from various areas of the Department of Finance, Service and Innovation [DFSI], the Resources Regulator and SafeWork NSW. Prior to finalising the review recommendations, further consultation was undertaken with agencies within the DFSI cluster, with all comments given careful consideration. The statutory review and subsequent development of the bill has been a collaborative effort involving extensive consultation. As a result, the proposed amendments in the bill are reflective of the feedback received and will improve work health and safety outcomes for all New South Wales workplaces. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (12:29): I support the Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018, and I commend the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation for introducing the bill to the House to implement this important reform. The bill will protect members of the NSW Police Force involved in an operational response to an active armed offender—or AAO—incident by ensuring that they are not prosecuted for breaching work health and safety duties in relation to action taken in response to those incidents. The NSW Police Force introduced the police officer AAO training program in late 2015 in response to the changing environment and threat posed by AAOs, which is evident internationally, nationally and, unfortunately, in New South Wales.

The AAO training program equips officers with the skills, training and resources they need when first on the scene at a terrorist or high-risk incident. It gives our police the training and tactical skills to protect the community and police in environments when "contain and negotiate" tactics are not appropriate. The program is based on world's best practice, bringing the operational capacity of the NSW Police Force in line with leading combat agencies around the world. The training involves training techniques similar to those used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and introduces officers to different scenarios where they can develop the skills to deal with their changing and challenging environments.

During training, officers learn a range of tactics to combat active armed offenders, including tactics to eliminate those offenders. AAO training is conducted over four days and includes dynamic live-fire practice sessions at a shooting range. The program is in addition to mandatory firearms and defensive tactics training carried out by New South Wales officers every year. All existing New South Wales police officers, as well as all new recruits going through the Goulburn police academy, are required to undergo the AAO training. Almost all

of our police officers—and we have more than 16,700—have completed the state-of-the-art training program since its adoption in November 2015. By the end of November 2017, approximately 15,000 officers had completed the training.

In late 2017 at Sydney's Central station, Exercise Pantograph was held to train police and other emergency officers in responding to active armed offender scenarios. This large-scale, multi-agency exercise assists police and other agencies to identify improvements that can be implemented. The Active Armed Offender model was developed by Texas State University, whose experts have evaluated the NSW Police Force capability as outstanding. As members have already heard, this bill will assist police in taking appropriate action to prioritise public safety in AAO incidents, without having to fear a consequential prosecution under work health and safety laws. I understand that the training program will be continually reviewed to ensure the best outcomes for police and the general community, and I am confident that the outcome will be positive for police and the public. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:36): I support the Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018. I commend the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation for bringing this well-crafted bill to the House, and I note that those opposite do not oppose the bill. I acknowledge the fantastic contributions of not only the Minister but also the member for Ku-ring-gai, the member for Drummoyne, the member for Manly, the member for Cootamundra and the member for Murray, as well as the contributions of the member for Swansea and the member for Fairfield. The main objective of this bill is to amend the Work Health and Safety Act of 2011 to improve the compliance and enforcement measures available to the New South Wales work health and safety regulator—SafeWork NSW—and the Resources Regulator. The amendments will enable the Work Health and Safety Act to better respond to business practices in New South Wales and, more importantly, improve public safety. Section 276B of the Work Health and Safety Act states:

- (1) The Minister is to review this Act to determine whether the policy objectives of the Act remain valid and whether the terms of the Act remain appropriate for securing those objectives. The Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation has conducted this mandatory review through the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation, and the final review report was tabled in this Parliament on 22 June 2017. In saying that it also gives me the opportunity to thank and acknowledge all those involved in drafting this legislation—the staff from the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation: Jacqueline Green, Mark O'Brien, Deborah Davis, Natalie Bokeyar, Christopher Kane, Louise Waltus, Darren Riley and Robert Stobo; the staff from the Safe Work and Resources Regulator; and the staff of the Office of Police, particularly Deanne Black and Cath Mackson for their great work. Finally I acknowledge the outstanding work of Ed Clapin with the support of the Minister for Police, Troy Grant.

I commend the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation on these amendments. The bill recognises the unique challenges faced by our police officers when responding to an active armed offender [AAO] incident and provides clarity for our fantastic police officers about their workplace obligations in what are likely to be extremely challenging circumstances. I have personal experience of the outstanding work of the Brisbane Water and Tuggerah Lakes local area commands. I note that the member for Wyong is in the Chamber; we are on a unity ticket when it comes to our fantastic local area commands. They are literally the thin blue line that keeps us safe at night. They do an amazing job and I commend them. All members in this place stand by their local area commands and the men and women who do such a brilliant job in keeping us safe.

The bill will provide comfort to those police officers when they put their own lives at risk to protect members of the community in the rare and extreme circumstances of an AAO incident. I note the presence of the Government Whip in the Chamber. He supports his local area command and the brilliant work it does in the Camden electorate. The Government is committed to doing all it can to support those fantastic police undertaking what is a very difficult job, particularly in the challenging dynamic of life-threatening circumstances posed by the active armed offender. The Government is committed to providing police with the powers and resources they need to keep the community safe. The bill is just one way the Government is supporting our police. I am proud to be a member of this Government that has delivered an expenses budget of \$3.4 billion and a record capital works budget of \$243.7 million to the NSW Police Force in 2017-18. Those numbers are huge.

Mr James Griffin: How much?

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It was an expenses budget of \$3.4 billion and a record capital works budget of \$243.7 million. For example, the 2017-18 Police budget includes more than \$51 million in funding as part of our \$100 million Policing for Tomorrow Technology Fund. I note that Temporary Speaker Evans has spoken about the great work of local area commands in his electorate of Heathcote and fully supports the wonderful work those men and women do. The fund will ensure that our police officers have access to the latest and most innovative ways to prevent and respond to crime.

The fund provides state-of-the-art technology for officers in the field, including body-worn video cameras and mobile devices for frontline officers. As part of the New South Wales Government's ongoing commitment to provide officers with the equipment they need to safely and effectively disrupt, prevent and

respond to crime, new light armour vests are also being rolled out to frontline officers. Indeed, \$5 million has been allocated in the 2017-18 budget for light armour vests to improve safety for frontline officers, including those who find themselves responding to an AAO incident. The rollout of up to 14,000 vests will happen progressively until 2019 at a total cost of \$19.6 million. That is cheap indeed compared to the lives of those fantastic men and women on the front line.

Those vests are designed to provide ballistic and stab protection while allowing officers to be mobile and agile, as they are lightweight, can be worn under clothing and have the capacity to carry equipment for easier access. On a number of occasions I have told the Chamber that, shortly after being elected the member for Terrigal, I was lucky enough to spend an evening with some of the fantastic team of the Brisbane Water Local Area Command. It was an eye-opening experience. Having lived a relatively normal life, I had not been exposed to the rigours that our police see every day. On that Friday night I was able to try on some of the gear that our police officers wear. The current vests are quite heavy but with advances in technology those vests have improved and are now more lightweight, which allows our police officers to have greater mobility and to react faster and in a more timely manner.

In addition, \$15 million has been allocated in the 2017-18 budget to build the capacity of the NSW Police Force aerial surveillance and counterterrorism capability while \$5 million has been allocated to contribute to the \$29 million upgrade and replacement of police vehicles. The New South Wales Government is also committed to boosting the strength of the NSW Police Force. The authorised strength of the NSW Police Force was 16,757 police officers as at September 2017, with this Government having added 951 positions to the NSW Police Force since December 2011. That is almost 1,000 extra officers in the NSW Police Force since 2011. Classes graduate three times a year to replace and add to existing police numbers. The Government's commitment is to boost the authorised strength of the NSW Police Force to 16,795 just over this term of government alone.

The commissioner is re-engineering the NSW Police Force to ensure that those police officers are where they are needed most in our communities. I have said multiple times that the best judge of police resources are the police, not members of Parliament. This bill is one of the ways that the Government is continuing to support and resource the NSW Police Force so that our police can keep the community safe. I am confident that this bill, in addition to equipment and resourcing initiatives, will benefit the community and police officers responding to AAO incidents. I congratulate the Minister and staff on this amendment and commend the bill to the House.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (12:46): I support the Work Health and Safety Amendment Bill 2018. I commend the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation for introducing the bill to the House. As stated by members, the bill supports those outstanding members of the NSW Police Force who undertake the vital role of reducing violence and crime to keep our communities safe. I commend Superintendent Ward Hanson, Commander of Camden Local Area Command, who is stationed at Narellan police station. Superintendent Hanson has done an outstanding job in the years he has been at Camden. I thank him and each of the men and women at the Camden Local Area Command for their efforts. They do an outstanding job in what is quite often trying circumstances. We appreciate their efforts. Quite often the community does not acknowledge the wonderful work of our NSW Police Force but I do today.

The bill provides that police are to be given as much support as possible. As first responders, police must make time-critical, often split-second decisions. The bill provides that the operational focus of police officers will remain on ensuring the safety of the community. The amendments in this bill will help to protect members of the NSW Police Force involved in an operational response to an active armed offender [AAO] incident. It will ensure that they are not prosecuted for breaching work health and safety duties in relation to action taken in response to those incidents. This State has one of the biggest, best and most highly skilled police forces in the world, and this bill will help to support the officers who bravely put their lives on the line to protect our communities.

A real-life example of a potential danger that police are exposed to every day, although not specifically related to an AAO incident, occurred in January this year with the near-fatal stabbing of a police officer on Australia Day. Detective Sergeant Breda was stabbed when he and his colleagues tried to arrest an accused sex offender at a pub in Maroubra. Detective Sergeant Breda was stabbed in the chest and stomach before the offender was fatally shot by officers. Thankfully, following surgery, the officer's condition improved and he has now returned home. He, all of his colleagues and his family have the bipartisan support of each member of this House. Following the severe and life-threatening injuries he received his survival was amazing news. The NSW Police Force and Police Association rallied to the cause by spearheading a blood donation challenge, which was fantastic.

I will share with you some other examples of extraordinary courage, selflessness and professionalism shown by NSW Police Force officers who have been recognised for their bravery. In February last year two NSW Police Force special constables were awarded the Commissioner's Valour Award for risking their lives to take down an offender armed with a firearm who had just murdered civilian NSW Police Force employee Curtis Cheng. On 2 October 2015 Mr Cheng was murdered outside police headquarters in Parramatta as he left work.

One of the special constables stepped out from behind a wall and put himself in the line of fire to shoot the offender before he was able to claim more victims.

In September last year the Governor-General named 21 NSW Police Force officers to receive Australian bravery decorations, including the Star of Courage for Senior Constable Lowden. It was awarded for her conspicuous bravery. In August 2011, Senior Constable Lowden sat for three hours with the victim of a bomb hoax who had a device attached to her neck. A further 12 officers have been acknowledged for their bravery in responding to the bomb hoax. Sergeant Warburton and Senior Constable Duffy received bravery awards for responding to an ice-affected armed offender threatening a doctor at Nepean Hospital in January 2016.

Another four police officers received group bravery citations. Group bravery citations are awarded for collective acts of bravery by a group in extraordinary circumstances. A further two group bravery citations were awarded to officers who assisted men caught in floodwater near Lismore in June 2016. In October last year nine NSW Police Force officers were honoured at the Royal Humane Society of Australasia annual bravery awards presentation for putting their lives on the line to rescue a number of members of the public. These are just a few recent examples.

As members have heard, officers of the NSW Police Force constantly place their lives on the line while keeping the community safe. This bill acknowledges the unpredictable and extraordinary circumstances that police face when responding to AAO incidents in particular. I understand the bill has been developed in close consultation with the NSW Police Force and the Police Association of New South Wales. I am extremely confident the bill will benefit the community and help police officers respond to AAO incidents by bringing clarity to their position in these extraordinary circumstances.

I commend the Minister, who is present in the Chamber. Yesterday, I spoke to him in depth about the bill. A lot of thought has gone into it, and it will make a real difference to the men and women in the NSW Police Force. I thank the Minister for his efforts and for working collaboratively with the Office for Police, the Resources Regulator and SafeWork NSW. As the Minister said to me yesterday, "As proud as I am of this bill, my staff are the backbone of the office." I made a note of them when I spoke to the Minister, and I acknowledge them now: Chief of Staff Ben Coles; Policy Director Julia Steward, who is now in the gallery; Parliamentary Liaison Officer Richard Hodge; Departmental Liaison Officer Natalie Bokeyar; Department of Finance, Services and Innovation employees Marcel Savary and Jacqui Green; the Office for Police; SafeWork NSW; and the Resources Regulator. I commend the Minister on this very good bill, and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (12:56): In reply: As members have heard, the Government is committed to making the lives of workers, business owners and the general community healthier, safer and more productive, whilst assisting the police in protecting the public. A statutory review of the Act was conducted through the Better Regulation Division of the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation. The Better Regulation Division consulted with unions, workers, businesses, employer associations, government agencies, SafeWork NSW and the Resources Regulator, who are the New South Wales work health and safety regulators. Six of the review's recommendations will be implemented by this bill. It clarifies legislative requirements by aligning the Work Health and Safety Act with current operating practices and enables police officers to prioritise public safety when responding to active armed offender [AAO] incidents, without fear of potential prosecution.

The bill addresses some of the challenges associated with the ever-changing work environment where, due to technological advances, the workforce is becoming increasingly mobile. I will now comment on issues raised during the debate and provide further information. The member for Swansea talked about the report's recommendation for tripartite consultation. I will provide further information on that point. During the New South Wales statutory review a number of stakeholders made submissions that some form of local tripartite consultative mechanism should be reinstated at the State level. Following the statutory review, the New South Wales Centre for Work Health and Safety has been tasked with reporting to Government on options for strengthening tripartite consultation in New South Wales.

The centre is currently conducting a literature review on best practice consultative models across various jurisdictions and industries. The next phase of the project will involve targeted consultation with peak bodies and community groups to determine their needs and preferences. The Centre for Work Health and Safety was established in 2017. It brings together experts in the fields of research, insights and analytics, science, outreach and business to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders, industry representatives and the scientific community.

The aim of the centre is to leverage cutting edge research and data to create awareness, suggest smarter approaches and bring about behavioural change in work, health and safety in New South Wales. The centre collaborates and affiliates with industry representatives, internal and external stakeholders and eminent research

providers. Some of the centre's partners include Unions NSW, the Black Dog Institute and the Safety Institute of Australia. In the meantime, Safe Work Australia continues to provide the foundation of tripartite policy development. Safe Work Australia is a tripartite body, working in partnership with governments, employers and employees. Safe Work Australia's members currently include Michael Borowick from the Australian Council of Trade Unions and Andrew Dettmer of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

A further strategic outcome of the roadmap strategy is that SafeWork NSW will enforce work health and safety [WHS] laws to protect workers and ensure there is no competitive advantage through negligence. Many public submissions to the statutory review of the Work Health and Safety Act suggested that consideration be given to increasing the penalty notice amounts and extending the application of penalty notice offences. This suggestion was adopted, with the statutory review making recommendations to introduce penalty notice offences for unauthorised high-risk work and failing to manage and minimise the risk of falls from heights. In response, in November 2017, the Government prescribed these offences as offences for which penalty notices may be issued.

To accompany the introduction of the new penalty notice offences, SafeWork NSW has commenced a 12-month statewide safety blitz targeting construction sites to ensure businesses are taking the right precautions to keep workers safe. Since the commencement of the safety blitz on 1 November 2017 and up until 31 January this year, there have been a total of 91 prohibition notices and 295 improvement notices issued. In addition, 63 penalty notices have been issued relating to falls from heights and five for unauthorised work. Penalty notices send a quick and efficient signal to operators that the regulator is serious about effecting behavioural change by those who breach their work health and safety obligations in situations where serious injury has not occurred.

With the creation of these new penalty notice offences, SafeWork NSW can now more efficiently and effectively undertake compliance and enforcement activities in these high-risk areas. The NSW Police Force requested the AAO amendment to ensure that police officers who are responding to active armed offender incidents can act quickly and decisively to stop these offenders from harming others. The drafting of the bill was undertaken in close consultation with the Office for Police and the Police Association of New South Wales. The amendment recognises the unique challenges of police officers in responding to active armed offenders and protecting the community.

Members have been interested to understand why the statutory review focused only on New South Wales-specific provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act. To address that point, the review only considered the New South Wales-specific provisions of the Act and Regulation because the model Act and Regulation, upon which the New South Wales legislation is based, were subject to the Council of Australian Governments examination of work health and safety laws in 2014-15 and are being reviewed again at the national level in 2018. The New South Wales statutory review did not want to duplicate the activities of the national review. Feedback from stakeholders was sought when determining the scope of the statutory review and informed the final terms of reference authorised by the former Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation. This included expressly focusing the review on the New South Wales-specific provisions.

The statutory review involved extensive consultation with stakeholders and provided all members of the New South Wales community the opportunity to have their say on whether or not they thought the work health and safety laws were working well. Consultation occurred from the outset with an initial paper regarding the potential scope of the review being sent to more than 230 stakeholders, with the feedback received informing the final terms of reference for the review. Public consultation was also undertaken between 11 November 2016 and 20 December 2016 on the New South Wales-specific provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011. To aid this consultation, a discussion paper entitled the "Statutory Review of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 Discussion Paper" was developed to guide feedback. It provided a brief background to the statutory review and included 83 questions to prompt consideration and stimulate discussion.

The New South Wales Government posted the discussion paper on its "Have Your Say" website along with a SurveyMonkey questionnaire to assist potential respondents in making submissions. The Government received 39 public submissions to the statutory review from a broad cross-section of the community, including unions, workers, businesses, employer associations, community associations and government agencies. Consultation with the WHS regulators—SafeWork NSW and the Resources Regulator—was also undertaken on an ongoing basis throughout the period of the review. The Commonwealth Department of Employment has further been notified of the proposed amendments.

The New South Wales Work Health and Safety Act 2011 incorporates the terms of the work health and safety model law in addition to some State-specific variations. The model law allows for limited variations by each jurisdiction to enable local matters to be addressed and to ensure the workability of the model provisions without affecting harmonisation. New South Wales has some unique provisions relating to having two regulators for work health and safety, SafeWork NSW and the Resources Regulator; permitting industrial organisations to

bring proceedings for an offence under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 in certain circumstances; and reviewing the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 in accordance with New South Wales parliamentary practice.

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 was only required to be statutorily reviewed five years from the date of assent of the Act, which is in accordance with New South Wales parliamentary practice and is generally required of all new legislation in New South Wales. However, the Act can be reviewed at any other time at the instigation of the Government. A review of the model work health and safety laws upon which the New South Wales Work Health and Safety Act 2011 is based is being undertaken in 2018. This review is being coordinated by Safe Work Australia. A lot more work has to be done and the opportunity for New South Wales to engage in the review of the model laws is one of which the Government is very much excited to be a part. Our aim is focused on ensuring that every worker in this State goes to work in the morning and comes home safely to their families at night. I know that has bipartisan support in this Chamber.

Before closing, I want to mention the important work being undertaken by SafeWork NSW to improve safety in New South Wales workplaces and to keep our workers safe. SafeWork NSW is committed to providing a transparent and consistent approach to its compliance and enforcement activities with the aim of promoting a competitive, confident and protected New South Wales. Compliance and enforcement activities undertaken by SafeWork NSW include: assisting compliance through the provision of guidance, information, education and advice; verifying and securing compliance through incident investigations, workplace inspections, audits, agreed actions and issuing improvement and prohibition notices; court sanctions involving criminal proceedings and court orders; and other sanctions including enforceable undertakings, and issuing penalty notices and warnings.

The type of interaction implemented depends on a range of factors including the level of risk, public interest and due diligence effort associated with each case, and is determined with reference to the National Compliance and Enforcement Policy. In addition, the Work Health and Safety Roadmap 2022 provides for prioritising sectors, harms, workers and workplaces where the most significant work health and safety risks exist. Ms Marie Boland has been appointed by Safe Work Australia as an independent reviewer of the national work health and safety model laws. Ms Boland, former executive director of SafeWork South Australia, brings to her role expertise and experience gained through years of involvement in work health and safety policy and regulation. Public consultation to explore how the model work health and safety laws are working in practice is now open. Ms Boland is conducting face-to-face consultations in metropolitan and regional areas around Australia, including in Sydney and Tamworth.

Ms Boland has invited a broad range of parties to attend these sessions, including State and Territory regulators; unions, employer and industry organisations and peak bodies; small- and medium-sized businesses; cross-border businesses; health and safety representatives; Commonwealth, State and Territory government agencies, with respect to governments as employers; family advocacy groups; work health and safety practitioners; lawyers and prosecutors; industrial magistrates; and academics. During the statutory review of the New South Wales-specific provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act, a number of comments were made in submissions about national work health and safety model law provisions. The New South Wales Department of Finance, Services and Innovation has already forwarded those comments to Ms Boland for consideration as part of the national review. Ms Boland is due to present her final report to Safe Work Australia in December 2018.

I thank all members of this House who participated in this important debate. I thank them for their concern about improving worker health and safety in New South Wales. I particularly acknowledge the shadow Minister, my counterpart, Ms Yasmin Catley, for her hard work and interest in this area. I also congratulate and thank Mr Alister Henskens, the member for Ku-ring-gai; Mr Guy Zangari, the member for Fairfield; Mr John Sidoti, the member for Drummoyne; Mr James Griffin, the member for Manly; Ms Steph Cook, the fantastic new member for Cootamundra; Mr Austin Evans, the new member for Murray; Mr Adam Crouch, the member for Terrigal; and Mr Chris Patterson, the member for Camden. Each of those members is genuinely committed to worker health and safety in New South Wales and to ensuring that we have the best laws in the country to protect our workers and to keep them safe.

Departmental officers do not always get recognised or noticed for the phenomenal work they do behind the scenes to bring laws to this place. As Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, I see examples of that every day of the week. I particularly acknowledge the incredible team at the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation: Jacqueline Green, Mark O'Brien, Deborah Davis, Natalie Bokeyar, Christopher Kane, Louise Waltus, Darren Riley and Robert Stobo. I recognise all the staff at SafeWork NSW and the Resources Regulator and also the staff at the Office for Police, particularly Deanne Black and Cath Mackson. I also acknowledge Ed Clapin and Minister Grant for their interest in this important area.

I take this opportunity to put on record my appreciation of my personal staff. I particularly acknowledge the hard work of Julia Steward, who has had carriage of the bill for the past couple of weeks. She has done a great job engaging with stakeholders, briefing the Opposition and getting the bill to this place. I thank her for her hard

work over the past couple of weeks in particular, but also for the past year. I also acknowledge Ben Coles, my amazing chief of staff and Lisa Mullins, my amazing deputy chief of staff, who is well known in this place for her years of service dedicated to improving the lives of people in New South Wales. I recognise Brooke Eggleton, whom I believe is the most outstanding media officer in the Government—although I cannot say that I am being objective. I also recognise Richard Hodge, Peter Poulos and Christine Chalker.

This bill is a demonstration of the Government's commitment to ensuring the protection and productivity of business and workers, including the hardworking police officers of New South Wales. My goal as the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation is to ensure that every worker in this State is able to go to work in the morning and come home safely to their families at night. I say to all those who have contributed to this legislation and those who have supported it that I am confident it will enhance our laws and improve the protections afforded to the incredible workers that make this State what it is. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr MATT KEAN: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

CRONULLA WOMAN OF THE YEAR KATE FITZSIMONS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (13:14): I congratulate 25-year-old Kate Fitzsimons on being named on International Women's Day the 2018 Cronulla Woman of the Year. In 2012, Kate tragically lost her sister Nicole in a motorbike accident in Thailand. Nicole was a talented dancer and devoted football fan and was on the brink of achieving her dream of becoming a sports journalist. In 2013, Kate left her corporate career to become the director of the Nicole Fitzsimons Foundation, which was founded by her family. The foundation aims to educate young Australians on the importance of travel safety overseas and assists talented and dedicated young performing artists and sportspeople with financial assistance to achieve their dreams. Kate has personally delivered presentations to almost 50,000 senior school students. The presentations hit home the reasons the students must never compromise their safety whilst travelling overseas. Kate's hard work and commitment to positively influencing young people made her an outstanding candidate for the award. More details about the foundation can be found at www.nicolefitzsimons.com. I congratulate Kate on this worthy award.

UKRAINIAN AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (13:15): Since 1948, when large numbers of Ukrainians began to migrate to Australia, the suburb of Lidcombe has been the hub of Ukrainian community life in New South Wales. I was honoured to join Ukrainian Australians on 26 November at the solemn commemoration of the Holodomor, the genocidal famine enforced by Josef Stalin's regime on the people of Ukraine in 1932-33. Seven million Ukrainians perished in the Holodomor. On 17 December 2017, I joined the Ukrainian community again, as Ukraine appointed its first consul to New South Wales—a well-known member of the community, Jaroslav Duma. On 26 February 2018, I hosted an event at the Parliament of New South Wales for supporters of the de-occupation of Crimea and for human rights there. His Excellency Dr Mykola Kulinich, Ukraine's Ambassador to Australia, Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile, members of the Ukrainian community, and the New South Wales Consular Corps attended this important event. I stand in solidarity with the people of occupied Crimea and with the Ukrainian people wherever they live, and I salute the contribution Ukrainians have made to our State and nation over the past 70 years.

NORTHHOLM GRAMMAR HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE ACHIEVERS

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (13:16): Today I congratulate the 2017 graduating class from Northholm Grammar for their fantastic Higher School Certificate results. Northholm Grammar was ranked 87 on the *Sydney Morning Herald's* list of top schools for New South Wales, which is a tremendous achievement. Over 45 per cent of students achieved at least one band 6; 76 per cent achieved at least one band 5; 18 per cent achieved an Australian tertiary admission rank [ATAR] of 90 or above; and 100 per cent of drama students achieved a band 6 result.

I make special mention of Carina Sirolli, who was on the All-round Achievers list for scoring 90 or above in at least 10 units. This meant she achieved an impressive ATAR of 99. Results like this are a testament not only to the work of the individual student but also to the dedication of both their parents and all the teachers at the school. I know Northholm Grammar will be proud of every student who worked so hard to achieve these

impressive results. I can say for sure that the students in the Northholm Grammar graduating class of 2017 have a very bright future ahead of them. I wish them every success in their future endeavours.

HUNTER WETLANDS CENTRE WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2018

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (13:17): Wallsend residents and visitors enjoyed the opportunity to attend an event celebrating 2018 World Wetlands Day, hosted in Shortland at our wonderful Hunter Wetlands Centre. Free trips and seminars were popular activities. Professor Tim Roberts summarised the day well, stating that visitors could see firsthand the ongoing transformation of marginal farmland and freshwater wetlands into mangrove and saltmarsh, now that the tidal flow has been restored. I thank the former Hunter Wetlands chief executive officer Stuart Blanch for organising the very successful event and I wish him all the best in the future. Our wetlands volunteers also deserve great praise. I thank them.

WINGHAM SHOW

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:18): Last weekend at the Wingham Showground I attended the 133rd Wingham Show. The show committee put together a jam-packed schedule across three days—horse and pony events in the main arena, woodchopping, loads of action over at the cattle and poultry pavilions, together with some wonderful displays from local high school students as well as a demolition derby and rodeo that entertained crowds on Saturday night. Great country shows like this one do not happen without a lot of hard work and organisation. I recognise from the Wingham Show Society its president, Ian Murray; the secretary-treasurer, Raelene Marshall; the canteen coordinator, Coleen Carle; the marketing assistant, Elaine Turner; administration assistants Susan Harris and Kim Sweeney; and all the stewards and judges.

CENTRAL COAST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY COMMITTEE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:19): Congratulations and a huge round of applause to all the members of the Central Coast International Women's Day Committee. The 2018 International Women's Day was a joy-filled, busy calendar item on the coast, thanks to this team. The events were emblazoned in our local papers and spoken about on our radio stations, and they were so varied and widespread that women and men across the coast participated. It was fabulous to join a number of elected local, State and Federal representative women at our launch at the Gosford RSL, which was sponsored by the Soroptimists. We were joined by retired mayor, Patricia Harrison, who was a leading female role model in our community in her time. The team had shoppers at Erina Fair and students at university and in many locations across the coast involved in celebrating the contribution of women to our community. Huge congratulations go to Sally, Chris, Lyn, Liz, Jill G and Jill D, Sandy, Rhonda, Robyn, Cheryl, Linda, Trish, Ainslie, Margaret, Bev and Liba and all their fabulous organisations, who do amazing work in supporting women on the beautiful Central Coast.

MANLY EAGLES STATE LEAGUE BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:20): I wish to update the House on the incredible success of the Manly Eagles under 18 baseball team, who flew to victory at the NSW State League Baseball Championships held at Blacktown last weekend. Breaking a 15-year premiership drought, the under 18 squad won the championship by defeating the Cronulla Sharks 3-1, with runs scored by Gabriel Mateu, Jaylin Rae and Sean Tanno. I extend commiserations to the Attorney-General and his Cronulla team. Congratulations to Josh Gessner, who had an outstanding performance from the mound, giving up just one run over six innings and with seven strikes to boot. His performance earned him the Most Valuable Player Award for the match. Congratulations on a great win for Manly also go to Aidan Torpey, who was named the Most Valuable Player for the season, and teammates Brendan Haithwaite, Filip Mijakovac, Kenshiro Nakashio, Vince Carreras, Blake Deegan, Ben Cooper and Liam Patterson as well as to the coaches and supporters.

SWANSEA CAVES JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (13:21): Every day in my community community-based organisations run by volunteers pull off enormous feats that deserve to be recognised. One of those is the Swansea Caves Junior Rugby League Football Club, which recently held a "Come and Try" event to promote the local footy club and get our kids active. I think I can safely say it was a roaring success. More than 100 players turned up to the event and 300 people in all, including Lyndon Shepherd from the National Rugby League, who works as a game development officer. Following the "Come and Try" event, the Swansea Caves football club has filled almost every team in the club and increased its number of teams in the Maitland-Newcastle competition by a whopping 50 per cent. It goes without saying that those events would not happen if not for the hard work of the volunteers on the ground. Well done to the club's committee. I look forward to watching Swansea Caves continue this success throughout the rest of the season.

COMMUNITY HUBS AUSTRALIA

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (13:22): Recently I visited the Community Hubs group at the Bert Oldfield Public School, Seven Hills, in the company of the Minister for Western Sydney. Community Hubs is a national program that aims to support migrant families and their children as they navigate the education system and strengthen their community relationships. Every hub is different, but activities include such things as playgroups, breakfast clubs, parenting and family support programs, homework clubs, story times, community kitchens and gardens, and linking families with appropriate social, education and health services. Community Hubs spans five local government areas in Western Sydney and has hubs in 22 schools. Community Hubs also services schools in my electorate, including Toongabbie East Public School and just outside my electorate at Westmead Public School. Community Hubs is doing great work in helping to make migrant families' lives easier across the electorate of Seven Hills and in broader Western Sydney.

WADALBA COMMUNITY SCHOOL MARKET

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (13:23): For several years the Wadalba Community School Parents and Citizens Association [P&C] has been fundraising to build a covered outdoor learning area [COLA]. Each year the association has held a market at the school as part of this effort. I have been lucky enough to attend both last year's market and the market that was recently held. Wadalba Community School has 1,500 students from kindergarten to year 12 and until recently was the school on the Central Coast with the largest maintenance backlog. It even featured among the highest backlog in the State.

Despite the Government's disregard for this large school, the P&C has demonstrated a strong and admirable commitment to seeing this project funded. Under the leadership of the P&C president, Brendon Bryant, there has been significant progress towards achieving their goal. This year I was able to secure \$50,000 in Community Building Partnership funding for the project, and the COLA should be completed this year. I hope to see the Wadalba Markets continue as a fundraising activity for the school in order to assist with funding for school formals and important infrastructure.

STEPHEN WARD SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT KATE SHELTON

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:24): I recognise Kate Shelton from my electorate, who is an employee of the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council and who recently was awarded the Stephen Ward Scholarship. The scholarship provides opportunities for local government employees to undertake further study, professional development or research while also honouring the life of former Shires Association President Stephen Ward. Kate started with Port Macquarie-Hastings Council as a trainee ranger in 2011. After completing her traineeship, Kate successfully applied for a permanent ranger role.

In early 2015, Kate stepped up into the position of development compliance officer and began investigating complaints related to unauthorised development and illegal land use. Kate currently is studying towards a graduate certificate in development assessment at the University of Technology Sydney. Kate will use the \$2,500 Stephen Ward Scholarship to undertake a certificate IV in government investigations with the Environment Protection Authority training unit. I congratulate Kate on her outstanding efforts working for the good of the local community, and I wish her all the best with her future studies.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM JAMES MARSHALL, OAM

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (13:25): I recognise in this House the late William James Marshall, OAM. Better known as Bill, Mr Marshall served 15 years as the town clerk in Orange. During that time Mr Marshall oversaw several large infrastructure projects that contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of Orange. Notably, Mr Marshall lobbied the Government for 10 straight years to have Orange connected with natural gas. It finally occurred in 1987. In 1976 Mr Marshall oversaw two major projects: the implementation of a \$20 million augmentation of sewage treatment works, and the construction of the Orange Civic Centre.

The centre remains one of the most prominent event venues in the city and routinely is used to this day. Mr Marshall held an honourable reputation of impartiality and demonstrated professionalism in his position, thus benefiting the community of Orange under his stewardship. Following his professional career, Mr Marshall dedicated his time and effort to an array of community organisations and causes. The community of Orange owes Mr Marshall a debt of gratitude for his significant contribution to the growth of the city, which now thrives as a result.

MINISTERS' AWARDS FOR WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT NOMINEE PRISCILLA BINGLEY

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (13:26): The Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government recognise the outstanding contributions and achievements of women in local government throughout New South Wales. On Wednesday 7 March 2018, I had the pleasure of congratulating horticulturalist Ms Priscilla Bingley in State Parliament for her nomination with respect to women in metropolitan traineeships or apprenticeships and to acknowledge her impressive dedication to maintaining council-owned gardens and land across The Hills to the highest standards. The diligent and determined workforce at The Hills Shire Council is the reason our local government area is considered the finest and greatest in the State. While Priscilla was not victorious in her nominated field of award this year, I am certain she is more than worthy in the eyes of her cherished community.

DISABILITY ADVOCACY SERVICES FUNDING

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (13:27): I recognise the disability advocates, people with disabilities and their families who joined me in Newcastle last week to raise their voices and to shout "Stand By Me" and "Don't Ditch Disability Advocacy". They all know that there is a need for disability advocacy in New South Wales to be funded. I thank Mark Grierson, who is the chief executive officer of Disability Advocacy NSW, David Belcher and Catherine Mahony from Community Disability Alliance Hunter, Serena Ovens, who is the executive officer of the Physical Disability Council of Australia, and Hunter workers for their contribution to the rally.

As at 1 July this year, disability advocacy services such as Vision Australia, Physical Disability Council of NSW, and the Deaf Society of NSW may no longer be able to empower people with disabilities by providing to them the information and support that they need to live their lives free from discrimination. Now more than ever people with disabilities need advocates to navigate the rapidly changing landscape of disability services. I thank everyone who raised their voice last week in the Hunter. I join them in their plea to this Government: Don't ditch disability advocacy.

DAVIDSON ELECTORATE VOLUNTEER RURAL FIRE SERVICE BRIGADE

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (13:28): Last Sunday, 11 March 2018, I attended the Davidson Volunteer Rural Fire Service Brigade's annual general meeting. It was held at the brigade's station in Borgnis Street, Davidson, in the new building extension that was funded partly from a State government grant and largely from money raised in the local community. I congratulate ongoing Brigade Captain Trent Dowling and his new team on their election and commend outgoing President Rory Amon for his service over the past three years. I again record my admiration for the way in which the NSW Rural Fire Service selflessly protects people and property from bushfires. I offer thanks particularly to all the Davidson brigade volunteers, who dedicated more than 15,000 operational hours over the past year and who also engage extremely positively with community groups in the surrounding area.

HURSTVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMUNITY BUILDING PARTNERSHIP GRANT

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (13:29): Two weeks ago I had the pleasure of visiting Hurstville Public School to witness the opening of its new outdoor learning area, which was paid for with money from a Community Building Partnership grant. The school has designed and built an amazing area for students and the local community to use, which was completed over the summer holidays. I could see straightaway it will be a popular place for kids to hang out in the shade so they can read, talk to friends or play games. I also had the pleasure to award Hurstville Public School with another Community Building Partnership grant for an outdoor learning area next to the kindergarden buildings. I thank the parents and citizens association and the playground committee for taking the time and effort to apply for the grants. Without their commitment to the school, these great developments would not happen. I pay tribute to the leadership of Hurstville Public School, which is the third largest school in New South Wales.

IMPACT100 SYDNEY NORTH CHARITY GROUP

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:30): I support Impact100 Sydney North, which is a Mosman-founded organisation that relaunched for the year on 13 March. The organisation is a giving circle, which is a group of like-minded people who want to make a positive difference but may not have the individual capacity to make large gifts. The group pools its donations so that collectively the money has more impact. This collective giving movement has a philanthropic bent. Impact100 is a simple model that works. Donations of \$1,000 from 100 members are combined to make one grant of \$100,000, so no administrative overheads are taken out. Each \$1,000 donor votes for which charity receives the grant. I thank and congratulate all who are involved in the

program, including co-founders David Day and Tina Jackson, Gill Dryland, Andrew Everingham and Fairlie Ruggles. I encourage the North Shore community to support this fantastic initiative.

BOTANY BAY CITY COUNCIL STREETSWEEPER JOHN GARLAND

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (13:31): I draw the attention of the House to Mr John Garland of Rosebery, who commenced work in 1987 as a streetsweeper for the City of Botany Bay. John still works full time for Bayside Council's waste and recycling services. John is perhaps the best streetsweeper in all of Sydney. He has a passion for his work and takes pride in everything he does to beautify our local streets. Anyone who walks past his patch in and around the Eastlakes Shopping Centre, as I do, can attest to the high quality of his work. John is so good at his job that council has been nominated him for a Star Award because of the enormous number of compliments it receives from the community about his high standard of work. John is a fixture of our local community and can always be seen strolling along Botany Road in his Rabbitohs hat, walking his beloved dog and chatting to everybody who passes. The House should commend John's exceptional 31 years of service.

COOTA BEACH VOLLEYBALL CARNIVAL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (13:32): It is with great pleasure that I advise the House of the success of the fifteenth annual Coota Beach Volleyball Festival, which was held last month in my electorate of Cootamundra. More than 600 tonnes of sand transformed Murray Street into a sporting destination. The only thing missing was the sound of the waves on the beach. National and State representatives, 24 teams and 1,500 people from around Australia made their way to Cootamundra to compete in the biggest beach volleyball tournament in Australia. Festival committee chairwoman Janine Ricketts praised the commitment of the committee and acknowledged the support of the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council; Eulonga Quarries, Fallon Excavations, Don Manwaring, Pop's Plumbing, Steve Cross and Col Trickett. Team participants were full of praise for the festival. It was a great tribute to receive. Well done, everyone.

MOUNT DRUITT LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENT TARSA LINDELL

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (13:33): I congratulate Ms Tarsa Lindell on being awarded the Mount Druitt Local Woman of the Year Award. Tarsa is a long-term resident of Old Mount Druitt who combines family and work with a strong commitment to community service. Tarsa has 40 years of dedicated service to Housing NSW, supporting local people in need to find safe and secure housing. Tarsa is a housing specialist who assists high-needs clients. She also mentors and supports staff to become proficient in dealing with this highly complex group of clients. Some of her many achievements include being an active board member of the Women's Activities and Self Help House for the past 22 years, a member of the Diocesan Kolo Srpskih Sestara Serbian Sisters Circle for some 35 years, and a current board member of the Serbian Orthodox Church of St Nicholas. I am pleased that Tarsa has been recognised for her community work with this award.

GREEN POINT COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:34): I draw the attention of the House to the fantastic work happening at the Green Point Community Centre, which is located in my electorate of Terrigal. The Green Point Community Centre is a community-minded and community-driven organisation, which plays an important role in connecting people with our local area. I pay tribute to Marie, Roz and their team of volunteers who work tirelessly to serve the community. This team goes above and beyond the call of duty to organise activities, particularly for senior citizens. Throughout my time as the member for Terrigal, it has been a privilege to work with and support them. Last year I was able to secure \$5,000 for a coffee cart for the community centre. Recently, I announced funding of \$6,608 for a new garden project at the community centre. This Friday at the Green Point Community Centre I will be hosting a listening post, which is an opportunity for the local community of Green Point and surrounding suburbs to have their say and raise important issues. I look forward to being at the community centre on Friday. I commend the work of the Green Point Community Centre and its team of volunteers.

GREYSTANES LITTLE ATHLETICS CENTRE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:35): I acknowledge Greystanes Little Athletics Centre, which is a fantastic institution in the Prospect electorate. On Saturday 10 March the 2017-18 Little Athletics season finished. I had the pleasure of witnessing more than 300 children competing in discus, long jump, shot-put, hurdles, javelin and, of course, running. Little Athletics caters for a number of different age groups from tiny tots to under-17s. Greystanes Little Athletics Centre is managed entirely by the parents of the athletes on a voluntary basis, with many events conducted each week. The organisation has the ethos that it does not matter if a child places first, second, sixth or eighth in any event; it is the personal improvement and development that matters. I congratulate the Greystanes Little Athletics Centre, particularly the committee, President Mick Bale, and Secretary Tracy Lennon.

CUPITT'S WINERY

Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (13:36): I congratulate the iconic South Coast restaurant, winery and brewery, Cupitt's, on recently winning bronze at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards. The award winning winery won bronze in the Tourism Wineries, Distilleries and Breweries category, competing against wineries from across Australia. Cupitt's was established more than a decade ago and has been drawing visitors to southern Shoalhaven ever since. Cupitt's winery is a proud promoter of the South Coast and everything it has to offer. This award will raise the profile of not just our local food and wine offerings but the region as a whole. Tourism is an important industry for the South Coast and this award is recognition of the incredible work and expertise of our local tourism sector. The beautiful South Coast region has so much to offer domestic and international visitors, as the growing number of visitors show. We look forward to welcoming even more travellers to this beautiful part of the State as a result of this fantastic achievement. I congratulate founder Rosie Cupitt and all the staff at Cupitt's winery and restaurant.

GRANT MCBRIDE BATHS

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (13:37): I congratulate the Central Coast Council on its decision to name The Entrance ocean baths in honour of former Labor member for The Entrance, Grant McBride. Grant passed away on 12 February after suffering from Alzheimer's. Grant was a tireless supporter of the ocean baths and initiated the campaign that gathered more than 9,000 signatures for a petition which ensured that the baths were protected and heritage listed. It is fitting to name the baths "The Grant McBride Baths" in tribute to a man who gave a lot to The Entrance electorate during his tenure between 1992 and 2011.

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NSW AWARD RECIPIENT JIM CALLINAN

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (13:38): I congratulate Jim Callinan of Scone, who is recognised for his outstanding contribution to the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW, or the RAS. This year at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, the RAS will award Jim with an esteemed Champion of the RAS honour. In 1973 Jim Callinan first attended the Sydney Royal Easter Show as a strapper. He was encouraged to try his hand at announcing. For the 35 years since, he has been calling the campdrafting, stockhorse draft, polocrosse and pony club zone events at the show. Jim Callinan is an absolute legend in Scone and around the Upper Hunter. He is a terrific bloke who is well loved by everyone. This award is due recognition for a man who puts so much into the community.

CAMPBELLTOWN WOMAN OF THE YEAR KYLIE SEYMOUR

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (13:39): I congratulate 2018 Campbelltown Woman of the Year Ms Kylie Seymour. Kylie has represented our State and nation as a hockey umpire at the national and international levels and she is also a local primary school teacher at St Francis Catholic College in Edmondson Park. Kylie is a shining example of the many wonderful women in Campbelltown and across our great State. Last week I was delighted to join Kylie and her mum at the Women of the Year Awards ceremony, which coincided with International Women's Day, to celebrate the invaluable contribution that thousands of women make to every aspect of our society every day. I once again congratulate Kylie and all 2018 Woman of the Year Award recipients. I acknowledge all of the women in this Parliament for their invaluable contribution and passionate representation of their communities. I also acknowledge the women on staff, who all work so hard and make an amazing contribution.

MINISTERS' AWARDS FOR WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT NOMINEES

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:40): I acknowledge two women from the Myall Lakes electorate who were nominated for the Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government in 2018. Councillor Kathryn Bell was first elected to Taree City Council in 2008 and continued to serve that council until last year when she was re-elected to the new MidCoast Council. For 10 years Kathryn has served her community diligently, working alongside many community groups and being part of council committees to create better Manning Valley and mid North Coast areas. I also pay tribute to Executive Assistant for Community Spaces and Services Michelle Jobson. With the creation of MidCoast Council, Michelle has used her 22 years of experience to ensure that the merger is a success and that workplace culture is a priority. From coordinating managers and directors to assisting junior staff and serving customers, Michelle's "get it done" attitude has ensured that the community is benefiting. I thank Kathryn, Michelle and all of the talented women working in local government across New South Wales.

TRIBUTE TO GABRIELLA WEHBE

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (13:41): Last Friday our community lost an amazing young woman, Gabriella Marie Wehbe. Gabbi gave so much in her 19 short years and her funeral yesterday was the largest I have

ever encountered at Our Lady of Lebanon. It was standing—outside in the rain—room only. At 16 Gabbi was diagnosed with metastatic alveolar rhabdomyosarcoma and given only a 20 per cent chance of survival. In 2016 she underwent chemotherapy and radiotherapy throughout her Higher School Certificate year, when she was also vice-captain of Our Lady of Mercy College.

During that period Gabbi also helped Chris O'Brien Lifehouse raise more than \$500,000 for cancer treatment and was named the Parramatta Young Citizen of the Year. She was an incredible and dynamic young woman. Last time I saw Gabbi she was in remission and looking forward to studying physiotherapy at university. She was a really bubbly and energetic girl. It is not just her family who have been short-changed by her early passing but the entire community. She gave a lot in her short life and had so much more to give. I offer my condolences to the entire Wehbe family, especially Gabbi's parents, Jim and Loretta. May she rest in peace.

STEPHEN WARD SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT MICK JONES

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:42): I recognise Mick Jones from my electorate, who is an employee of Port Macquarie-Hastings Council and was recently awarded the Stephen Ward Scholarship. The Stephen Ward Scholarship provides opportunities for local government employees to undertake further study, professional development or research while also honouring the life of former Shires Association of NSW president Stephen Ward. In 2004 Mick started working with council as an engineering designer. Mick has extensive experience as an engineering designer and in previous roles undertook the project management of high-profile projects. Mick has complemented his professional skills with specialised training in intersections and roundabout design, 12D civil design software, environmental planning legislation, water sensitive urban design and the review of environmental factors. Mick will use the \$2,500 Stephen Ward Scholarship to study for a diploma of project management through TAFE NSW. I congratulate Mick on his outstanding efforts working for the good of the local community. I wish him all the best with his future studies.

PENRITH CITY COUNCIL GARBAGE COLLECTORS

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (13:43): I congratulate Penrith City Council on acting to protect the wages and conditions of its garbage collectors, many of whom live in my electorate and the electorates of Mulgoa and Penrith. On Monday night at an extraordinary meeting councillors debated a motion that would have caused our garbage collectors to lose their current wages, entitlements and conditions under a new contract. It would have meant that Penrith City Council garbage collectors, who are already struggling with the cost of living, would lose up to \$250 a week in their take-home pay packet. I was very pleased that the motion moved by the Liberal councillors was soundly defeated. I congratulate the garbage collectors on attending the meeting and speaking against the motion and thank the NSW Transport Workers Union for its support. I also congratulate the Labor councillors and Independent Councillor Kevin Crameri, who voted to support our Penrith garbos.

MAGPIES WAITARA CHARITY GROUP

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (13:44): Magpies Waitara is a wonderful club in Hornsby. Its members are always working tirelessly to give back to our local community. In late 2017 they held a community raffle that raised \$23,000 to donate to three local charities. Hornsby Connect, Ku-ring-gai Youth Development Service and Studio ARTES are worthwhile charities working hard for the people of Hornsby and they have all benefited from the generosity of the Magpies. That was not the only time the Magpies have given back to the community; they are the first to offer their services to local charities in Hornsby. I pay tribute to board President Brian Fulmer, Vice-President Peter O'Brien and directors Ian Jordison, Mike Mercer, Stephen Loccisano, Philip Murray and Michelle Kelly for their dedication to our community. Magpies Waitara is a great place to grab lunch; I encourage all members to drop in if they are ever in Hornsby. I thank the Magpies for going above and beyond to support local charities in the wonderful Hornsby shire.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY LIFE EXPO

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (13:45): On Saturday 10 March I was delighted to attend the Muslim Women's Welfare of Australia [MWWA] International Women's Day Life Expo at Liverpool Grand Hall. MWWA is a not-for-profit community-based organisation that is committed to enhancing the empowerment of Muslim women in the Australian community. On the day, participants were provided with access to support and service groups, and a number of workshops on a diverse range of activities were held. Representatives from many health organisations attended the expo to provide much-needed advice to the mothers, young women, older women and children who were there. I pay tribute to my very good friend Faten El Dana, OAM, and the entire Muslim Women's Welfare of Australia executive for coordinating the amazing event. I was grateful to be invited to support an important cause and take part in such a prestigious occasion.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

*Announcements***ART OF AGEING EXHIBITION**

The SPEAKER: I urge all members to view the Art of Ageing exhibition on display in the Fountain Court until 28 March 2018. It features the work of five regional photographers who were commissioned to capture the spirit of older people in their communities. The photographs celebrate the value, experience and contribution of older people to our communities, and challenge updated perceptions of ageing. It is worth taking a look at this fantastic exhibition.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I extend a warm welcome to participants of the Introduction to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly Public Sector Seminar, guests of the Speaker. The Department of the Legislative Assembly has run these seminars for almost six years and they are very popular. I met with the participants this morning and I trust they are finding the seminar useful and informative. I thank the member for Newtown, the member for Albury, the Government Whip and the Opposition Whip for attending the seminar. I extend a warm welcome to members of the Sydney Women's Consular Committee Club who joined me for lunch today. I thank also the member for Maitland, the member for North Shore, the Hon. Catherine Cusack and the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones for their contributions. We all had a wonderful time together. The members of the Sydney Women's Consular Committee Club are also guests of the Speaker.

I acknowledge Mr Harry Edmondson from Dubbo, guest of the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services, and member for Dubbo. There must be something in the water at Dubbo because it turns out some wonderful young people. I acknowledge a delegation of members from the Kiama Men's Shed, guests of the Parliamentary Secretary for Education and the Illawarra and South Coast. I acknowledge also in the gallery students and teachers from Carinya Christian School, Tamworth, guests of the Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Roads, Maritime and Transport, and member for Tamworth. I welcome students from the University of the Third Age, Lake Macquarie Campus, guests of the member for Lake Macquarie. Finally, I welcome the former member for Strathfield, Ms Virginia Judge, who is accompanied by the President of the Royal Society of New South Wales, Emeritus Professor Brynn Hibbert, FRSN; Adjunct Professor Paul Heather, AM, FRSN, FAIB; and Professor Bob Gordon Whittaker, AM, FRSN. I welcome you all to the Chamber.

*Notices***PRESENTATION**

[During the giving of notices of motions]

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Drummoyne to order for the first time.

*Question Time***SYDNEY STADIUMS**

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:24): My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Premier confirm that the Government will issue not one but two contracts for the new Moore Park stadium and that the first contract will be for the demolition of only Allianz Stadium in order to knock it down in a hurry before people have a chance to have their say at next March's election?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:24): Madam Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Bankstown that she will be removed from the Chamber if she continues to interject.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: First, I place on the record what the Leader of the Opposition told Mr Hadley about Allianz Stadium. He said, "I am keeping all my options open." But in relation to Parramatta Stadium he said, "Yep," and in relation to ANZ Stadium he said, "Yep." The Leader of the Opposition is a fraud because he is pretending—

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Port Stephens wishes to take a point of order. I could not hear what the Premier was saying, but I will listen to the point of order.

Ms Kate Washington: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. Personal reflections should be made by way of substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: Is the member referring to a personal reflection about an individual member? If so, I did not hear it.

Ms Kate Washington: It was to the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: The member for Port Stephens will resume her seat. There is no point of order. Those types of comments come from both sides of the Chamber on a daily basis.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Leader of the Opposition has a habit of telling people what he thinks they want to hear. He says one thing to Mr Hadley and he says another thing to the community. He is pretending to the rest of the community that he is not spending a dollar on stadiums. When Mr Hadley asked the Leader of the Opposition, "You support Parramatta Stadium?", his answer was, "Yep." When Mr Hadley said, "You support ANZ rectangular stadium?", he said, "Yep." And in answer to, "What about Alliance Stadium?", he said, "I will keep all my options open."

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: You may have missed this but this was in contradiction to your ruling yesterday regarding the response, "Yep," which was repeated by those opposite a number of times.

The SPEAKER: "Yep, yep, yep"—I heard it. Are they doing it again?

Ms Jodi McKay: Yes. I ask you to reinforce your ruling from yesterday.

The SPEAKER: I now will be watching members.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: How can the people of New South Wales trust someone who says one thing on 2GB and says another thing to the community?

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am proud of this Government's infrastructure record. Since we have been in government we have invested \$111 billion in schools, hospitals, roads and rail.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. We are getting the Premier's usual stumps speech.

The SPEAKER: The Premier remains relevant to the question she was asked.

Ms Jodi McKay: We want to know whether the Government has two contracts and whether the demolition will be rushed through.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. The Premier remains relevant to the question she was asked.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: This is new information. I have never talked about the \$111 billion that this Government has already spent. When the \$80 billion that is already in the budget is added over the next four years that will total a \$200 billion investment in infrastructure. Every time this Government announces a major project those opposite—

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Every time this Government raises an issue about its source of funds from asset recycling—

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Londonderry continues to interject, she will have an early exit today—as she did yesterday.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Every time we talk about asset recycling, Opposition members oppose everything this Government does.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is being relevant to the question she was asked.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Because of our vision for the future—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: The question that was asked was specifically about the demolition contract.

The SPEAKER: I can only ask that the Premier be relevant. The member for Strathfield should read the standing orders.

Ms Jodi McKay: The Premier has not dealt with that. Will the Premier rule that out in the lead-up to the election?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will read the standing orders. If she raises the same point of order again, she will be out of the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We have worked our guts out—

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We have worked our guts out and we have already invested \$111 billion on infrastructure and another \$80 billion is coming.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the second time. If the member for Keira makes those comments again he will be out of the Chamber for two days, today and tomorrow. His behaviour is unacceptable. We talk about reflections against other members and there it was.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: What is the member's point of order?

Mr Luke Foley: Five minutes and the Premier cannot mention this Government's stadium policy. Is it not going well? What a shambles the Premier is leading.

The SPEAKER: And the Leader of the Opposition does this every day.

Mr Luke Foley: Five minutes and the Premier cannot raise the business case.

The SPEAKER: I warn the Leader of the Opposition. He may think he is on a roll, but he will be outside if he continues. All members who are already on one or two calls to order are now deemed to be on three calls to order. Any member placed on one call to order will instantly be on three calls to order. Their behaviour is unacceptable. The level of noise, interjections and personal reflections from both sides of the House is unacceptable, given the number of people we have in the gallery this afternoon, including school students. Those students do not expect to see this type of behaviour from their members of Parliament. Some members think that is funny; they do not think I am serious.

Mr Luke Foley: Madam Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition does not have a question or a point of order, yet he stands at the microphone to argue. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Luke Foley: Further to your ruling, could you advise members why on earth, when the Premier says the Leader of the Opposition is a fraud and you say you cannot hear it, we should take a lecture from you on proper behaviour in this House?

The SPEAKER: That hurt—dagger to the heart!

HOSPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (14:31): I address my question to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government looking after the health needs of the people of Western Sydney?

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Keira to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of three hours.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Keira left the Chamber at 14:31.]

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:32): I thank the member for Riverstone for his question. Is the Leader of the Opposition not a bit touchy-touchy today?

The SPEAKER: That is hurtful.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Opposition members do not like the truth when the truth is called out.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have asked members to come to order. I have warned members about their disorderly behaviour.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I thank the member for Riverstone for accompanying me and the Minister for Health this morning to Mount Druitt where we saw—

Mr Edmond Atalla: Where is my invitation?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I will take the member for Mount Druitt there too.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Mount Druitt to order, which means that he is now on three calls to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Today was a special day because it was the final stage of the \$700 million redevelopment of Blacktown and Mount Druitt hospitals. What better way to finish off that redevelopment than the opening of a renal dialysis centre in the heart of the Mount Druitt complex. What made the three of us feel extremely special was when we spoke to the patients and their families about the impact the centre was having on them.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Mount Druitt.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I spoke to one woman who was having dialysis three times a week and she told me that prior to the opening of the renal dialysis centre at Mount Druitt she was spending 45 minutes travelling to Liverpool for treatment. With the opening of this centre it will take only five minutes to travel from her home to the centre. It adds considerable stress to people who are already under stress with their health condition when they have to travel 45 minutes to Liverpool and back three times a week. A renal dialysis centre in the heart of that community means that patients requiring regular dialysis treatment will be able to reduce their travel times which will make a huge difference to their lives.

I acknowledge Aunty Rita and many of the other uncles and aunts who attended the opening of the centre. Regrettably, as we all know, our Indigenous brothers and sisters have a higher proportion of people who need that dialysis machine. Many of them spoke to me about what it means for their community in Western Sydney to have that facility on their doorstep. I thank all of them for the input they had into the wonderful healing garden which is now open to all patients. Today reinforced in my mind what happens when a good government makes a commitment and delivers to communities in need.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mount Druitt will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Coincidentally, today, in addition to being able to complete this redevelopment, we were also able to acknowledge the release of a few figures which paint a very positive picture of how well our health system is doing. I am the first one to say that we know there is always room for improvement, but today it was pleasing to see that the Bureau of Health Information quarterly report showed that 80 per cent of patients spent four hours or less in the emergency department at Mount Druitt Hospital. That is a great result, given that it is a 0.8 per cent increase on the figures for last year. Under Labor, that figure was only 49 per cent. I congratulate the staff of the hospital for supporting the Government and making this happen. Meeting all the hardworking staff today—the nurse unit managers, the clinicians and the technicians—was a very positive experience.

Another interesting fact that came out of that quarterly report today is that at Mount Druitt Hospital 100 per cent of elective surgeries were performed on time—under Labor only 84 per cent were performed on time. There is always room for improvement, but across the State 97.5 per cent of elective surgeries were performed on time, and in Western Sydney that figure was above average at 98.8 per cent. We know that Western Sydney is growing rapidly, and that is why our record investment in health is making such a difference. Today it was not about the dollars; it was about the patients. We got a chance to meet the patients individually and to speak to them and their carers, who transport them often to get dialysis, and we know what a huge difference we are making. Not only the patients but also the staff spoke to us frankly about how their job is made easier now. I spoke to a patient, Ron—I hope he does not mind me speaking about this, but he had to have amputations done as a result of his kidney disease—and what he said about having less travel time and better surroundings and what it meant to him personally was a very compelling story. [*Extension of time*]

We know that it is not just the bricks and mortar that make a difference to people; it is what happens inside those buildings. We are very pleased to continue to support our staff. We have delivered an additional 9,400 doctors, nurses and midwives to our health system and we have opened more than 65 new or upgraded health facilities across the State. I know that those opposite do not like to be reminded of this, but when they left office the health budget was only \$15.5 billion. Today the health budget is \$23 billion every year, and that does not include for infrastructure; that is just for day-to-day services.

We know that those opposite do not like to be reminded of these facts, but they shut down hospital beds and they closed maternity units in many communities around the State. We are doing the exact opposite, and the good news is that there is much more to come. I am extremely positive about the impact our health investment will have on communities, individuals and families. We do not build things for the sake of it; we build them because it makes a difference to people's lives. That is why people elect us: to make decisions that make a difference to people's lives. But every time we talk about how we can raise the funds, how we can be more disciplined with managing the budget so we can put our dollars in health, those opposite oppose it. New South Wales has never spent this much on health at any time in history, and the good news is that we will continue to double our efforts in the future. I take this opportunity to thank the hardworking staff who made that possible and I give our commitment that we will continue to support them in the future.

NEPEAN HOSPITAL UPGRADE

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (14:39): My question is directed to the Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport. Given that 3,015 patients are waiting for elective surgery at Nepean Hospital, including 883 people waiting for orthopaedic surgery and 391 for tonsillectomies, why is the Minister rushing the building of a new stadium at Moore Park by 2021 while delaying the upgrade of Nepean Hospital until 2023?

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister should be given an opportunity to answer the question.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (14:40): It gives me great pleasure to answer this question from the member for Blue Mountains and to inform the House about the upgrade of Nepean Hospital, which is under construction—we are not waiting until 2023 to do it. Included in the \$576 million upgrade—

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear what the Minister is saying.

Mr STUART AYRES: Included in that upgrade are 12 new operating theatres. The reason for the backlogs in elective surgery is that the people of Penrith and Western Sydney never had a hospital under those opposite that could handle the amount of work required. Also included in the upgrade will be a new clinical services block and a new and expanded emergency department, which I will come back to a little later because it is a really good story. We are adding 200 beds to Nepean Hospital, we are building a new neonatal intensive care unit, we are creating new community health services and we are increasing the number of birthing suites to 18—an increase of 10.

Given that last year alone there were more than 5,000 births at the hospital, that is one of the best possible investments we can make. It is very obvious that if we are upgrading Nepean Hospital now, we are prioritising that over every stadium we have not yet built. We have to do this work because we have a growing population across Western Sydney. Over its 16 years in government Labor had an opportunity to ensure that Western Sydney had the infrastructure it needed.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Maitland to order for the first time, which means she is on three calls to order.

Mr STUART AYRES: It is important that the House is aware of the history of the emergency department at Nepean Hospital. In 2004 the Labor Government upgraded Nepean Hospital's emergency department and created an emergency department that it thought would last 20 years. The emergency department was built for 50,000 presentations, but the problem is that there are now 71,000 presentations at the emergency department. This Government recognises that, as the community grows, we have to invest in important infrastructure.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Londonderry.

Mr STUART AYRES: We have longer wait times for the emergency department at Nepean Hospital because those opposite never built an emergency department to cater for the growth across Western Sydney.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time, which means that she is on three calls to order.

Mr STUART AYRES: This is the absolute epitome of the way those opposite have dealt with infrastructure. The agenda of this Government has been to invest more than \$111 billion in infrastructure across New South Wales and, moving forward, there will be an additional \$90 billion. That means we have \$200 billion worth of infrastructure. The stadium investments represent just 1 per cent of that. There is no better example than Nepean Hospital of where we have decided to invest for the future. We are ensuring that there are enough birthing suites and that there is an emergency department that can cater for the growth across Western Sydney.

Ms Prue Car: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about why you are so obsessed with stadiums if health is such a problem. Just admit you have given up on your electorate, Stuart.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Londonderry from the Chamber under Standing Order 249.

[The member for Londonderry left the Chamber at 2.44 p.m. accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Mr STUART AYRES: The problem with the Opposition's agenda is that the truth always gets in the way of what the Labor Party is telling people. The simple fact of the matter is that the priority of this Government has been, and always will be, health and education but it does not mean that we cannot fund other things like arts

and culture facilities and sporting stadiums. One does not have to look any further than the great electorate of Penrith to see that priority in action.

REGIONAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (14:45): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business. What is the New South Wales Government doing to drive up sports participation in regional New South Wales?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:45): I thank the member for Tamworth and welcome all those in gallery from Tamworth—a lovely part of the world. The member for Tamworth is a great local member who advocates for his region. He has certainly kicked a few goals for the Tamworth electorate, making sure he delivers the infrastructure, amenities and services that the fantastic and growing centre of Tamworth deserves.

I remember last year going to Tamworth with the Premier during the Tamworth Country Music Festival when we announced \$4.25 million for the Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence in Tamworth, an example of this Government's commitment to investing in regional sports infrastructure to ensure that our kids have a pathway to become elite sportspeople and represent our nation and our State. We all know that the gems and champions who have become Australian heroes have originated from rural New South Wales. I know that the member for Tamworth still volunteers as a ground announcer at a number of the football matches in Tamworth. Some, not me, would say he is biased but I know he is passionate about regional New South Wales.

The question touches on this Government's focus on regional New South Wales, sharing its prosperity and making sure that we build the amenities for this generation and generations to come—not only the roads and the rail but also the schools and the hospitals—amenities that are so important for raising a family and for keeping our kids in regional communities, such as regional sports infrastructure. That is why in last year's budget, under the Regional Growth Fund of \$1.3 billion, the Government allocated \$100 million for regional sports infrastructure but also allocated \$200 million under the Stronger Country Communities Fund to work with local councils to deliver amenities and infrastructure at a grassroots level. Of course, we want to fund the big stuff, like we did with Lismore recently where we knocked the ball out of the park when we made the significant announcement for the multimillion dollar upgrade of the baseball park to make Lismore the home of baseball in New South Wales. That is part of this Government's commitment. But it is just as important to deliver at a local level. That is why recently I visited the electorate of Myall Lakes.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections from Opposition members.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: In Wingham we announced \$500,000 for the upgrade of a local ground. We also announced that in the next round of the Stronger Country Communities Fund an additional \$100 million will be given to support regional councils and regional communities to continue to build the sports infrastructure that is so important to regional communities. Those of us in government who were born and bred in regional New South Wales, have family there and who are raising a family in regional New South Wales love where we live but want to make sure that we continue to receive our fair share. Members opposite come into the House, throw grenades across the Chamber and say it is pork-barrelling because regional communities deserve their fair share.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Cessnock to order, which means he is on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: There is a sniff of an election in 12 months time so Labor members want to pretend that they care about regional New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Rockdale to order, which means that he is on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: They talk about investment out of the Snowy funds for regional New South Wales but they want to sneakily redefine regional New South Wales. I have spoken about this before. Labor members define Wollongong, Newcastle, Campbelltown and Liverpool as regional New South Wales. Labor wants to use the funds that we have allocated for regional New South Wales to pork-barrel and to win seats in the next election. It is not just about building infrastructure.

The SPEAKER: Order! If Opposition members wish to converse, they should do so outside the Chamber.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Members opposite do not understand when I talk about regional New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Port Stephens will be removed from the Chamber for three hours if she interjects again.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: According to the shadow Treasurer, regional New South Wales is two words. That is how much Labor understands about regional New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members are too noisy.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I might slow this down for the shadow Treasurer so that he can understand.

The SPEAKER: Order! Stop the clock. I would have thought Government members would listen silently to the Deputy Premier rather than having their own discussions. Government members should have manners and listen to the Deputy Premier in silence and with interest.

[Extension of time]

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Those in the gallery will see the contempt that the Opposition has for regional New South Wales. We come into this House day in and day out to talk about the hundreds of millions of dollars that are going into regional sports infrastructure, local amenities, local parks and local footpaths—the stuff that matters and makes regional cities and towns the great places that they are for generations to come—yet the Opposition shows complete contempt. Not only are we spending hundreds of millions of dollars on bricks and mortar building infrastructure; we also want to make sure we get kids into sport. That is why the New South Wales Government has introduced the Active Kids rebate where parents are given \$100 per child to enable their kids to participate in team sport. The Government is trying to help parents with the cost of living and this \$100 rebate per child to help kids get involved in sport is fantastic. We know that sport helps the health and wellbeing of our kids. It helps the Minister for Health not to worry about his budget; we can reduce his budget if we need to because we have more active and more healthy kids.

Mr Brad Hazzard: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Health is misinterpreting what was said; he should just settle down.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Most importantly, it is about kids coming together as a community within the sports clubs. In regional New South Wales sometimes the identity of an individual town is defined on the football field or the netball courts. It defines who we are with that cross-town rivalry; it could be Tamworth versus Armidale and I know there is rivalry there—not the two members but the communities. The Government has allocated \$355,000 to Clarence Valley Council for the Yamba Sports Complex; \$603,000 to Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council for community fitness infrastructure; \$375,000 to Nangus, Stockinbingal and Wallendbeen; while in Boorowa \$130,000 has been allocated to upgrade recreation park amenities. This is just a small list of the stuff that the Government is doing to support regional communities. *[Time expired.]*

SYDNEY STADIUMS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (14:53): My question is directed to the Minister for Sport. Infrastructure NSW has indicated that the Allianz Stadium redevelopment will be assessed as a State significant development. Can the Minister give the House an assurance that he will not seek to change this by exercising his power under the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Act to approve the demolition and rebuild of the stadium all by himself?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (14:54): It is actually a pretty good question from the member for Heffron.

The SPEAKER: They usually are.

Mr STUART AYRES: He is the local member and it is important that he has the ability to represent his local constituency. As the member for Heffron alluded to, section 16A of the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Act 1978 provides the Minister for Sport with the consent authority for doing upgrades and improvements across the Sydney Cricket Ground trust land—which is where the Sydney Cricket Ground [SCG] and Allianz Stadium are. I have informed Infrastructure NSW [INSW] that we will not utilise that Act to develop Allianz Stadium; that we have asked INSW to use the standard provisions under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for this development, which provides very consistent time lines during which the community can engage and undertake community consultation. It also provides a very clear understanding about how this development will continue.

One of the things that we have told people consistently is that the Government has made its decision to develop the new rectangular stadium at Moore Park exclusively on SCG trust land. It is a relatively tight footprint. The Rugby Australia building is there, and obviously the SCG is there. The impacts on the community should be dealt with properly through the process that is set out by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. I think

it is a good question and it is a perfectly good opportunity to explain to people how we are moving through that process. Once I again, it also allows me to continue to reinforce exactly why we need these great facilities. It has just come out in the media that even Rugby Australia is supporting the Government's decision to reinvest in stadiums, saying that—

Mr Luke Foley: That will swing the public.

Mr STUART AYRES: "That will sweep the public." Rugby Australia said that, without the ANZ redevelopment, the capacity to bid for the Rugby World Cup in 2027 would be hugely compromised or it would not even bid at all. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to send major events such as the Rugby World Cup to other cities or, even worse, to other countries then we know what his agenda is. The real question we have to ask is: Why is the Leader of the Opposition the only Labor leader anywhere in the country who does not want sporting infrastructure in his city? Even Daniel Andrews, the poster boy for those opposite, gets it. If you build really good facilities, you get the best events. Rugby Australia has just confirmed that. You need an upgraded Allianz; you need an upgraded ANZ. If you want to have the women's world cup, if you want to have the men's world cup in 2027, if you want to make sure that the British and Irish Lions come to Sydney every four years and not go to Perth, Adelaide, Brisbane or Melbourne, you have to build the facilities.

The public must understand that it is the Leader of the Opposition who wants to send every one of those events to other cities because he refuses to support New South Wales, support the major events economy and support sports across this State. We have already heard the NRL say how important the upgrade of sporting infrastructure is to its game. Rugby Australia is now supporting it. Sydney FC, one of the great club franchises across New South Wales, desperately needs to get into a new and upgraded facility to continue to grow all the opportunities for that particular club.

The Western Sydney Wanderers, which have brought fantastic opportunities across Western Sydney, are absolutely looking forward to getting back into the new Western Sydney Stadium. The Leader of the Opposition sends messages to those in the Labor Party to say that he is opposed to stadiums. But he sends a different message to football, a different message to rugby league and a different message to rugby union. What we really want to know is: What is the position of those opposite? Do they really want to invest in stadiums? If they have a position, they should tell us.

[*Interruption*]

That is right—Ray got it; Ray got it out of him in one very simple interview. Do I support a Western Sydney Stadium? Yep. Do I support Allianz? I am still keeping my options open so I am going to spend lots of money there anyhow. Do I support ANZ? Yep. Why is the Leader of the Opposition not honest with everyone? He should tell everyone that he has his own \$2 billion plan. You know what he can do? He can actually do what leaders do and get behind everyone in New South Wales and attract the best possible events to New South Wales. He can support the major events economy and he can deliver the best possible facilities that sport requires across the next 30 years in this State.

ACTIVE KIDS PROGRAM

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (14:59): My question is addressed to the very popular Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order so that the member can ask his question. Members who continue to interject will be removed from the Chamber. The member for Heathcote cannot even read the question without being interrupted.

[*Interruption*]

The SPEAKER: Order! From the intelligentsia from the Opposition. That was a nasty little interjection.

Mr LEE EVANS: How is the success of the—

The SPEAKER: Order! I suggest the member for Cessnock not continue with any further line of nastiness. It does not become him.

Mr Clayton Barr: You called me dumb and I was just asking—

The SPEAKER: I did not call the member for Cessnock dumb. I could, but I did not. I used the word "intelligentsia".

Mr Clayton Barr: I do not know what it means.

The SPEAKER: The member for Cessnock said he did not know what it meant.

Mr LEE EVANS: How is the success of the New South Wales Government's Active Kids program helping in increasing childhood participation in sport and creating a healthier New South Wales? Are there any other sport related matters?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (15:01): I am very pleased to have the Member for Heathcote—in fact, healthy Heathcote—advocating for healthy, active lifestyles and participation in sport. One of things that we are absolutely committed to as the Premier's priority is reducing childhood obesity by 5 per cent over 10 years. The best way that we can reduce childhood obesity is to have more kids active and playing sport in their communities. One of the things I hear all around New South Wales is that the cost of participating in sport can be expensive for families, and for mums and dads. What has the New South Wales Government done? We have established the Active Kids voucher program, which has been nothing short of a raging success. In fact, since we launched the program, a massive 434,023 vouchers have been downloaded by mums and dads right across New South Wales.

Although the member for Heathcote will be very proud of the number of vouchers in his electorate at the moment—7,237 vouchers in the member for Heathcote's electorate—he is actually ranked number 3 across the top 10 electorates around the State. I will run through them: 7,971 from Hornsby; 7,895 from Riverstone; 7,237 from Heathcote; 7,227 from Cronulla; 7,172 from Epping; and 6,813 from Camden. Good on the member from WallSEND, who recognises how important this program is in her electorate. She is one of those members on the opposite side of the Chamber who has been promoting the Active Kids voucher across her community, which is reflected in the more than 6,716 vouchers that have been downloaded across her electorate. The rebate is taking \$100 away from the cost of sport and putting it back into the pockets of mums and dads all over New South Wales. In many cases, this is being reinvested by families into the participation of sport. I will use a couple of quotes. Louise Nisbet said:

Thank you Office of Sport. As a mother of four the Active Kids vouchers means my kids can participate in two sports this year. Such a wonderful initiative.

There is a family of four kids playing only one sport but now playing two sports because the Government is investing in mums and dads, and healthy kids. Kelly Glover said:

This is a great way to get children involved in physical activity. Not only is it great for the health but their social wellbeing also. It teaches them how to be a part of a team while being active.

And Sarah Andur Art said:

This is brilliant for non profit sporting organisations who already struggle to get rego in low socio economic areas so thank you—it will help our clubs grow.

By using Service NSW that is exactly what was set up. The Service NSW customer interface provides people across New South Wales with access to their account to activate the Active Kids voucher. Rather than money having to change hands with club volunteers, people rock up with their voucher, they have their registration lowered and Service NSW pays directly to the clubs. I thank sporting clubs all over New South Wales that have been promoting this program. The Government has built a system that works for the volunteers. It has built a system that works for the mums and dads. It is putting money back into the pockets of parents all over New South Wales.

The Active Kids voucher system encourages kids to get out and be physically healthy and active. As well as Active Kids, this Government has continued to invest in infrastructure that helps people participate in sport. Earlier the Deputy Premier said how important the Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund and the Stronger Country Communities Fund will be. Recently I was with the member for Myall Lakes visiting one of the local rugby league clubs in his electorate. The club will receive new amenities such as toilets and showers, as well as having access to the Active Kids voucher. That means more kids playing sport at a lower cost in better facilities. This Government is providing all of those opportunities to participate in sport, whether in the bush or in the city. We know that is the single best way to reduce childhood obesity, which is a key target for this Government.

SYDNEY STADIUMS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:06): I direct a question to the Treasurer. Does the Treasurer support the Premier's claim that the Sydney stadiums will pay off their costs in two years? Will he release Treasury modelling to substantiate that?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (15:06): Here we are again. Unlike those opposite, this Government is investing in more infrastructure than this State has ever seen. This Government makes no apologies for making this city a world-class city and for making New South Wales a world-class State. Those opposite hate the stadiums policy. That is fine. This Government will build more hospitals, more schools, more roads and more rail than ever before.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer is being relevant. Does the member for Campbelltown have a different point of order? He should not continue jumping up; I will not tolerate it.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order is Standing Order 73. The Treasurer's personal reflections are irrelevant. Does he support the Premier's claim and will he release the modelling?

The SPEAKER: There were no personal reflections in the Treasurer's answer compared with what I sometimes hear from the Opposition side of the Chamber. There is no point of order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: A stadium is not a person. This Government has leadership. We want to turn New South Wales into a world-class State. On that side of the Chamber we have low-grade Luke, who wants to turn New South Wales into a second-rate State. He wants to turn New South Wales into an image of himself: a modest man who has everything to be modest about. Yesterday the member for Londonderry—

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 73. The Treasurer is making personal reflections against the Leader of the Opposition by calling him "low-grade".

The SPEAKER: I caution the Treasurer on the comments he directed at the Leader of the Opposition. Let us be kinder to one another.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Yesterday the Speaker correctly removed the member for Londonderry from the Chamber—I endorse that decision.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bankstown will be the next to leave the Chamber if she continues to interject.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am a hard marker. That was a good decision. Those opposite are worrying about where the National Rugby League will play its games. They will not play at Etihad; they will play with Eddie Obeid. The Government will take rugby league to Labor Party heartland and play games at every jail around the State. We will play at Cooma jail and Long Bay jail.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: The Treasurer is about as convincing as the corrections Minister. My point of order is Standing Order 73, personal reflections, and Standing Order 129. He is being totally irrelevant.

The SPEAKER: Personal reflections against whom? Who are the personal reflections against? Is it somebody in this Chamber? Is the member for Campbelltown taking offence on behalf of Eddie Obeid?

Mr Greg Warren: The Treasurer is personally reflecting on totally irrelevant matters. Will he release the modelling and does he support the Premier's unsubstantiated claim?

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown will resume his seat. He is taking offence on behalf of Eddie Obeid.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Those opposite cannot move away from the people who put them into Parliament. Here he is backing Eddie Obeid. The difference is that on this side of the House we are able to make these investments because we manage money well.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Campbelltown will cease calling out.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Under Labor the budget would be in deficit, there would be no capacity to invest in stadiums, there would be no capacity to invest in hospitals and there would be no capacity to invest in schools.

The SPEAKER: Order! I can hear the member for Port Stephens, but I cannot see her. She is not hiding herself.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: That is why this Government is building more than 120 new and upgraded schools. Labor closed 90 schools across the State. If those opposite want to talk about infrastructure, we will talk about infrastructure every day of the week, because this Government is building the infrastructure to make this State the best place in which to live, to work, to run a business and to raise a family. Every single transaction—

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 129. You can say the word "stadiums", Dominic. You are allowed to say the word. We know you hate it.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Minister is being absolutely relevant to the question he was asked.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I have said "stadiums" four times. I will say it again: Whether it is stadiums, schools, hospitals, road or rail, there is no State, there is no jurisdiction across the world that is investing in infrastructure like the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government. Those opposite disqualify themselves from any comments on an infrastructure projects because they oppose the means by which the funds are available.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Strathfield to order for the first time, which means she is on three calls to order.

TAFE NSW REFORMS

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (15:11): My question is addressed to the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills. How are the New South Wales Government reforms to TAFE NSW enabling more job opportunities in the State's health sector?

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills) (15:12): I thank the member for Myall Lakes for his question. I acknowledge his genuine interest in and support for TAFE NSW, and his involvement in his profession in the health sector before coming into this place. He is a supporter of the \$4.2 million upgrade of the Taree TAFE campus with a state-of-the-art nurse training facility, which is training more young people and older people in that community to work in an important sector for this State in which we are seeing more and more skills demand. The Government, through TAFE NSW, provides a wide array of training—more than 1,200 nationally accredited courses across all corners of this State—to meet the State's ever-growing, increasingly diverse skills needs. That is off the back of record infrastructure investment by the Government and record job creation in this State.

As we know, this State is the economic powerhouse of this nation and that is manifesting itself in huge skills demand, particularly in the health sector. TAFE NSW, as the country's premier vocational and training provider, is rising to meet that challenge. To illustrate, by the year 2021 nationally we will need to train another 80,000 nurses. New South Wales will carry the vast bulk of those new nurses. Unlike those opposite, this Government is building the health facilities for those people to work in, work that was not done in the years prior to this Government coming to office. This Government has made many decisions about reforming TAFE to make sure we are in the best position to allocate resources to frontline education, to remove back-office waste, and to target funding at infrastructure such as the new \$4.2 million facility at Taree to meet those extra needs.

For the information of the House, the Diploma of Nursing is offered by TAFE in 26 locations across the State. The Certificate III in Health Services Assistance, which is the most subscribed qualification in the health area, is delivered in every region of the State by TAFE NSW, with more than 2,500 enrolments last calendar year. I am happy to report to the House that enrolments in the Certificate III in Health Services Assistance are up 16 per cent this year compared with last year. This is on the back of the Premier's announcement last week about increasing enrolments in Certificate III courses for electricians, plumbers and carpenters—up 19 per cent, 11 per cent and 11 per cent respectively. To date across all of our trade qualifications this is an increase in enrolments by more than 8 per cent.

Ms Trish Doyle: Rubbish.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: The member for Blue Mountains says it is rubbish. What does she have against TAFE? The shadow Minister stood outside the front of Taree TAFE—

[*Interruption*]

The SPEAKER: Order! When the member for Blue Mountains interjects in that manner, she brings it upon herself.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: I am loath to say this because the member for Londonderry is not in the Chamber, but as the member for Blue Mountains interjected I almost feel obliged to say it. Two weeks ago the shadow skills Minister stood out the front of Taree TAFE. Mind you, this Government has just spent \$4.2 million on an upgrade of that TAFE campus and we have extra enrolments—yes, this is Kingswood back in October 2015 all over again. The member for Londonderry said to NBN News, "This Government's record on TAFE is miserable. All they do is attack it." If a \$4.2 million upgrade of a campus and increasing enrolments is attacking it, how does the Opposition describe its abysmal record on TAFE? Those opposite had 10 different institutes and a bloated bureaucracy, and spent 50¢ in every dollar paying administrators, not teachers.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maitland and the member for Swansea are fired up. Government members are not helping. I will stop the clock and add another two minutes due to the interjections from the member for Maitland and the member for Swansea.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: The worst thing is the question: When is one student not one student? Those opposite had this contrived model of counting student enrolments.

The SPEAKER: Order! This is my last warning to the member for Maitland.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: Students were actually counted twice and three times; some were counted four times. On this side of the House we believe that one student equals one enrolment. I know it is a new concept. *[Extension of time]*

But in spending almost half the TAFE budget on administration, those opposite also had this novel concept that owning and maintaining empty paddocks across the State, raising cattle, sheep and horses—they probably counted them as enrolments too—would somehow meet the skills needs of this State. Members on this side of the House are ensuring that every single dollar invested in TAFE NSW goes to frontline education to address the skills needs in the nursing sector, where 80,000 new nurses are needed, and it is working.

Ms Trish Doyle: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Blue Mountains will resume her seat. She has interjected and now she wants to take a point of order.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: They do not like it because it is working. Trade qualifications are up, health services sector qualification enrolments are up 16 per cent and they do not like it. We make no apologies for investing in TAFE in this State. *[Time expired.]*

CRUISE SHIP LOW SULPHUR FUEL REGULATION

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:18): My question is directed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. The Government claimed it could not implement its low sulphur fuel cruise ship regulation as it was overridden by the Commonwealth. But now in Senate estimates the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority said it was actually the New South Wales Government that chose to not regulate. Will the Minister now move to implement her own air quality regulations to protect the health of the people of Sydney?

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight) (15:19): I thank the member for Balmain for his question and for his continued interest in this issue that is of concern to his constituency and people generally within the cruise ship industry, a very important industry to the people of New South Wales. The New South Wales Government has been working in collaboration with the Commonwealth on this issue. As the member for Balmain knows, in October 2015—the Attorney General was the environment Minister at the time—we agreed that we would have a low sulphur marine fuel policy for Sydney. Subsequently amendments have been made to the Federal Government's anti-pollution laws that make that inoperable. But this Government has not walked away from it. To address this issue, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority has published a marine notice under the Navigation Act 2012 stating it will issue a formal direction to each cruise ship entering Sydney Harbour to use a maximum fuel oil sulphur content limit of 0.1 per cent while at berth. Cruise ships at berth are required to use low sulphur fuel under this Australian Maritime Safety Authority [AMSA] direction to reach 0.1 per cent.

The direction also allows for the use of an alternative method, such as an exhaust gas cleaning system or scrubbers to achieve the same outcome. I would love to see a media release from the member for Balmain on this issue. The good news is that our air quality monitored by the Port Authority confirms compliance with the AMSA direction. We are reaching that goal of 0.1 per cent. In 2020 all shipping vessels will be regulated to comply with the international standard established by MARPOL—International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships. That convention is only 0.5 per cent. Cruise vessels will be required at berth to maintain the 0.1 per cent sulphur standard in New South Wales.

HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (15:21): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research. How is the Government investing in the health of residents—

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the question because of the noise coming from Government members. The member for Camden will start again.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research. How is the Government investing in the health of residents of New South Wales and delivering better results in our hospitals?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (15:22): I thank the member for Camden for his question about how the Government is investing for residents

across this State in health infrastructure. As the member for Camden, he has been an amazing advocate for south-western Sydney and indeed for the whole of Western Sydney. It certainly has been a great day today. As the Premier indicated earlier, this morning she and I were at Mount Druitt Hospital where we met various locals as we opened the new dialysis unit, something that was never conceived by the Labor Party.

We also met some amazing doctors, nurses and representatives of the local Aboriginal community—Aunty Lillian, Aunty Rita and Uncle Danny. Uncle Danny is an amazing artist who has painted and been involved in the construction of an Aboriginal healing circle right outside the dialysis centre. He is doing a lot of work across Western Sydney and in Redfern. I thank each of them for taking part this morning with the Premier, the member for Riverstone and me in making sure that yet another facility is open for the people of Western Sydney. There is no question that every single member of the Liberal-Nationals Government loves Western Sydney; absolutely loves Western Sydney. We love south-western Sydney and we love the regions. We are delivering in a way that the former Labor Government never delivered at all. I will refer to some of the hospitals in the Western Sydney area and the work that has been going on there.

The Government has already spent \$134 million on stage two of the redevelopment of Campbelltown Hospital. It has committed \$900 million to Westmead, \$700 million to Mount Druitt and Blacktown, and \$576 million to Penrith. Over the past few weeks, we have heard Labor talk a lot about the Government's infrastructure spending. It is interesting to compare the previous Labor Government's health infrastructure spending to that of this Government, using Campbelltown as an example.

[*Interruption*]

I do not even know who you are so I am not going to worry. I just plucked that example out of the air to make a comparison. The previous Labor Government spent \$15.4 million on Campbelltown over seven years. How generous for Campbelltown: \$15.4 million. Since members on the Labor side probably do not know, I will ask the fabulous members of the Liberal-Nationals Government, who are supporting growth in health infrastructure in Western Sydney, what this Government has spent on it in the past seven years. What do members on this side think the Government has spent in seven years? Is it \$50 million?

Government members: No!

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is it \$100 million?

Government members: No!

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is it \$200 million?

Government members: No!

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is it \$300 million?

Government members: No!

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is it \$400 million?

Government members: No!

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is it \$500 million?

Government members: No!

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is it \$600 million?

Government members: No!

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is it \$700 million?

Government members: No!

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Is it \$766 million? A big yep: yep, yep, yep. [*Extension of time*]

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: Madam Speaker, you have been very pointed in your commentary regarding the behaviour of the Opposition today, but we have not behaved in the way that members opposite are behaving now.

The SPEAKER: I have been very pointed in my criticism of those on the Government benches.

Ms Jodi McKay: You have had three Opposition members removed from the Chamber today, yet not one of those opposite have received a warning after that performance.

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will be removed next if she does not resume her seat. Stop the clock. The member for Strathfield is quite wrong to assert that I have not paid any attention to those on the Government benches or made note of their behaviour; I certainly have.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order. The behaviour of Government members—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Was fantastic!

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is not helping.

Mr Michael Daley: The member for Strathfield makes a valid point, Madam Speaker. Government members have not been called to order, despite having been incited by the overacting Minister to behave as though they were at a football match. Not one of them is on a call to order. I do not know if you are deaf in your right ear and blind in your right eye—

The SPEAKER: I find that offensive and ageist. The member will resume his seat. Government members are not interjecting.

Mr Michael Daley: Your behaviour from the chair is tantamount to cheating.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn Government members about their behaviour. The member for Maroubra will not tell me what to do.

Mr Michael Daley: You need someone to tell you what to do because you are losing control of the House.

The SPEAKER: That is bullying behaviour.

Ms Jodi McKay: I want to take a point of order.

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will resume her seat.

Ms Jodi McKay: No. Time and again, you have accused those on this side of the House of bullying.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Strathfield from the Chamber for three hours under Standing Order 249.

Ms Jodi McKay: You cannot make that sort of accusation about people in this House. I ask you to apologise for that comment.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Strathfield. The member may return to the Chamber in two days.

Ms Jodi McKay: It is an offensive comment that you have made time and again to people on this side of the House. You have lost control; you are completely and utterly out of order.

[The member for Strathfield left the Chamber at 15:29 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The short answer is: Those opposite spent a pittance on hospitals; we are spending a fortune to ensure that health infrastructure is well cared for across this State and particularly in Western and south-western Sydney. But it does not stop in south-west Sydney. Where is the member for Coffs Harbour? The Government is spending \$156 million in Coffs Harbour. The member for Monaro? We are spending \$10 million in Cooma. The member for Drummoyne? We are spending \$341 million in Concord. The member for Goulburn? We are spending \$120 million in Goulburn.

While we sit here listening to the drivel coming from the Labor Party, this is what the Coalition is spending right now. We are spending \$200 million in Hornsby, \$30 million in Inverell, and \$450 million in Maitland. Can I hear a thankyou? In Mudgee, \$70 million; Nepean, \$550 million; Randwick Campus, \$720 million. Where is the member for Shellharbour? She has disappeared. We are spending \$251 million in Shellharbour. There is the member for Shellharbour—she should say, "Thank you." In Lismore, \$52.5 million and in Albury, \$30 million. We are spending \$200 million on Wyong Hospital, which the former Labor Government was going to close. The Coalition is delivering for health infrastructure; those opposite delivered nought.

*Committees***COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION****Government Response: Review of the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 Annual Reports of the ICAC Inspector**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the Government Response to report 3/56 of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled, "Review of the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 Annual Reports of the ICAC Inspector", received 8 March 2018.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (PAC)**Government Response: Examination of the Auditor-General's performance audit reports July 2015 - January 2016**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the Government Response to report 5/56 of the Public Accounts Committee entitled, "Examination of the Auditor-General's performance audit reports July 2015–January 2016", received 13 March 2018.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

The CLERK: I announce that the following petitions signed by fewer than 500 persons have been lodged for presentation:

Pet Shops

Petition opposing the sale of animals in pet shops, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Companion Animals on Public Transport

Petition requesting that companion animals be allowed to travel on all public transport, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

*Business of the House***BUSINESS LAPSED**

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105(3):

- (1) General Business Notice of Motion (Bills) No. 1 [Police Amendment (Rewards for Information on Serious Crimes Bill)] and General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) Nos 2360 to 2378 and 2380 have lapsed.
- (2) General Business Notices of Motion (General Notices) Nos 2381 to 2399 will lapse tomorrow.

HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE**Reordering**

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:33): I move:

That the General Business Notice of Motion (General Notice) given by me this day [Health Infrastructure Spending] have precedence on Thursday 15 March 2018.

The House should give precedence to my motion tomorrow, which is in the following terms:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises the record investment of the Government in delivering brand-new and redeveloped health facilities and infrastructure that are vital to communities.
- (2) Supports the continued investment of health infrastructure funding, with \$7.7 billion to be invested over the next four years. Our investment is delivering for everyone in this State. The Government is delivering projects in every local health district, meaning that more and more people are experiencing the benefits of new or upgraded facilities. We have made massive investments in Western Sydney. They include more than \$700 million for Blacktown and Mount Druitt hospitals, more than \$900 million for the redevelopment of Westmead Hospital and the Children's Hospital at Westmead, \$550 million for Nepean Hospital and the integrated ambulatory services redevelopment, and \$632 million for stage two of Campbelltown Hospital. We have also begun initial planning works for a brand new facility at Rouse Hill and the redevelopment of Liverpool Hospital.

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members will cease their private conversations. It is disrespectful to the member for Terrigal. The member will be heard in silence.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: We are investing in brand-new facilities in rural and regional New South Wales. Our investments include \$340 million for Gosford Hospital, \$200 million for Wyong Hospital, \$534 million for a brand new hospital at Tweed Valley, \$450 million for a brand new hospital at Maitland, \$73 million for a brand

new hospital at Macksville and \$70.2 million for a brand new hospital at Mudgee. We are revitalising northern beaches facilities through a \$600 million contribution to a new world-class Northern Beaches Hospital that will be operated by HealthScope. There will be three new community health facilities on the northern beaches and Mona Vale Hospital will be modernised.

We have committed \$300 million to stage five of the Multipurpose Service Program, which is aimed at providing improved access to health and aged-care services. As I outlined earlier, we have made billions of dollars worth of investments across areas such as Kogarah, Blacktown, Liverpool, Penrith, Northmead, Artarmon, Caringbah and Haberfield. The Government will continue to deliver for all communities across New South Wales and that is why this motion should have precedence tomorrow.

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (15:36): The motion of which I gave notice earlier should be given priority tomorrow. I say to the National Rugby League [NRL] that the Premier may have told it yesterday that she is not for turning on her stadium splurge but the truth is that she does not possess the courage to see it through. She will leave the NRL stranded at the stadium that hosts grand finals and State of Origin games. We have seen it all before. On 13 February 2017 we were told, "The Berejiklian government has refused to back down on its council mergers in Sydney," but on 27 July 2017 Premier Berejiklian announced that her Government was abandoning forced council mergers. The Premier boasted that her new Fire and Emergency Services Levy was an historic economic reform. That was her boast—until 30 May 2017 when she backed down on it. The best bit is that at the time of the backdown one of her members spoke to the *Daily Telegraph* and the paper reported:

The MP said it was not a full backflip and the change ... would not be dumped entirely but the Premier and Treasurer Dominic Perrottet would go back and do more work on it.

How is that going? This Premier is always doing more work, but it never amounts to an agenda for the State. It is just a series of panicked manoeuvres to save her and the Government's skin. The Cabinet is not even considering stadiums this week because the Premier says she needs to do more work. Quick: Someone bring her more documents to study! The Premier will hit the books—as if that is a substitute for clarity of thought, for leadership or for knowing where she is taking the people. She just does not have it. She will take more time, she will read more documents and then she will fold, just like we have seen so many times before. Why do I know this? Because her eyes cannot hide the fear.

Every day we see it here and at her press conferences. We know the scared and darting eyes, the jerks of the head, the biting of the lip. The Premier is terrified that she is leading the Coalition parties back to where they have spent a majority of the last century—in opposition. We know this Premier does not have the courage of her convictions. We know she will back down on stadiums, just as she backed down on the Fire and Emergency Services Levy and forced council mergers. The more she disputes it and denies it, the closer the day of the backflip. We know she is not up to the job. What is more, so does she.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes49
Noes32
Majority.....17

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Elliott, Mr D
Goward, Ms P
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Provest, Mr G
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G

Aplin, Mr G
Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr A
Grant, Mr T
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Maguire, Mr D
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Roberts, Mr A
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

Ayres, Mr S
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Donato, Mr P
Evans, Mr L
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

AYES

Wilson, Ms F

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
 Barr, Mr C
 Crakanthorp, Mr T
 Doyle, Ms T (teller)
 Harris, Mr D
 Hornery, Ms S
 Lynch, Mr P
 Mihailuk, Ms T
 Piper, Mr G
 Tesch, Ms L
 Watson, Ms A (teller)

Atalla, Mr E
 Catley, Ms Y
 Daley, Mr M
 Finn, Ms J
 Harrison, Ms J
 Kamper, Mr S
 McDermott, Dr H
 Minns, Mr C
 Scully, Mr P
 Warren, Mr G
 Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
 Chanthivong, Mr A
 Dib, Mr J
 Foley, Mr L
 Hoenig, Mr R
 Leong, Ms J
 Mehan, Mr D
 Parker, Mr J
 Smith, Ms T F
 Washington, Ms K

PAIRS

Fraser, Mr A
 Gibbons, Ms M
 Rowell, Mr J

Cotsis, Ms S
 Haylen, Ms J
 Lalich, Mr N

Motion agreed to.*Motions Accorded Priority***WESTERN SYDNEY CITY DEAL****Consideration**

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (15:45): My motion is about supporting the future growth of Western Sydney and it should be accorded priority. The historic Western Sydney City Deal that was signed by the Commonwealth and State governments and eight local councils will be a game changer for New South Wales. In the creation of this deal a number of councils put their communities ahead of politics. In particular, four Labor councils—Blue Mountains City Council, Campbelltown City Council, Penrith City Council and Liverpool City Council—came together with councils such as the Wollondilly Shire Council, Fairfield City Council and Hawkesbury City Council to deliver for their communities. Unfortunately, in the lead-up to the Western Sydney City Deal some Labor councillors were under enormous pressure not to sign. That is nothing short of disgraceful. Some are trying to score cheap political points by putting politics ahead of the people of Western Sydney.

The Western Sydney City Deal will give Western Sydney every opportunity to be the economic powerhouse that this State needs. It is well known across the western parkland city, as defined by the Greater Sydney Commission, that we need a north-south rail link. We need an opportunity to link the north-west through greater Penrith with the airport and then south towards Campbelltown. In fact, the north-south rail link is the centrepiece of the Western Sydney City Deal. The Commonwealth Government has recognised that it needs to play a greater role in delivering infrastructure, particularly in areas on the fringe of major metropolitan cities that have substantial growth in population. It has said that it will joint fund the north-south rail link from St Marys to the airport.

This is a fantastic deal for the people of New South Wales, but it is in complete contrast to that being offered by those opposite. Bill Shorten, Anthony Albanese and Luke Foley have said that their priority for connections to the airport will come from the east—namely, the Leppington rail line. They want to take the shortest and cheapest route to get to the airport. The problem is that those who live in the south-west, the north-west or greater Penrith will never be able to use that rail line to get anywhere near the airport or to the job-creating opportunities that will exist around the airport or in the aerotropolis in the city deal. The future of New South Wales is reliant on a strong and prosperous Western Sydney and that can be achieved if all sides of politics work together in the Western Sydney City Deal.

WATER COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Consideration

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (15:48): My motion should be accorded priority. The Premier needs to backflip on the stadium deal because this House needs to deal with so many other scandals. The water scandal is one such scandal that deserves priority in this House. This should be an easy one for the Liberals to support because it bags The Nationals out—for the last two weeks John Barilaro has been bagging the Liberals out. In the last 18 months we have seen nothing but corruption and misdeeds in the Darling River. Just this week we discovered that Minister Blair had informed Parliament that the Government had issued 120 infringement notices, but none had been issued. He also said there had been 12 criminal prosecutions, but there have been no prosecutions. But wait, it gets worse: The Ombudsman told the Minister at the time that he had misled Parliament and Minister Blair told no-one—that was because the Senate disallowance vote was taking place at precisely the same time.

I take the House back in history to "Hollywood" Humphries who used to always seek the spotlight; he is now in the witness protection program. I would not even be surprised if he came into the Chamber in a trench coat, hiding behind a pot plant. He stands accused of allowing an irrigator mate to illegally pump during a total water ban, thereby stealing water from his own constituents. Tough love does not get tougher than that. This issue will not be fixed under the leadership of Deputy Premier Barilaro. He does not have the integrity to do it; he stabbed his best mate in the back to get his current job. How can we rely on him to fix up the water problems in far western New South Wales? Is it not true that he did that to his best mate? He can live with the history of that.

The Deputy Premier has claimed that those on this side of the House are playing politics with this issue. Is Mark Hutton from Broken Hill playing politics? Is Badger Bates from the Barkindji people playing politics? Are the McBrides from Tolarno Station playing politics? Are the Strachans from Pooncarie playing politics? They just want the river to flow past their houses, but it has been nicked by his mates. The Deputy Premier is doing nothing about it. The Premier is too weak to pull The Nationals into line. She does not have the guts to do the things she should. She should call out Niall Blair for misleading the Parliament and she should call out the Deputy Premier for the rorts of The Nationals. The only way to save the Darling is to throw this mob out.

Mr John Barilaro: Say that outside.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I have said it every day in press releases.

Mr John Barilaro: Say that outside, gutless water boy. Sit down.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: At least I did not stab my best mate in the back to get ahead. The Deputy Premier is an absolute hypocrite.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! All members should be on three calls to order. Today no respect was shown in question time, nor has any been shown in this debate. I am not sure what those in the public gallery will be thinking about such disgraceful behaviour. The question is that the motion of the member for Penrith be accorded priority.

The House divided.

Ayes47
Noes32
Majority.....15

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr A
Grant, Mr T
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Maguire, Mr D
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Sidoti, Mr J

Aplin, Mr G
Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Provest, Mr G
Speakman, Mr M

Ayres, Mr S
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Elliott, Mr D
Goward, Ms P
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Roberts, Mr A
Stokes, Mr R

AYES

Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Foley, Mr L
Hoenig, Mr R
Lynch, Mr P
Mihailuk, Ms T
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Atalla, Mr E
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T (teller)
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Mehan, Mr D
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T F
Washington, Ms K

PAIRS

Fraser, Mr A
Petinos, Ms E
Rowell, Mr J

Cotsis, Ms S
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N

Motion agreed to.**WESTERN SYDNEY CITY DEAL****Priority**

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (15:59): I move:

That this House supports the historic Western Sydney City Deal.

About a fortnight ago at the Western Sydney University Penrith campus at Werrington we saw a truly historic moment: an opportunity for the Commonwealth Government, the State Government and eight local councils to come together to prioritise the future of Western Sydney—to put aside their political differences, whether they be Liberal, Labor or an Independent, and put the people first. Those three tiers of government want the Western Sydney City Deal to outline a plan that enables Western Sydney to grow properly. Those eight councils—Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Camden, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Penrith, Fairfield and Wollondilly—recognise that their communities will have to carry a large burden of growth as our State continues to grow. They want to ensure that the infrastructure required to allow those city areas to grow and develop properly is there.

The centrepiece of the Western Sydney City Deal is a north-south rail line. The first stage of that rail line will run south from the T1 Western Line near St Marys to the aerotropolis via the new Western Sydney Airport. We have seen the three tiers of government make a commitment to deliver 200,000 new jobs across the eight council areas, and the aerotropolis land—114 hectares adjoining the airport—is critical to ensuring that that happens. It is, in effect, the kick-starter to bringing those high-quality, knowledge-based jobs to Western Sydney, backed up by significant infrastructure.

We also want to ensure that the airport precinct has an agribusiness precinct attached to it because we know there are immense opportunities for Western Sydney to link up with our farmers and growers across the regions to export their fantastic produce around the world. We will continue to invest in the livability of Western Sydney. As our communities continue to grow we want to ensure that our open spaces, our parklands, our rivers, our wonderful Blue Mountains are still accessible to the public and that those areas enhance the livability of Western Sydney. Once again, the three tiers of government have come together to support a \$150 million livability fund. That fund will go towards enhancing those parks and creating new opportunities in the fantastic river precincts located across Western Sydney.

In addition to the livability fund, the Government has a long-term commitment to education. We want to leverage out of the unique attributes that exist in that part of the world as well as the leading investment from the Commonwealth Government in a new airport. Therefore, we will establish a new aerospace institute where we can leverage out of universities, vocational education and training providers such as TAFE, research institutes and industry—space or defence. We want to bring the smartest minds to Western Sydney and we want to provide new opportunities for jobs, not just for today but also for the next 25 or 50 years.

In developing the Western Sydney City Deal we have seen people in leadership positions, regardless of their politics, putting the people of Western Sydney first. We have seen a clear plan for the delivery of infrastructure across Western Sydney. That is exactly what the people of New South Wales demand of its leaders and we have delivered it through the Western Sydney City Deal. We have also made a commitment to a joint cooperative effort in the future planning of land use across Western Sydney. This will ensure that we plan and manage development properly so that we achieve economic and livability outcomes and benefit from the commercial and industrial opportunities that exist across Western Sydney.

This Government wants to ensure that we plan for infrastructure properly, that we actually reserve the corridors early, back the project up with real funds, do not do it alone and do not lecture people. It wants to create partnerships with the Commonwealth and local governments to ensure that Western Sydney has a bright and prosperous future for everyone who chooses to live, work, play or raise a family there.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:04): On behalf of the New South Wales Labor Opposition, I speak on the Western Sydney City Deal motion moved by the Minister for Western Sydney, which the Government supports. The Leader of the Opposition has stated on record that Labor welcomes the part-plans to build the Western Sydney rail line and Anthony Albanese has also put the case for us. However, the Opposition asserts that Western Sydney encompasses Campbelltown and Macarthur to Rouse Hill, from Fairfield and Parramatta out to Penrith, and slightly beyond. It is a massive area.

The Federal and State governments have come up with a half-baked idea about putting in a small rail line. We suggest that from day one they should ensure that the residents of Western Sydney receive equity in travel—public transport or road—and social infrastructure. The member for Penrith spoke about the expanding population in Western Sydney. We know it is expanding but it is expanding especially in the Fairfield and Liverpool areas where there has been a massive humanitarian intake of 7,000 refugees. We understand it is expanding, but coupled with that expansion is the need for employment, and education and health infrastructure to make Badgerys Creek successful.

No mention has been made about a Rouse Hill to Campbelltown connector or a broader tourism plan for Western Sydney, which is a beautiful place to live. No mention has been made of fuel links to the airport. Will we see more fuel tankers traversing the roads north, south, east and west in Western Sydney? There is no mention of the east to west cross-flow of traffic or connectors for public transport. No mention has been made as to whether there will be bus connectors from the airport to the Liverpool to Parramatta T-way, and from Parramatta to Rouse Hill. There has been absolute silence from this Government. There is no mention from the Federal Government about roads in our area—whether it be Elizabeth Drive, Hoxton Park Road, the Northern Road, Fifteenth Avenue, the Western Road, Luddenham Road, Mamre Road or Badgerys Creek Road—that are bursting at the seams. The member for Penrith understands what I am talking about because these roads will be critical for people getting in and out of the precinct of Badgerys Creek. I would like to hear the Minister's comments on that.

No mention has been made of the vital emergency services support that will exist in the near future while the precinct is being built and beyond. Will we get extra police on the ground to deal with the additional population and increased traffic? Will we see an expansion of Fire and Rescue resources for the surrounding areas? We acknowledge that within the precinct Fire and Rescue is the responsibility of the Federal Government but the surrounding areas will have additional traffic. Hopefully additional bus links going east and west to the airport will be built because the situation is diabolical now. People in my area complain that the bus system has been depleted under this Government. I look forward to the Minister's response to those issues that have come from residents in the area. They welcome the airport but they want equity in what is going to be Western Sydney airport. It is as simple as that. It is not the second airport for Sydney but, rather, the first airport for Western Sydney.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (16:09): It gives me great pleasure to commend the Minister for Western Sydney for the Western Sydney City Deal. I say with great confidence that the Western Sydney City Deal announcement made on 4 March is a once-in-a-generation, historic opportunity for us to work with our Federal colleagues and eight different councils to plan for the future. Western Sydney faces several challenges due to its population growth, and demand for additional jobs, homes and infrastructure will increase. Parramatta was established as the central city and the Government is delivering great infrastructure. The good news is that the Western Sydney City Deal will plan for Western Sydney.

It is no mean feat to have the Federal Government, State Government and eight different councils—including Labor councils—supporting this deal. They all know it is a good deal. I will give three great reasons why the motion is important and why we should put aside our own politics to support it. The first reason is that it will create up to 200,000 jobs in Western Sydney. I always say the most important thing is to give a person a job, and indeed the opportunity to live and work in the same area. This megaproject, catalyst, aerotropolis will drive the aim of people living and working in the same area for the next 20 years. The second reason is that it provides an opportunity to deliver the vital housing. Housing affordability is under pressure and one way to solve the problem is to increase housing supply.

The third reason is to deliver infrastructure. It is great news that the blueprint for the Western Sydney City Deal will be able to deliver the vital infrastructure and not just the road and the north-south rail link. I noticed this morning that the Leader of the Opposition agreed that the north-south link is important. We have already planned for that but the State and Federal governments are in the process of delivering \$3.4 billion in improved road access to the airport and the work has already started. Equally important is the social infrastructure such as the parks, gardens and schools to enhance the lives of people. The Western Sydney City Deal is an important, once-in-a-generation opportunity to make Western Sydney realise its full potential as a wonderful place.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (16:13): I move:

That the motion be amended by adding "and that the number of councils be expanded to include all Western Sydney councils" after "Western Sydney City Deal". Members have heard a lot of clichés and in principle the Labor Opposition supports the Western Sydney City Deal because it provides an opportunity for all. Western Sydney is the cornerstone and centrepiece for the north-west rail line. We have heard that Western Sydney must be strong and prosperous, and we all agree with that. However, I was surprised that the member for Parramatta supported the motion when Parramatta is not even part of Western Sydney. I want to know what is Western Sydney? If someone lives in Bargo in the Wollondilly shire, which is 100 kilometres away from Sydney, they are considered to live in Western Sydney. However, if people live in Blacktown, The Hills, Parramatta or Merrylands they are no longer considered to live in Western Sydney.

However, if Blacktown is included into the Western Sydney City Deal—just one council area—the economic output of Western Sydney will increase by 36 per cent and the population will increase by 34 per cent. Why is Blacktown City Council, which has the largest population in Western Sydney, excluded? Blacktown has a \$15.6 billion economy and Parramatta has a \$22 billion economy. It is ridiculous. We heard the member for Penrith say that the ANZ Stadium is located in Western Sydney. ANZ Stadium is 36 kilometres from the border of Western Sydney. Why has the member for Penrith decreased his portfolio by half? The Western Sydney Wanderers should rename themselves the Wanderers because they are based in Blacktown and play at Parramatta. Perhaps the Greater Western Sydney Giants who are based in Blacktown and Homebush also need to be renamed.

We should get the business case right. There is no money on the table for the north-west rail line. It is a business case. A business case of \$100 million has been put forward. The Prime Minister, seven mayors, and the Premier, have agreed that they will have considerable value capture. Why do the people of Western Sydney have to pay for their railway line? Why do they have to value capture from land tax? Why do the people of Western Sydney have to pay toll roads left, right and centre, when every other infrastructure asset is paid by all taxpayers? We must improve this deal and deliver the best for the whole of Western Sydney.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (16:16): In reply: The member for Fairfield described the Western Sydney City Deal as a half-baked idea for a rail line. If that is what an Australian Labor Party representative thinks of the commitment to deliver rail from St Marys to the aerotropolis via Western Sydney airport then that speaks volumes about what Labor thinks of Western Sydney. This Government has consistently indicated that the city deal is made up of eight councils across Western Sydney. At no stage was the city deal designed to include every council that exists in Western Sydney. There is a reason for that.

This Government wants to create strong economic plans and generate strong social investment across the areas that make up the western parkland city because that is where future growth will come from. Greater opportunities must be generated for the people who live in those locations. I have not seen anything more hypocritical than the position of the member for Blacktown who continues to take \$100,000 from the people of New South Wales to maintain his position as the strongest anti-airport advocate in Western Sydney. The member for Blacktown demonstrates the Leader of the Opposition's weak leadership form because he has not asked him to resign his position on council which allows him to collect \$100,000. The member for Blacktown continues to stand in the way of hundreds of thousands of jobs being created across Western Sydney.

The city deal will create opportunities for people in Blacktown and Parramatta because those areas need outer Western Sydney to be as strong and as prosperous as possible. Every community across New South Wales will benefit if the area west of the M7 has a clear plan for a north-south rail line. The member for Blacktown also said there was no funding agreement. That is not the case. In fact both the Commonwealth Government and the State Government stated that they will jointly fund this rail line. This joint commitment will allow the first stage

of the rail line to link the airport to the T1 Western Line. Unfortunately, Labor's policy to connect the airport to the T1 Western Line is an extension of the South West Rail Link.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes31
Noes45
Majority..... 14

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Scully, Mr P
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T (teller)
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Mehan, Mr D
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T F
Washington, Ms K

Bali, Mr S
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Hoenig, Mr R
Lynch, Mr P
Mihailuk, Ms T
Piper, Mr G
Tesch, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr L
Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Provest, Mr G
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

Aplin, Mr G
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Elliott, Mr D
Goward, Ms P
Hancock, Mrs S
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Ayres, Mr S
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr A
Griffin, Mr J
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Maguire, Mr D
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

PAIRS

Cotsis, Ms S
Foley, Mr L
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N

Barilaro, Mr J
Fraser, Mr A
Gibbons, Ms M
Grant, Mr T

Amendment negatived.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Matter of Public Importance

PRINCES HIGHWAY UPGRADE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:26): One of the reasons I stood for Parliament was to fix the Princes Highway. Today, together with my colleague the member for the South Coast, I am proud to speak in debate on this matter of public importance which highlights how critical this vital road corridor is to the South Coast

community. At the outset I know that the community wants leadership—leadership that looks to outcomes and delivers real results. We have seen leadership at the State level. Since 2011 more than \$1.1 billion has been spent by this Government and it has committed to spending more than \$2 billion. Over this same period, in comparison, the Commonwealth Government has committed just \$58 million, or 5 per cent, of the New South Wales Government spend. Much has been achieved but there is much more to be done.

The first project was the Gerringong upgrade of the Princes Highway. Too many lives, particularly young lives, have been lost on this section of road. The improvements made between the Kiama Bends and Toolijooa have made a phenomenal difference to road safety and drivability. If the House will indulge me, I will pay tribute to Barry O'Farrell. Without his leadership this project may never have happened. I will never forget the day that Barry O'Farrell stood with Shelley Hancock, the Hon. John Ajaka and me to announce that if elected to Government in 2011 an O'Farrell government would build the Gerringong upgrade and start the Berry bypass.

True to his word, the O'Farrell Government funded the project and construction started a year later. The project was complete in 2015 and at the same time the largest single investment in the history of the Princes Highway was commenced. Surpassing this project is the Foxground and Berry bypass opened by Premier Gladys Berejiklian last year. The \$580 million 12-kilometre Foxground and Berry bypass has provided a change to the road landscape that has delighted locals and attracted more visitors than ever before. Make no mistake, this project is a game changer for the South Coast and I am pleased to report that business is as strong as ever in the Berry township.

Recently I announced the installation of tourist signage on either side of Berry to encourage tourists to continue to visit Berry and enjoy everything it has to offer. This was a personal initiative of the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight and I take this opportunity to thank the Hon. Melinda Pavey for working with the Berry Chamber of Commerce and ensuring the installation of these wonderful new signs. There has been other key investment including the Termeil Creek upgrade, \$21 million; Burrill Lake Bridge, \$58 million; and South Nowra, \$72 million to upgrade the Princes Highway.

Members would be well aware of the Albion Park Rail bypass. This bypass will remove the only sets of traffic lights between Bomaderry and Heathcote. Planning approval has been secured for this project and I look forward to the announcement of successful tenderers for both early works and design and construct later in the year. I finish my remarks on the need for a replacement bridge across the Shoalhaven. The member for South Coast and I have secured more than \$2 billion from the New South Wales Government to upgrade the Princes Highway. These New South Wales taxpayer funds that are being spent have not been matched by the Commonwealth.

I note that 80 per cent of the costs of the Pacific Highway are currently being met by the Commonwealth and 20 per cent are being met by the New South Wales Government. It is time for the South Coast and the Princes Highway to receive the same deal and the same funding split. They should not be treated like second-class citizens. In August 2011, then Minister for Roads, the Hon. Duncan Gay, wrote to the Federal Government seeking inclusion of the Princes Highway in the National Land Transport Network. Again in August 2013 Minister Gay wrote to the Mayor of Shoalhaven City Council, Joanna Gash, stating:

The New South Wales Government actively supports including the Princes Highway south of Wollongong, including a branch to Port Kembla, in the National Land Transport Network.

The New South Wales Government has also made a submission to the Commonwealth Government for a 50:50 funding split of a \$1 billion package for road improvements between Gerringong and Nowra. The package included the Foxground and Berry bypass, the Berry to Bomaderry upgrade and a replacement southbound bridge over the Shoalhaven River. Subsequently the New South Wales Government has made three applications to Infrastructure Australia, the latest in December 2017, requesting that a new bridge over the Shoalhaven River be made a priority.

All this seems to have fallen on deaf ears in Canberra. Today the Federal member for Gilmore held a rally to commence her campaign to upgrade the highway and called on the New South Wales Government to reveal the cost of a new bridge. These calls are not only disappointing; they defy logic. The campaign to upgrade the Princes Highway has been raging in the community for decades. I say to the Federal member for Gilmore: It did not start today. The community wants more than cheap political stunts, corflutes, shirts and flyers. It wants real leadership, real representation and results. The community has seen what this Government has been able to do and it is time for the State and Commonwealth governments to work together. If the Federal Government commits to funding the Princes Highway, it will be welcomed. I say to all those involved: We need bipartisanship on this issue. I commend Fairfax Media for its campaign and all other media outlets that are joining to ensure that our community is not forgotten again. [*Time expired.*]

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:32): I am grateful to the member for Kiama, who is supported by the Speaker, for bringing this issue before the House. For as long as I can remember, funding for the upgrade of the Princes Highway has been a matter of debate and contention. I have lived in the Illawarra all my life. Sadly, the Princes Highway features regularly in news reports because of the deaths that occur on that road. The deaths of Jessica Falkholt's family on Boxing Day and her subsequent death in hospital are just some of the tragedies that have occurred on the Princes Highway over the past 12 months. We do not want anyone to die on our roads, but people die regularly on that dangerous stretch of road. In 2017 the official death toll in New South Wales was 392, which means that 392 families were affected. We have witnessed political game playing at the Federal level to distract attention from a lack of action by the Turnbull and Abbott governments. On 2 January 2018 Deputy Commissioner Burn, when commenting on the road toll, said:

It is senseless and many of these people were innocent people who were passengers in vehicles or were just doing the right thing on the road.

This is something I watch every day. I grieve for those people who have lost their lives. I grieve for their families and I'm bitterly disappointed and frustrated in the fact that there are people who are putting people's lives at risk.

All too often emergency service professionals—in some cases emergency service volunteers on the South Coast—have to attend motor vehicle accidents on the Princes Highway. All too often they have to clean up damaged vehicles and deal with emotional trauma when people are involved in vehicle accidents. Recent road safety upgrades such as the installation of rumble strips and centre-line wire barriers on a section of the highway that was featured in the news late last year and earlier this year are a welcome start but not a solution to the problems on that stretch of road.

All those who live south of the Victorian border who have travelled on that road to Sydney have seen dramatic changes in the quality of road surfaces and structure but we need consistency across the board. Recently my colleague the shadow Treasurer and shadow Minister for the Illawarra was asked what improvements should be made to the Princes Highway. I echo his calls for bipartisan support for continued road upgrades. Last Monday when the Prime Minister visited the steelworks in Wollongong on a self-promotion tour and used the steelworks as a backdrop for selfies, he suggested what we should do with the funds from the Snowy Hydro sale. I hope the Government sees fit to use some of the funds from the Snowy Hydro sale to improve safety on the Princes Highway. Easter is a popular time to head down to the South Coast—from my perspective any time is a good time to head down to the South Coast—and there will be an influx of visitors to the region. I hope that those who come to the region enjoy it for what it is. Visitors to the South Coast should drive safely, drive to the conditions and return home safely.

Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (16:37): In the limited time that I have available to me I thank the member for Kiama for bringing this matter of public importance to the attention of the House. I also thank the member for Wollongong for his considered contribution to this debate. Traditionally, matters of public importance receive bipartisan support and that has been evident today. Over the past few months seven fatalities have occurred in my electorate, which has shaken the community to its core. Last Sunday I was invited to what normally is a closed meeting of police and emergency services workers who gather to support one another in times of crisis, such as accidents and fatalities along the Princes Highway. The meeting was an eye-opener. Members of the Rural Fire Service, the State Emergency Service, police, ambulance, Marine Rescue NSW, Fire and Rescue NSW and the driver training facility at Ulladulla High School all support one another because of the trauma to which they have been subjected. We should spare a thought for them. Sometimes we forget the cumulative effect of the traumas and tragedies to which they are subjected.

We feel for the Falkholt family and for other families who have lost loved ones. I taught some of the people involved in those accidents when they were children. All members would be aware of someone in their community who has lost his or her life on the Princes Highway. The message we are receiving is loud and clear: No-one wants us to engage in funding wars. Unless we have bipartisan support on this issue there will be a war between the Federal Government and the State Government, even though we are members of the same party. People have had enough. We heard the message that was delivered on Sunday by 100 members from police and emergency services. They said that the State Government has contributed a lot of money towards upgrades on the Princes Highway at Burrill Lake, Termeil and Berry. It is now time for the Federal Government to contribute something.

The time for games, stunts, rallies and bitterness is over. We should all come together and do our bit. I have been talking in this Chamber about the Princes Highway since the day I was elected in 2003, but people are still losing their lives. Seven people have lost their lives in the past few months. I am grateful to John Hansken, Editor of the *South Coast Register* and the *Milton Ulladulla Times* for calling a meeting on Friday to try to get all editors and media outlets to achieve a solution. I will listen to their suggestions and I hope that all parties campaign

to reach a solution. I thank the member for Kiama for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. I thank the member for Wollongong for his considered and sensible contribution to the debate.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:41): In reply: I thank the member for Wollongong and the member for South Coast for their contributions to this debate. There is no point in being a member in this place unless we do something with our time. When we leave this place we will look back and think about the legacy that we have left. The member for South Coast and I want our legacy to be a safer road network. We could then say that we played some part in securing the necessary funds to make roads better for our local community. Some people in this Chamber occupy office, which is great, but it is better to look back on one's time and know that one has done something meaningful and made a difference to one's community.

I thank the member for Wollongong for his comments. I agree that some of the funds from the Snowy Hydro sale should go towards upgrading country roads—in particular, the Princes Highway. The member for South Coast and I have already made representations and we will continue to do so. I acknowledge in the other place the Hon. Don Harwin and the Hon. Paul Green who have been strong supporters of this campaign. I thank the member for South Coast in particular for her heartfelt comments. We have all known people who have lost their lives on the Princes Highway and we have attended their funerals. Her comment about the emergency services personnel who have to attend these events is a reminder that they have to deal with accidents and carnage on a daily basis.

I often wonder why we do not receive more bipartisan support from Canberra. There is a lot of civility and a degree of collegiality in this Chamber, which I often do not see in Canberra. Our communities want results from their elected leaders, regardless of what side of politics they might be on. As a member of this place, I see this as an article of faith. I want to make sure that I make a difference and that I leave a legacy. I know that the member for South Coast also wants that. We are a strong team and we will work with anybody who is fair dinkum and who wants to bring something to this debate. We will work with the media, with roads Ministers and all those who want to make a difference for our community. I think that we can and we will do that. We have demonstrated that at the State level and I will continue to do that in the future. I will always extend an olive branch. All governments will have difficult demands concerning what they should fund and how they should fund it, but this is a priority for us and our community. A sign of effectiveness of members in other Chambers will be whether they are successful in making this a priority.

Private Members' Statements

CAMBODIA

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (16:44): Members of the Cambodian community in my electorate and in other electorates have raised concerns about the outlandish threats of violence against Cambodian Australians issued by the Prime Minister of Cambodia, Hun Sen. Hun Sen will visit Sydney in the next few days, for the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit on 16 and 17 March. He has issued a chilling warning to those thinking about protesting during his visit. Let us be clear about what this former Khmer Rouge commander has said:

If they dare make an effigy of me and burn it, I will pursue them to their houses and beat them up.

He said that he would "pursue them to their houses and beat them up". Hun Sen and his goons are threatening assault, home invasion and violence, yet he will still present himself for drinks at Kirribilli House with our Prime Minister. He will not think at all about Kern Ley, the political analyst murdered in broad daylight in Cambodia in July 2016, whose widow and children are now living in Australia. They were moved to tears last weekend at a ceremony to remember him, by the support that they have received in Australia. Hun Sen calls himself "Lord Prime Minister Supreme Military Commander".

The world has poured billions of dollars into the creation of democracy in this tyrant's country—a massive 20-year investment flushed away. He has had the opposition leader Kem Sokha arrested, charged with treason and today still held without bail while he awaits trial. The opposition party headquarters were seized, new laws have been directed against unions, media outlets have been closed down and foreign non-government organisations have been banished. A few weeks ago the United States cut back aid to Cambodia and restricted visas for specific officials. For more than a quarter of a century Washington provided more than \$1 billion in assistance to Cambodia. The European Union is also weighing sanctions. Australia is a significant donor to Cambodia—\$92 million in 2016, \$90 million in 2017 and an estimated \$87 million this year. That is funding for the good people of that nation to help their growth and development.

Hun Sen does not like anyone to know that around three million of them bravely voted against him at the local council elections last June, as well as at the national elections in 2013. More than 11,000 Cambodian migrants are living in Sydney. They and their children and grandchildren who were born here take the threat of violence against them by Cambodia's Prime Minister very seriously. They are scared—scared that if they stand

up publicly and peacefully against the despotism of Hun Sen's rule in coming days they will be targeted by his thugs. I want this State's Cambodian community to know that I stand with them. I want them to know that in Commissioner Mick Fuller, the NSW Police Force has a commissioner who will ensure that people engaged in lawful protest will be afforded the full protection of the law. That is not Hun Sen's way but it is most certainly the Australian way.

INGHAM INSTITUTE FUNDRAISING EVENT

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (16:47): Last week I attended the Ingham Institute annual fundraising lunch which coincided with International Women's Week. Each year the event is highly successful, raising much-needed funds to enable the institute to continue its groundbreaking research. Over the past four years it has raised \$210,000. After the huge success of last week's event another \$90,000 raised takes that figure to more than \$300,000 over the past five years. Although the research facility is adjacent to Liverpool Hospital, many other hospitals in Western Sydney also contribute to the vital research. About 40 groups are doing research on cancer, brain injury, diabetes and other diseases. With the great work of the researchers, hopefully we will one day be free of these illnesses.

Special guests at the lunch were Patron Lyn Ingham and Ambassador Irene Vitocco from the Ingham's Institute which donates more than \$1 million a year for research at the hospital in addition to supporting this fundraising lunch. The emcee for the day was the extremely popular Natalie Barr from Channel Seven's *Sunrise*. Natalie, who is passionate and who contributes so much, did an outstanding job. Guest performer was Jean Kittson. There were only 20 men in an audience of 300 or so but Jean in her contribution focused on women's menopause. I spent a lot of time looking at the carpet. Guest speakers were Professor Meera Agar, who spoke about special research into medical cannabis, and Associate Professor Kieran Scott, who spoke about the 15-year research he has conducted for prostate cancer.

As with any fundraiser, sponsors are vital to its success. I acknowledge all the sponsors, as without their support days like this just would not happen: Hope sponsor Lady Mary Fairfax group; Dove sponsors Absolutely Fabulous Event Decorations, Coutts Solicitors & Conveyancers, Infineprint Design and Marketing, Wisdom Homes and Woppitt Bloodstock, Cameron Brae Group, Coleman Greig lawyers and Vitocco Constructions; Butterfly sponsors Blue Tongue Homes, Commonwealth Bank, Fitzpatrick Group, Diamond World jewellers, Family Focus Legal, Marsdens Law Group, Kelly and Partners Chartered Accountants, Narellan Pools, McGrath group, Wests Group and The Beauty Base.

I thank the luncheon partners: Australian Helicopter Pilot school, Aine Beachside—South West Rocks, Alan Evans Jewellers, Dyson, Firefly, Gemelle restaurant, Hand in Hand Photography, itravel, Lakeside Golf Club Camden, Liverpool Catholic Club Quilters, Narellan Town Centre, One Big Heart yoga studio, Rydges Campbelltown, Symphony of Spirit, Town Grocer Narellan, TreeTop adventures and Victoria Nasso. I congratulate the luncheon committee on a very successful lunch. I am sure everyone had a wonderful time.

I thank the members of that committee for their hard work in putting together the event: great mate Adriana Care from Coutts Solicitors & Conveyancers; Natalie Heard, another great mate from Absolutely Fabulous Event Decorations; Lyn Ingham, Ingham Institute luncheon patron; Emma McFarlane, Coleman Greig Lawyers; Victoria Nasso, Ingham Institute; Leanne McNamara, Ingham Institute; Tracey Roberts, Ingham Institute; Faye Vitalone, Wisdom Homes; and Irene Vitocco, Ingham Institute Luncheon Ambassador. These wonderful ladies contribute a great deal to this luncheon, the institute and our community.

Bob Ingham's vision more than 20 years ago to give back to the community and to begin the establishment of the Ingham Institute has proven to be a vital part of our lives. All of us will benefit from the work that is being done at the institute. Researchers who passionately strive for results one day will achieve worldwide success which hopefully will rid us of insidious diseases. I commend all members for their support for the Ingham Institute and thank everybody involved.

SYDNEY MARKETS

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (16:52): Today I was honoured to be at the iconic Sydney Markets to see the switch flicked on for Australia's largest private sector rooftop solar system on a single site. The Sydney Markets at Flemington is an amazing place—the site of the largest wholesale fruit, vegetable and flower markets in the nation and one of the largest and most efficient food centres in the world. As well as having a dedicated and efficient workforce of more than 5,000 people, the Sydney Markets has a visionary board and chief executive officer. The vision of the Sydney Markets board has now turned into reality—the completion of a \$15 million project involving a car park for an extra 700 vehicles, a new footbridge, and this magnificent solar system. As I said, Australia's largest private sector rooftop system comprises 8,594 solar panels and has a capacity of more than three megawatts. It will be able to generate sustainable energy as well as drastically reduce the carbon

footprint of the market. I am told that it would take the planting of 676 hectares of trees each year to extract the same amount of carbon dioxide.

The solar power system will provide approximately 11 per cent of the annual site power of Sydney Markets, which is equivalent to powering 730 households each year. The market will save almost \$1 million in yearly electricity costs. We cannot overstate the importance of Sydney Markets to the people of New South Wales, the economy and the day-to-day welfare of citizens. Sydney Markets spans 43 hectares, operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, employs more than 5,000 workers and generates \$3 billion of trade annually. It is not only an integral part of the fabric of Sydney but also a vital part of the State's economic wellbeing. It is also home to the Sydney Flower Market, which is the largest in Australia and has an annual turnover in excess of \$150 million. Sydney Markets is one of the busiest sites in the country, with about 5½ million members of the public visiting each year. Sydney Markets supplies thousands of retailers, providores, florists and food processors on a daily basis with 500 semitrailers and trucks unloading there each night.

As Sydney Markets continues to grow, Chairman John Pearson and Chief Executive Officer Bradley Latham, the authorities of Sydney Markets Limited, and their team have seen the need for extending the infrastructure to make life easier and safer for visitors and workers alike, and to make the market more efficient. The latest expansion demonstrates the significance of Sydney Markets to the people and economy of New South Wales. I know that the Government recognises and acknowledges the important and iconic status of Sydney Markets. I congratulate the chief executive officer, the board, the business operators and workers of the market. I was truly honoured to be on hand with the Minister for Planning, Anthony Roberts, and Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells as the switch was flicked on a bright future for Sydney Markets. The presence of a number of members of Parliament demonstrated the importance of Sydney Markets as well as its employees and customers.

TERRIGAL ELECTORATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:56): So many inspiring women and men in my local community strive to make the Central Coast an even better place to live, work and raise a family. On 8 March last week we celebrated International Women's Day, which is a fantastic annual occasion when we celebrate the contributions that all women make to their local communities. One such inspiring woman is Tanya Deger, the deputy captain of Wamberal Rural Fire Brigade, who puts her life on the line to help to protect people and properties from danger. Not only that, she also trains and mentors new volunteer firefighters, particularly the younger female members of her brigade.

Tanya has a distinguished history as a volunteer firefighter, having worked at all levels of engagement within the Rural Fire Service [RFS]. She has been involved in firefighting at a range of dangerous fires, including the Port Stephens Lone Pine fire, the Kincumber Blackwall Mountain fire, the Red October fires in 2013, the April storms on the Central Coast in 2015, the Catherine Hill Bay fire and others. She is well known in the RFS community for her drive, determination and dedication. Tanya not only works tirelessly as a volunteer but also runs a small business called Coastal Cake Co while raising two young children. Quite frankly, I do not know how she does it.

In recognition of Tanya's commitment to our community I was delighted recently to nominate and name her as the Terrigal electorate 2018 Local Woman of the Year. Last Thursday morning it was a pleasure to join Tanya, her husband, Luke, and her two-week-old baby boy at the Women of the Year Awards reception. As part of the 2017 round of the Community Building Partnership program I announced \$25,000 for phase two of the Wamberal fire station extension, which will ensure that Tanya and our other local firefighters are adequately equipped and supported with the resources and facilities they require to keep our community safe from fires and hazards.

I also bring to the attention of the House another inspiring woman in my electorate. Suzy Miller lives in Macmasters Beach and is the director of Leadership Within, a business that provides executive coaching and leadership development. Suzy was selected recently as a finalist for the NSW Business Woman of the Year Award as part of the 2018 NSW Women of the Year Awards. It is an amazing achievement to be selected as a top four finalist from hundreds of great nominees across the State. I congratulate Suzy on that achievement. Like Tanya Deger, Suzy Miller is an inspiration to us all. After working for more than two decades in a large financial institution, Suzy shifted her focus to making our local area a better place. She now actively involves herself with community initiatives and events such as the annual 5 Lands Walk and the Cancer Council NSW 2018 Stars of the Coast. Her career path is living proof that it is possible to be based on the Central Coast and still succeed in the corporate world. Her story should be an inspiration to everyone in my electorate of Terrigal.

With so many hardworking people in our region who sometimes go unnoticed and are not praised for their work, this year's International Women's Day was an opportunity to say thank you to everyone who works to make a difference. As I mentioned, last Thursday morning it was an honour to join our Premier Gladys Berejiklian,

Minister for Women Tanya Davies and many other colleagues at the International Convention Centre to recognise the outstanding achievements of members of our respective local communities. Finally, the Government is committed to ensuring that all women and men across New South Wales have the opportunity to achieve their ambitions and goals. Australian Bureau of Statistics labour force statistics released earlier this year show that female employment in New South Wales has increased 5 per cent in the past year alone. That is more than double the 10-year average.

Since coming to government in 2011 the Liberal-Nationals Coalition has been focused upon balancing the budget and undertaking a record infrastructure investment that is creating more opportunities and more jobs for workers and families in every community. The positive labour force figures are a testament to the many hardworking women in New South Wales. I thank all women on the Central Coast for all that they do to make our region a great place. I again congratulate Tanya Deger and Suzy Miller on receiving the recognition they readily deserve.

ILLAWARRA INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (17:01): The Illawarra is playing what I have come to refer to as the Berejiklian Government's game of funding hokey-pokey. Sometimes we are in and sometimes we are out. We are growing sick and tired of it because most of the time we are missing out altogether. It is not through lack of need or lack of quality projects. It is through opportunity denied when we are largely excluded from funding programs and are left instead to compete against the relative strength of a global city of nearly five million people. As the *Illawarra Mercury* editorial last Thursday screamed, "Stop playing games with our 'region'." The editorial sums up the frustration of the community towards the endless tale of arbitrary and variable definitions of our area and whether the Illawarra might get a fair shot at funding opportunities.

Apart from its editorial, the paper also published a very useful summary in a separate article of all times in recent years when the New South Wales Government considered the Illawarra to be a region. We are apparently considered a region when the Government sends out its bureaucrats to do a plan or wishes to merge councils forcibly. The Department of Planning considers the Illawarra a "fast-growing region" and part of "regional New South Wales". It is considered a region under the Resources for Regions program. Even the Prime Minister, who dropped by my electorate on Monday on a lap of self-congratulation on news that was days old, considers the Illawarra a region.

The irony that the Prime Minister's visit and statement followed his Government's rejection of an application to develop a business case to improve rail connections between Wollongong and Sydney the day before was not lost on anyone. What needs to be done? My Illawarra Labor parliamentary colleagues and I have written to the Premier stating our willingness to work in a bipartisan manner on a more realistic and consistent definition of the Illawarra to be used across government. As we told the Premier in our letter:

As you are aware, Wollongong and Shellharbour local government areas have been excluded from eligibility under the five funding programs covered by the Regional Growth Fund. Both local government areas are only eligible for one of the funding programs—Resources to Regions.

Even the Government could not get away with sidelining us from that program, given the number of working coalmines in the area. Last week the Deputy Premier told the House that excluding Wollongong and splitting the Illawarra geographically and socially was deliberate, arguing:

If Cobar has to compete with Wollongong, we know Wollongong will always win ...

The same logic must be evident to the Government when Wollongong is forced to compete with the massive population of Sydney. While the Illawarra often punches above its weight, the bottom line is that an area with a population of slightly less than 300,000 people will always struggle against the largest economy in the country in the same way that the Government points out Cobar struggles against Wollongong. The implications of seven years of such competition are evident. Members will be interested to know that having been forced to compete against Greater Sydney for the purposes of funding from the \$20 billion sale of the electricity poles and wires, the Wollongong local government area is yet to see a single benefit.

The Premier, who is usually spruiking about her Government's spending, fell as quiet as a church mouse when she was asked to list specific projects in the Wollongong local government area. She could not mention a single project—not one. Nor could the Deputy Premier identify a single benefit when he was asked what benefits the Sydney stadiums splurge would have for the Illawarra. If the Illawarra is part of Sydney, should we not be sharing in Sydney's gains? Wollongong and Illawarra stakeholders are fed up with being excluded from funding programs. This situation is becoming untenable and must be resolved. The Legislative Council Standing Committee on State Development recently issued a discussion paper as part of its public inquiry into regional development and a global Sydney. A key question was the identification of regions. I will be interested to see its recommendations.

Some may dismiss this debate as largely semantic, academic and even parochial, but those who hold that view fail to appreciate the full ramifications of large regional centres such as the Hunter and the Illawarra, which are damned by funding exclusion. I note the member for Newcastle is in the Chamber. There are very real consequences in adopting definitions that exclude areas from funding programs. I have no doubt that the Premier will dismiss and ignore the concerns that were raised with her. Not so long ago when the Premier was asked what she considered to be Wollongong's place in our State, she responded, "Wollongong is Wollongong." Labor recognises the importance of Wollongong and the Illawarra.

We have outlined a comprehensive \$225 million plan to build on the region's strengths and to help meet the challenges of the future, including creating jobs. Our cities and large towns are growing in importance. It is about time that the game of funding hockey-pokey ended. It is true that large geographically and economically defined areas such as the Illawarra should not be unfairly pitted against smaller regional and rural centres, but they also should not be unfairly pitted against the relative size and needs of Australia's global city. It is time centres such as the Illawarra were defined in a new way to reflect their relative size and to end the exclusion from opportunity that has become the hallmark of this Government.

REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES INVESTMENT PROSPECTUS

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (17:06): The launch last month in Casino of the Regional New South Wales Investment Prospectus by Deputy Premier John Barilaro was a great day for regional New South Wales and a proud day for Casino. The launch took place in front of consuls general and trade commissioners from 15 different countries, as well as many other stakeholders across the Northern Rivers, including captains of industry, mayors and other council representatives, members of community organisations and representatives of the New South Wales Government agencies that helped to prepare the prospectus. The prospectus is an interactive online tool designed to attract national and international investment in regional New South Wales. It highlights the enormous potential for investors, both international and domestic, in creating businesses in regional New South Wales.

It was not by chance that Casino was chosen for the launch. The Richmond Valley Council welcomes industry and investment to create jobs and boost the local economy; it is very progressive. Mayor Robert Mustow and the councillors are single-minded in delivering the very best opportunities for their community. That is why Solaris Nutraceuticals has chosen to develop the largest medicinal cannabis processing plant in Australia at Casino. It has submitted plans to build the largest medicinal cannabis greenhouse in the Southern Hemisphere. In addition to providing alternative medicinal relief options for those who struggle with conventional medicines, this business will employ hundreds if not thousands of local people and significantly boost the local economy. The Richmond Valley Council welcomed Solaris Nutraceuticals and made investing in Casino very attractive.

In a similar way the Richmond Valley Council has welcomed another first to Casino. Brisbane-based Utilitas Group Pty Ltd has partnered with DomaCom Ltd to raise \$4.3 million to secure a site in Casino to develop a biohub facility to transform organic waste and waste water from the Richmond Valley region into energy, clean water and other bioproducts. This will create local jobs in a cutting-edge industry and help to grow the local economy. Casino is also known as the beef capital of Australia. It is home to the Northern Co-Operative Meat Company, which employs more than 1,000 people and produces beef and pork for the domestic and export market. It came as no surprise that Richmond Dairies was chosen as the site to launch the investment prospectus. Richmond Dairies is part of the Longley Farm Group, which is based in the United Kingdom.

When the family-owned Longley Farm Group came to Australia in 1995 it introduced some of the world's best dairy technology to the factory at Casino. It produces quality dairy products for the domestic and international markets. The products are made using natural, high-quality, fresh Australian milk supplied by Australian dairy farmers. Great things are happening in Casino and across regional New South Wales. We need to get that news out to domestic and international investors. The Regional New South Wales Investment Prospectus showcases regional New South Wales as a great place to start or grow a business.

In this digital age there is no compelling reason for businesses to locate in metropolitan areas. The regions can be far more attractive with cheap land, progressive councils, a willing workforce and connectivity to supply chains and to markets, both digitally and physically. The Federal and New South Wales governments have invested heavily in improving internet speeds, and in improving roads and other transport options in regional New South Wales. The regions today offer great education, health and lifestyle choices. They are a great place to do business.

The investment prospectus is not only a tool for prospective investors but also a tool for businesses seeking investment. Indeed, in some cases it will work to match investors with those businesses looking to grow. It was a great thrill to launch the website in front of such a large international trade delegation, to show off some of the stunning scenery of the Northern Rivers and to enjoy our outstanding local produce. Regional New South

Wales supports wonderful industries from the old traditional agricultural industries such as beef and dairy, to new niche businesses such as Brookfarm, which is one of Australia's leading producers of premium quality macadamia products that are enjoyed domestically and exported around the world.

It was unprecedented to have so many international delegates on our home turf. It was also an opportunity for people from overseas to look at regional New South Wales and to think about what a great place it is to start or to grow a business. The investment prospectus will focus on supporting businesses that are expanding and developing new market opportunities, setting up greenfield operations or planning to relocate to regional New South Wales. Regional New South Wales is the largest and most diverse regional economy in Australia; it comprises one-third of the New South Wales economy. I endorse the work that was done to compile the Regional New South Wales Investment Prospectus.

SOUTH COAST ELECTORATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (17:11): Tonight I inform the House about just a few of the hundreds of inspirational women who work tirelessly for their community each and every day in my electorate. Unfortunately, time does not permit me to talk about all of them. Over the past decade or so many of these women have made some remarkable achievements and quite often many who are breaking barriers in business, industry and government are not recognised for those achievements. International Women's Day, which we celebrated last week, is not only an opportunity for us to highlight the achievements of women on one day of the year but also gives us the launch pad to recognise so many women and to continue the fight for equality.

This year we celebrate and acknowledge the 100th anniversary of a bill that was introduced and passed in this place to allow women to run for Parliament. It is difficult to think of a time in which women were unable to stand up in this place to advocate on behalf of their communities—let's face it, no-one does it better—but the number of women in Parliament is still unrepresentative of the broader community. That must change. Many in this place are working to right this wrong, but it is not only in this place that this work is being done. Across all our communities women work tirelessly to advocate on behalf of their regions, and continue to be innovative in business and industry. In my electorate many women are leaders in their fields. They lead the way for so many across our community and beyond.

I have spoken previously in this place about Glenda Staniford, the 2018 South Coast Woman of the Year, who was recognised for her tireless efforts in improving bus safety. Together with another woman, Janiee Shaloub, they formed the Belt Up for Safety Action Group and successfully lobbied governments at all levels to install seatbelts on school buses across rural and regional communities. For more than 20 years Glenda and Jan have fought, and I am proud that this Government has delivered on their vision. By 2021 all regional school buses will have seatbelts. That is an incredible effort by two incredible women.

For decades Annette Pham has been an advocate for those who are unable to speak for themselves. It is because of her passion, drive and determination that the South Coast is leading the nation in providing child and adult change facilities in parks and centres for the disabled. Across the South Coast region we have seven Lift & Change facilities, giving everyone, no matter their disability, the opportunity to enjoy community facilities. Annette Pham is not just talk. She has committed \$60,000 of her own money to provide a Lift & Change facility in Nowra. It is also because of Annette's efforts that work will soon commence to construct a Lift & Change facility at Parliament House.

Another woman, Zita Cleary, deserves recognition for her efforts in establishing the South Coast Cancer Care Centre. Those efforts are largely unrecognised, perhaps overshadowed by the work of her husband, the late Dr Ray Cleary. Although I could never take away from the work that Ray did, after he died it was Zita who took over the challenge, leading the charge to secure the necessary funds to get the centre off the ground. Although we have lost her, Narelle Ober's work will never be forgotten. She worked tirelessly as part of the Milton Ulladulla Hospital Auxiliary for decades. The establishment of the Renal and Palliative Care Unit at the beautiful Milton Ulladulla Hospital is due largely to her amazing efforts. Narelle's and Zita's work is recognised in the buildings that they helped build and the lives they played a role in saving each and every day.

In business, women across the South Coast are leaders in their fields. Carmel Krogh, the Director of Shoalhaven Water, has been recognised time and again for her outstanding leadership. Carmel is the first female engineer to graduate from the University of Technology Sydney, is a director of the Australian Water Association and has been named New South Wales Water Professional of the Year. I commend Carmel for her success but also her mentorship of other women through the traineeship program at Shoalhaven Water. Every day, Rhonda McGuire shares her more than 20 years of experience in business management through the Shoalhaven Professional Business Association's mentorship program. For years, Rhonda has given her time to mentor and assist young people, particularly women, to grow and succeed in business.

The South Coast is unique in being represented at all levels of government by women, and has been for many years—and will continue. In my role as Speaker, I continue to try to make the Parliament a friendly place for women, particularly young women with children, in a bid to encourage greater participation by women in this place. I look forward to continuing to highlight the achievements of women and #PressforProgress. Together we can and will make a difference.

FOODBANK NSW BREAKFAST CLUB PROGRAM

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (17:16): At one time or another we have all felt the gnawing pangs of hunger. Like an empty vessel, our stomachs moan and groan. Our bodies feel weak and depleted, and our minds wander aimlessly, thinking only of a meal—any meal—to sustain ourselves. The body is much like a car: Feed it the right fuel and the right amount, and it will run at optimum, but when the tank is empty, we are destined to stall. Children in particular need sustenance for good overall health, for peak physical performance and for their minds to work at a premium. This is why Breakfast Club, the pilot program of Foodbank NSW & ACT, not only serves a healthy start to the day but also delivers so much more. I recently had the opportunity to see the Breakfast Club in action at Campbellfield Public School in Minto, and from the queues for breakfast I could tell that the initiative has been a roaring success.

Run by the school's student representative council and the parents and citizens association, the Foodbank Breakfast Club enables students at the school and their families to have a nutritious breakfast for free. On the menu is a variety of healthy breakfast options, including cereal, toast, fresh fruit and juice. The breakfast club operates every Tuesday to Friday during the school term, and I have it on good authority that many children are racing to get to school early in the morning to enjoy their breakfast. The breakfast club kicked off at Campbellfield Public School in term 4 of 2017, and the plan is for the program to be ongoing to give kids a healthy start to their day so they can learn at their best.

Foodbank NSW's Breakfast Club programs, such as at Campbellfield Public School, are meeting a huge need in our local area. The statistics speak for themselves. One in seven children go to school without the most important meal of the day. On average, a student loses more than two hours of learning time each day they go to school hungry. If a student were to arrive hungry at school once a week, that student would lose the equivalent of more than a term over the course of a year. Teachers at Campbellfield Public School report that since the breakfast club started, students are more attentive and willing to learn. Students are also more engaged in their learning and are more connected with their peers, teachers and families. Importantly, by starting the day with a nutritious breakfast, students are less likely to fill up on sugary drinks or food with poorer nutritional value.

Although all the food is supplied by Foodbank, the breakfast club relies on the goodwill of parents and the broader community. Bread is donated by the parents and citizens association, and families contribute by donating items such as plates, cutlery and serviettes. I commend the work of all involved in the breakfast club at Campbellfield Public School, including Principal Nicole Wade, the parents and citizens association and, of course, the Executive General Manager of Foodbank NSW & ACT—and my former colleague—John Robertson.

Another wonderful outcome of the breakfast club is the skills gained by student leaders, who assist with the preparation and serving of breakfast to their peers, family members and teachers. The experience helps students gain confidence, develop a sense of community and learn important life skills. I am pleased to report that since my visit to Campbellfield Public School, the students and the broader school community have named the breakfast club: The Shine Cafe. This fitting name highlights the positive impact that the breakfast club has had for all of those involved and the community spirit it has evoked among so many.

I acknowledge the wonderful and committed volunteers of the Campbellfield Public School parents and citizens association and in particular Sam Hyratt, whose drive and dedication has been an inspiration. I make special mention of Foodbank NSW & ACT for its commitment to giving children across the State a healthy start to the day so they can learn and be at their best. It is no small feat that Foodbank delivers more than 200,000 school breakfasts a week, meaning that more than 100,000 students do not miss out on the most important meal of the day. These are incredible statistics. Breakfast club is certainly a win-win for all. One image that will stay with me for a long time is the many smiling faces at the Campbellfield Public School breakfast club—the Shine Cafe. Shine on they will, with the breakfast club giving them the best possible start to their day and a positive start to their future. I commend everybody who has been involved in this program and I look forward to seeing it continue, not only in this school but in other schools in my electorate and across the State.

WORMTECH PTY LIMITED WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (17:21): The innovative organisation called WormTech Pty Limited is owned and operated by Adrian and Deanne Raccanello, whose current project is making incredible inroads into the sustainable management of waste. WormTech's original facility is located in the village of Yenda, on the

outskirts of Griffith. The evolution of the company dates back to when the couple, who have been farming for more than 20 years, began incorporating natural fertilisers into their farming practices. They soon discovered an increase in quality, production, and overall plant and soil health.

The process is extremely interesting, because it is simply one enormous worm farm that munches through organic waste—including nutshells, husks, vegetable and fruit waste, waxed cardboard, manure, citrus and fruit pulp, and grease trap waste. The company describes worms as "nature's best recyclers since the beginning of creation that can be matched by no man-made process". It now has a composting facility in the Carrathool area, west of Griffith. That facility was established in 2015 as the region's first organics composting facility and is fully licensed by the Environment Protection Authority [EPA]. The licence was awarded after passing strict regulations, environmental impact studies, and odour and dust regulations.

Originally processing 50,000 tonnes of waste per annum, the company is now licensed to process three times that amount. The facility is ideally situated to take waste products from large agricultural processors in the region, including the co-located RivCott cotton gin. WormTech is able to use cotton trash, a by-product of the ginning process, which previously had no use. Cotton trash consists of leaves, sticks, soil and unrecoverable lint cleaned from the recovered cotton lint. WormTech mixes it in windrows more than 800 metres long. Other ingredients are mixed in to achieve the right balance for composting, and then it is watered and turned using specialist compost turning machinery. This process takes two to three months. During that time, the green waste ingredients are heated naturally by the composting to destroy seeds and pathogens. The result is a very high-quality compost suitable for all types of farming applications. Having visited the facility and putting my hand into a nearly completed windrow, it was very warm and like putting my hand in the richest soil I have ever seen.

WormTech also has composting lines for green waste; fruit and vegetable waste from local packing sheds and processing plants; manure from piggeries, poultry sheds and cattle studs; and waste from the large chicken growing sheds spread around the region and the very large Baiada chicken processing plant in Hanwood. Each of these lines have their own additions mixed in so that they compost efficiently, and each type of waste has been licensed by the EPA, including a line containing unrenderable chicken meat and by-products that they jokingly refer to as chicken lasagne.

The other exciting aspect of this facility is the potential to process the organic waste that is being produced in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra and in large regional cities. This waste is currently processed to a limited degree—basically it is only mulched—and then it is reused where possible or stored onsite. The use is minimal and storage is heading towards a limit, exacerbated by the location of these facilities in or adjacent to urban areas where EPA licensing becomes more and more difficult. The facility at Carrathool has a large area in which to expand, away from urban areas and accessible via major highways for all the large urban centres of south-east Australia. It also has the advantage of a ready market for the compost end product in the large number of agricultural enterprises located nearby. This potential has been recognised by the EPA, with the company being awarded an organics infrastructure grant from the New South Wales Government for its facility at Carrathool. Organics infrastructure grants support waste operators to sustainably manage waste.

When I visited the Carrathool site owners Adrian and Deanne were delighted with the \$477,000 grant for their composting facility. They will match this funding on a dollar-for-dollar basis. WormTech will use the grant to increase the quality of its recycled organics by improving the current process. This will include purchasing a trommel screen, which is used to separate the material, and a more efficient self-propelled windrow turner, and it will install compacted areas for delivery and processing. I congratulate Adrian and Deanne. Their contribution to environmental sustainability is applauded, as is their commitment to building this important business within the Murray electorate.

WALK THE WALLS STREET ART FESTIVAL

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (17:26): On the weekend of 2 to 4 March I had the privilege of attending the first Walk the Walls Street Art Festival in Caringbah. Thirty-four artists painted up a storm at the festival, contributing to an energetic fair with live music, workshops and food stalls. The artists have left a legacy of an amazing outdoor art gallery in central Caringbah that everyone can appreciate. The New South Wales Government was pleased to be a joint sponsor of this event with Sutherland Shire Council and contributed \$50,000 through the Safer Community Compact. We have been left with a truly valuable outdoor gallery of public art—one of the largest street art projects in Sydney.

Thirty-four artists, including local up-and-comers from the Sutherland Shire, eight women, two Indigenous artists and even an artist from Mexico, created around 1,500 square metres of murals across 23 walls, using media that included paints and glass, helping to cover ugly graffiti tags in Caringbah. Residents will benefit not only from a more colourful and pleasant central business district but also from the crime prevention that the street art festival has at its core. The festival forms part of a crime prevention strategy known as Crime Prevention

through Environmental Design, or CPTED. The acronym is clumsy, but the idea is brilliant: It is to help communities across the world effectively design crime out of urban environments. Projects such as this will help to reduce further graffiti incidents in the Sutherland Shire, which have already fallen 30 per cent from 360 reported incidents in 2012-13 to 256 reported incidents in 2016-17.

Regrettably, Caringbah has been defaced and vandalised with graffiti over recent years, which has made the area somewhat unpleasant in parts for locals, negatively affecting businesses nearby and giving visitors the false impression that the community is indifferent to how our streets look. The response from business owners, staff and residents in the electorate and in the neighbouring electorate of Miranda has been fantastic. Visitors, local residents and workers alike enjoy this outdoor gallery, unlike the ugly and illegal graffiti tags of the past. One should not tar legitimate street art and illegal graffiti tags with the same brush. Public spaces that feel safer and promote the appreciation of art benefit everyone who accesses them.

Nearly 50 years ago the Woodstock festival had art at its centre, sharing the glory with the music that was. It went for three days, and so did Walk the Walls, which might now be called Sydney's Wallstock. I congratulate our partners, Sutherland Shire Council, in this venture and, in particular, Sutherland Shire Mayor Carmelo Pesce for his vision; artistic curator Tim De Haan, better known in street circles as "Phibs"; and everyone who has brought Caringbah back to life with Walk the Walls. I hope that other public spaces nearby can be revitalised with art as in Caringbah and that residents and visitors can enjoy the colour, techniques and talent that can create more colourful and community-friendly neighbourhoods. This is a great way of putting the "Caring" back into Caringbah. I thank our venture partners, Sutherland Shire Council, and I hope to see more of this sort of street art in central Caringbah in the months and years ahead.

SEVEN HILLS ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:29): Westmead is an important part of my electorate of Seven Hills and it is great to see its health and education precinct receive a crucial redevelopment to the tune of \$1 billion and transport investment such as the Parramatta Light Rail. Health, education and transport are crucial issues for my constituents and it is spectacular to see record investments in all three areas by the Berejiklian Government on these issues across the State, but particularly in Western Sydney and in the Seven Hills electorate. The hospitals' redevelopment is very important to my community. Many community members are employed as part of the 18,000-strong workforce across the precinct, predominantly in essential healthcare worker roles and in other vital hospital support staff roles.

The construction phase will lead to many more jobs for those in my community, and that large number is set to rise when the redevelopment is completed. Most importantly, this project will see a remarkable boost in the quality of health care provided to my electorate and across greater Western Sydney. I should also mention the millions being spent on Blacktown and Mount Druitt hospitals, just outside my electorate, and on the wider Western Sydney local health district. First, I will provide a summary of this project, before I go into detail about some highlights of what has happened throughout the year.

The \$1 billion will see the largest health infrastructure investment in New South Wales history. This Liberal-Nationals Government has committed \$750 million for a new acute services building and upgrades to the hospital; a further \$72 million for precinct parking, including a multistorey car park which has already been built; and \$95 million to redevelop the Children's Hospital. It is great to see the government, the private and education sectors building the precinct and adding to the redevelopment. The University of Sydney has made a significant commitment to education and infrastructure programs for the next 15 years.

Recently the redevelopment has seen early and enabling works completed to help establish the precinct's future capacity. A new helipad for the Children's Hospital has commenced operations; the old Westmead Centre for Oral Health has been renamed the 03Hub and has been completely refurbished; the gastroenterology unit has been refurbished; the refurbishment of the Children's Hospital's Kids Research Institute stage 1 has been completed; the Westmead Education and Conference Centre, in collaboration with the University of Sydney, has been refurbished; and, as I said earlier, a new 1,250-space multistorey car park has been completed.

I also note that lengthy consultations have been undertaken with stakeholders and employees regarding the project through user groups and direct community consultation. Project administrators have also undertaken extensive work on the Arts and Culture Strategy to ensure that the designs are both artistically and culturally sensitive. In 2017, consultation with Aboriginal elders took place to commence works on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legacy Strategy and Action Plan. This year the Government, my electorate of Seven Hills and wider Western Sydney will see the completion of new ear, nose and throat and audiology units at Westmead Hospital; the refurbishment of the Westmead Hospital library; the opening of stage 2 of the Kids Research Institute; the consultation and planning process of the new ambulatory care ward for adolescents and young adults;

designs for the Central Acute Services Building; consultation and planning for a new infectious diseases unit; and the celebration of the first Westmead-based Masters of Nursing cohort.

A new building to be constructed by Multiplex will house new adult and paediatric departments, new theatres, and medical imaging and diagnostics labs. However, the best comment comes from the Chief Executive of The Sydney Children's Hospital Network, Dr Michael Brydon, who said: "The families of Western Sydney and across the State will receive the very best care when they need it most." This is thanks to the State Government's record \$1 billion investment that will allow Westmead to flourish into both a national and international health, education, training and research precinct. Across the refreshed precinct we will see \$2.5 billion more spent on transport with the construction of the Parramatta Light Rail. Stage 1 of this project will deliver 12 kilometres and 16 stops along a two-way track from Carlingford to Westmead. The light rail will link the booming Parramatta central business district with communities across the greater Parramatta City Council area. Record infrastructure is being built in my electorate of Seven Hills thanks to the Government's investment in the State.

NEWCASTLE BUS SERVICES PRIVATISATION

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (17:35): There is no secret about the chaos that the privatisation of Newcastle buses has created in the region that I represent. When the Government announced it was going to privatise Newcastle buses and ferries there was scepticism in the community and a belief that a privatised model would cut services and put profit before people. Sadly, our deepest fears have been realised. Today I share an email from a constituent. I have met this constituent, although not since 2014, when I doorknocked him. The email was sent to Minister Constance on 22 February 2018 and states:

Dear Minister, I have been a Liberal Party worker and supporter since 1959. I was born in Sydney I knew Bob Askin personally I worked with Phillip Ruddock to help him win the seat of Parramatta 1972 and onwards.

IF YOU DO NOT RETURN OUR BUSES TO THE WAY THEY WERE I WILL WORK AGAINST THE NSW LIBERAL PARTY AT THE NEXT ELECTION AMONGST THE VERY LARGE NETWORK ASSOCIATES I HAVE IN SYDNEY IN THREE ORGANISATIONS WHICH I AM A MEMBER. I carry out a lot of unpaid voluntary work and the people are absolutely distressed with the difficulty trying to go to Belmont hospital or The Mater or any where. I have been taking a chap to the Mater hospital at Mayfield for Radiotherapy and sitting there waiting for him I have heard the most upsetting stories from ill people living in Lake Macquarie having to take hours and several buses plus long walks and waits. I was distressed to the point of tears (and I am ex military). Bob Askin once said to me, "Public Transport is not supposed to make money it is a service to the people." He also said, "If I am going to spend the Govt's money the swinging seat will get the \$\$ every time." "Why would I spend any money in Newcastle when they will vote Labor anyway and why spend any money in the then North Sydney because I will get there vote regardless." HOWEVER HAVE A HEART AND RESTORE THE SYSTEM IN LAKE MACQUARIE AND NEWCASTLE THE PEOPLE UP HERE HAVE A LOT OF RELATIVES IN SYDNEY AND AROUND THE STATE AND YOU ARE GOING TO GET A BIG GOODBYE AT THE NEXT ELECTION IF YOU DO NOT SHOW COMPASSION FOR THE PEOPLE UP HERE!!

The Government cannot ignore these stories and continue to ignore the 1,000-plus people who attended the protest rally at the 16-foot sailing club a few weeks ago. The Government certainly cannot ignore the 10,000 signatures on the petition that was lodged in this place just last week, and there are more to come. I note the presence of the member for Newcastle in the Chamber; I thank him for his support. He is aware of the importance of buses in our area. We will have another 10,000 signatures—that will be 20,000 signatures calling on the Minister to fix Newcastle buses. Let me make it very clear: The Government cannot continue with this arrogance and ignore the destruction it is imposing on the lives of normal, hardworking people. If it does, it will be at its peril.

I say to Coalition members that they will all be tarred with the same brush as the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, who is known for his arrogance and for not listening. They all know the old saying, "If you lie down with dogs, you will get up with fleas." There is not enough calamine lotion in this State to calm the scratching of the Coalition Government that is to come. The Government must reverse this decision and have a proper review. We do not want tweaking or refining; we want a consultative, thorough review that will restore services for people in my electorate of Swansea, the electorate of Newcastle, and the electorate of Lake Macquarie—and I note the member for Lake Macquarie is in the Chamber—as Cardiff is a pinch point. That is what we need.

CENTENARY OF FIRST WORLD WAR BATHURST NURSE VOLUNTEERS

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (17:40): It gives me pleasure to speak of the positive things happening in my community which, because of the Government's initiatives, is thriving and becoming prosperous. Whether one lives in the city of Bathurst, in villages or rural areas, the community is benefiting. I speak about a special event that took place last Friday 9 March 2018. The Bathurst community came together to honour an incredible group of women who were nurses in World War I. These women of outstanding calibre faced challenges beyond our imagination and endured hardship. In the era of the Great War, it was thought that a woman's place was in the home.

Despite the social barriers, this group of nurses undertook overseas travel to assist in Australia's war effort and help wounded soldiers, and last Friday we acknowledged 24 of these incredible women. However, they did so much more. They were pioneers who built the foundations of the now recognised strength, commitment

and dedication of the nursing profession. A great cross-section of the community was represented last Friday, including the Federal member and representatives from council, the nursing community, schools and the Returned and Services League of Australia. It was a proud moment for the families of these 24 women, generations later.

We shared incredible stories of these amazing women, who have made such a huge difference. More than 3,000 Australian civilian nurses went wherever they were needed. They worked long hours in surroundings and circumstances that few can relate to. Few can imagine the horrors they experienced during war, but they were always there to assist our wounded soldiers. These nurses wore white aprons and veils and were thought of as angels. A memorable statement from one of these wonderful women was, "Where there is life there was hope, and we won."

These nurses put their lives at risk for the sake of helping others, and the number of lives they saved can never be calculated. This ceremony was both a memorable and historical occasion. That these 24 remarkable women are now recognised on a plaque on the base of the Carillion in Bathurst is something of which we can all be proud. It has taken too long for the names of these women to be acknowledged, but I am really pleased that we have done so now. I pay tribute also to Andrew Fletcher of Bathurst, who worked tirelessly in bringing community recognition to the Bathurst nurse volunteers of the Great War of 1914-18. He spent months ensuring that these 24 remarkable and committed women from the Bathurst area were recognised and honoured for the services that they each provided. He undertook many hours of research to ensure that the story of each woman was recorded and that their names were placed on the plaque to honour and commemorate them.

It has only been through the endeavours of Andrew Fletcher that this memorable occasion occurred and the recognition of these wonderful women came to fruition. The women who came from Bathurst and the surrounding villages at that time show that those communities were truly committed to protecting this country. I commend and acknowledge the incredible and invaluable contribution made by Andrew Fletcher to the community of Bathurst. His extraordinary efforts have ensured the permanent recognition, at long last, of 24 young nurses from the Bathurst area. They were women of outstanding calibre and pioneers in their profession who were instrumental in the creation of the Anzac spirit. Lest we forget.

PEDALCURE4MND BIKE RIDE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:45): A shout-out today to my fellow cyclists who are right now making their way from Corowa to Benalla, having passed the halfway point on their ride from Ungarie in my electorate to Melbourne as part of the Pedalcure4MND 2018 for FIGHT MND. By now everyone will know where Ungarie is, having transformed from a little dot in western New South Wales to a big red footy shape on the Australian map. I kid you not: That is because the town now boasts a five-metre-long, 800-kilogram football, a tribute to Ungarie's most famous exports, Aussie Rules legends Terry, Neale, Anthony and Chris Daniher. Between them, the four brothers played 752 games for Essendon and the Sydney Swans.

This amazing artwork—the Big Sherrin—was unveiled at the weekend and has been fittingly inscribed with the words, "Ungarie, home of the Danihers". Such is the legacy and legend of the Daniher name, no more words are required. The Daniher family epitomises what can be achieved when you work hard together towards one dream. This fitting tribute, in turn, represents what can be achieved when not just a family but an entire community, works together with local and State governments and corporate partners to turn a dream into a reality. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government, particularly Deputy Premier John Barilaro, for helping to get this project over the line. I have never been part of something that means so much to so many people—and what a privilege it was.

The show rolled on with the start of the 700-kilometre Pedalcure4MND in Ungarie. It is currently headed south to Melbourne. It is no coincidence: Neale Daniher continues his fight to find a cure for motor neurone disease [MND], which he was diagnosed with in 2013. The need to do more, to learn more and to search for a cure for this insidious illness pedalled through the hearts and minds of every cyclist who started the ride on Sunday. With only 40 kilometres of training under my belt, I set off alongside around 60 other cyclists on the ride's first leg to Arian Park. The 104 kilometres of asphalt in 34 degree heat hurt less amid the scores of bike riders who were up for a chat.

I am advised by organiser John Fox that \$98,000 has been raised, well exceeding the initial target. There are many stories of people contributing to the cause, such as the 79-year-old lady who lost her brother to motor neurone disease more than 20 years ago. I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone involved in the Pedalcure4MND 2018 bike ride, especially the organisers, led by Foxy; the sponsors, including Delta Agribusiness; the volunteers who provide much-needed sustenance on each stage; and the cyclists who have taken time off work and away from their families to ride. I wish them well as they head south. I ask everyone to consider donating to this cause. It takes people to find a cure, and the money will be used to fund the best and brightest researchers around Australia to help find a treatment and a cure for MND.

HILLSBOROUGH ROAD SAFETY

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (17:49): I will update the House about the situation regarding Hillsborough Road, a main arterial road that forms a large part of the boundary between my electorate of Lake Macquarie and the electorate of Charlestown. It is an extremely busy road, and one which I and the member for Charlestown have spoken about a number of times. It has been earmarked for widening and improvements for many years. In fact, this House debated a petition in June 2016 in which more than 15,000 people called for urgent action. The road has several dangerous and busy intersections that have claimed lives. The road remains of considerable concern to everyone who uses it, myself included.

The member for Charlestown and I are of the same mind when we say that an upgrade to Hillsborough Road has been too long on the backburner. I first need to reflect on the death of Jade Frith, who was killed almost two years ago while trying to cross Hillsborough Road. Jade's death was tragic and brought into sharp focus the need to upgrade a section of road that has been problematic for many years. It is becoming increasingly so with increased traffic and more businesses located along its length. Jade was a promising local swimmer. She was struck by a car—through no fault of the driver, I hasten to add—while attempting to cross this busy road.

At the time of Jade's death, Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] was in the planning phase of improvements to Hillsborough Road. Recommendations on how to improve this road corridor were to be produced later in 2016. Following Jade's death it is true that some measures were taken to improve pedestrian safety in the vicinity of that accident, and that has certainly improved things to some extent by lessening the temptation for people to cross where there is no pedestrian refuge or traffic lights. I am pleased that late last year the Government also provided \$1 million for a new set of pedestrian traffic lights approximately 100 metres east of the major roundabout at the Hillsborough and Macquarie roads intersection. Roads and Maritime Services have informed me that it is on track to be installed before 30 June this year. That is a good thing.

Budget papers show that a further \$4 million was allocated to continue planning to widen Hillsborough Road to four lanes between Warners Bay and the Newcastle Inner City Bypass at Charlestown. Where that project or corridor strategy is up to is unclear, as there is nothing on the RMS website that informs people about the project. I believe Roads and Maritime Services Regional Manager Anna Zycki keeps me informed as much as she can, but I have no information to take to my community about the bigger picture. The roads Minister is aware of the situation with Hillsborough Road. When I asked a question in this Chamber in May last year about Hillsborough Road, the Minister indicated that she shared the concerns that I, the member for Charlestown and our local communities had brought to her attention. At the time the Minister referred to:

... currently reviewing the strategy for the road corridor for Charlestown to Warners Bay which identifies short, medium and long-term road investment priorities to address safety, travel times, reliability and incident management challenges. I expect that we will have that corridor strategy released by the end of this year.

Unfortunately, that time frame has not been met. We are still waiting on details of that corridor study. The section of road where Jade was killed is not the only part of Hillsborough Road where fatalities have occurred. The bigger picture includes the intersection with Crockett Street, which is equally dangerous, especially for any of my constituents in Cardiff South who need to turn right out of Crockett Street or from other smaller streets further east near the dog showgrounds at Hillsborough. People are becoming very concerned about the status of the Hillsborough Road improvements. Maybe planning is much more advanced than the local members or the community are aware, but either way we would all appreciate more information on a timely basis from Roads and Maritime Services.

I know that improvements to that road will be expensive but the cost will not decrease with waiting—it will only get worse, as will congestion, frustration and risk to road users. I appreciate that RMS will soon install pedestrian lights. However, after Jade was tragically killed we had hoped for a relatively fast response to the overall problem. This has not happened and I suspect the main reason is funding. I therefore call on the Government to allocate funding to RMS to allow it to get on with improving this vitally important section of road.

WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (17:54): This is Rob's workers compensation story:

After working hard for well over 40 years, struggling to pay bills and taxes, always abiding by the laws of the land and through no fault of my own, I am left without an income.

That was how Rob introduced himself to me. Rob is a constituent of mine and he is another injured worker who has experienced the ruthless wrath of the changes to the Workers Compensation Scheme implemented by the Liberal-Nationals Government in 2012. In one of the most heartless ways possible, Rob received his last workers compensation payment on Christmas Day 2017. The Government's legislation added to his trauma and instability on the day that we are supposed to celebrate cheer and goodwill. Christmas was not a time of cheer and goodwill

for Rob. It was a period of high stress and the gradual, perhaps accelerated, decline in his psychological wellbeing. Who in their right mind would consider Christmas Day as the most appropriate time to cut off someone's form of income?

If a business or private operator terminated 4,000 of their employees over the Christmas period, every member of this place would be demanding answers, calling for inquiries and condemning the private operator for their heartless and inconsiderate decision. Unluckily for Rob, it was not a private operator that terminated his income but the New South Wales Government. There were no calls for inquiries, no calls to demand answers, and no calls of condemnation. Therefore, thanks to the 2012 changes to the Workers Compensation Act, he has no recourse to recover his income. According to the Government, Rob is no longer eligible for payments because he fails to meet the whole person impairment threshold of more than 20 per cent enshrined in legislation.

The simple fact is that Rob will never work again. It does not matter what penalties are imposed upon him. His injury prevents him from doing any manual work. Rob is unable to lift any object without experiencing excruciating pain through his abdomen. Imagine not being able to lift anything without suffering crippling pain. Clearly, there are questions that need to be asked about Rob's whole person impairment assessment. Surely we cannot expect someone, who is unable to lift an object without pain, to return to work. If we cannot expect them to return to work, why do we choose to cut off their workers compensation benefits? That is what we are forcing under the current legislation. Weirdly, taking away Rob's weekly entitlements is seen as an incentive to him to return to work. Rob cannot return to work and now he has no income because he has failed to meet the threshold of the Centrelink payments scheme. All we are doing is making his life miserable.

Rob summed it up clearly when he told me, "I feel like Ivan Milat lives a better life than I do right now." This tends to be the sentiment of so many of the injured workers who have been thrown on the scrapheap over the past six months because they have met the five-year term imposed upon them and they no longer have access to workers compensation, even though they continue to be injured and even though it is impossible for them to return to work. Rob and those people have lost all hope. They feel isolated and worse than criminals. They are being punished by the Government all because they were injured at work, through no fault of their own. Rob had suffered enough before his income was taken away from him. Now he is made to feel as though he is a burden on his own community, relying on Centrelink and Medicare for his health and wellbeing. Clearly and simply, this is not how we should be treating our injured workers

GRANVILLE ELECTORATE REFUGEES

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (17:59): My electorate is home to more than 3,000 African-Australians including those who have settled as refugees over the past 15 years from countries such as Sierra Leone, Sudan and Liberia. Many of them are making a great contribution to the community. A large number of Ghanaians and Egyptians have also settled successfully in Australia over decades. Granville is a hub for Rwandans, Eritreans and Congolese who are dispersed across Sydney, but come together for national day celebrations and other culturally significant events. It is a privilege to work with all these groups and share their special occasions.

Last weekend the Africultures Festival was held in nearby Lidcombe with performers, food stalls, handicrafts and community organisations from across the 54 countries of Africa. In its tenth year, the festival is the largest of its kind in Australia and it is absolutely fantastic. My close relationship with these groups and other African-Australians ensured that my trip to Rwanda, Ghana and Liberia in January was a great success. I had the opportunity to visit the Rwandan Parliament; met with a number of Ministers in Rwanda and Ghana to discuss environmental and education issues; and even had the opportunity to attend the presidential inauguration ceremony and ball in Liberia.

I want to focus on the support services provided to refugees by countries with far larger numbers of refugees than Australia and far fewer resources. The Granville electorate is home to many refugees and others who fled conflict to find a better and safer life in Australia. Having worked in a Liberian refugee camp in Ghana in 2006, I wanted to investigate what it means to send refugees back to their home country and also the fate of Liberian refugees who have stayed on in Ghana since it was deemed safe for most of them to return. It was remarkable to see that Rwanda has been transformed since the 1994 genocide. The Rwandan Government includes many former refugees such as President Paul Kagame so it has a different perspective on the needs of refugees and the contributions they offer. Therefore the Rwandan Government is far more sympathetic to the plight of refugees than many others.

With the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], I visited the Mahama refugee camp which is home to 56,000 Burundian refugees. Overall, I was impressed by many of the changes in policies and practices that the UNHCR has implemented since 2006, which provide greater empowerment, personal security and clean water. In acknowledging the protracted nature of most refugee settlements today, the UNHCR has made a concerted effort to utilise the existing skills of refugees and has created

opportunities for them to learn new skills, work or start businesses. Many of the nurses in the camp hospital are refugees. I also met hairdressers who have opened new shops at the camp, a bicycle repairer and others run market stalls. Contrary to myths, refugees are demonstrably good for local economies. The additional economic activity created by refugee camps has a beneficial effect for local businesses within 10 kilometres of the camps, compared to those further away.

To ensure social harmony is maintained the UNHCR and the Rwandan Government are sharing resources. Locals can attend the camp hospitals and some children from the camp attend the local school instead of the small camp schools. The closest school is the largest in Rwanda, with 19,000 students including 3,000 refugees. The worst aspect of the camp was the food rationing. Each family's monthly food rations have been cut dramatically since the Trump administration significantly reduced their funding for the United Nations Food program. With the support of the UNHCR I also visited a much smaller Ivorian camp in Ghana. Refugees are building new facilities and some of the Ivorian teachers are now teaching French in the Ghanaian school system. The camp hospital serves the local community and its school is part of the Ghanaian State school system.

The Buduburam camp, where I lived and worked in 2006, is now a settlement. Accra has grown to engulf it and most of the homes vacated by Liberian refugees have been taken up by refugees from other African countries such as South Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire, and the Central African Republic. The Liberians that remain in Ghana have been declassified as refugees by the UNHCR and the Ghana Refugee Board. They have been given the option to return to Liberia or settle permanently. Approximately 300 are still designated as refugees eligible for resettlement in a third country such as Australia, including my close friend Otti Sackrow who fled Liberia in 1991. She had been living in limbo at the camp for 15 years when I met her and her sons.

As for the Liberians who returned to Liberia, the Ebola outbreak devastated the country and added to the trauma of many families who lost loved ones in the war. When I visited, there was widespread euphoria about the first ever democratic transition of power. Even those who voted against George Weah were happy that they had their say. However, a lot of other people who were responsible for much death and destruction during the war are in power so safety and security is still precarious.

My visit coincided with the awful comments from Trump about African countries, racist vitriol against Sudanese migrants in Melbourne, and the embarrassing spectacle of a French journalist asking Booker prize winning Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie if there are bookshops in Nigeria. Those comments were widely reported. They are extremely hurtful and far from the truth. My experience in January has only strengthened my view that we can do more to support refugees and that refugees on the whole give back enormously to the places where they find safety and security. We see that not only at the Africultures Festival but also across my electorate with the huge number of otherwise empty shops being opened by refugees from around the world. I urge all members to ignore the bigots and racists such as Pauline Hanson and One Nation, to consider the facts and welcome refugees.

AUSTRALIAN LONGBOARD SURFING OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (18:04): Once again it is an honour to inform the House of a significant event in the Tweed—the 2018 Australian Longboard Surfing Open. I congratulate big kahuna Sean McKeown on another successful longboard event. The surfing open was held at Kingscliff from 28 February to March 4, when competitors were greeted with an amazing four to six foot easterly swell, offshore winds and sunshine. This year offered the biggest star-studded line-up in the history of the event. As the only World Surf League sanctioned longboard event on Australia's east coast, it has the full support of the Tweed community, Tweed Shire Council and tourism operators in the region. The Australian Longboard Surfing Open is in its seventh year and is a multi-day celebration of longboard surfing and the surfing lifestyle. This year the competition attracted grommets of all ages, with seven people competing in the over-70s division and the oldest amateur surfer being 77 years old.

Originally starting as the Malfunction in 1984, the event was used as an excuse for oldschool surfers to get together. Back then the contest was designed for those who wanted to have fun in the waves after perhaps not competing for some time. The first event was won by surfing legend Jeff Hakman from the United States. This year Kingscliff local Ray Gleave went away with the king's crown after winning two divisions. Hawaiian-based world champion Honolua Blomfield won the women's event. Ray Gleave was one of a number of surfers to make it to two finals but was the only one to win both. After blitzing the field in the over-50s it was sweet revenge for Gleave, who scored 12.33 ahead of Ian Pearson with 10.06. Gleave lost to Pearson in 2017. Ray Gleave went on to win the last event of the day, the 10-foot stand-up paddleboard, with a score of 11.60 ahead of Kiwi, David Storck.

Today the Australian Longboard Surfing Open is a celebration of the surfing lifestyle that attracts the current crop of professional longboard surfing superstars including world champions, former champions and

grommets who are striving to be future world champions. On stage at the event this year I saw local Phyllis O'Donnell, who was born in 1937 and was the first Women's World Surfing Champion in 1964, and current World Longboard Champion 18-year-old Honolua Blomfield standing beside her. Another event, the Juraki Surf Invitational, is a preliminary event for the Roxy Pro and Quiksilver Pro. Local surfer and previous women's world champion Stephanie Gilmore is a supporter. Mick Fanning, Joel Parkinson, Taylor Moore and many other surfing legends have also attended the event. Competitors are expecting a backlash from Cyclone Linda and it looks as though the swells will get to around 10 feet. That will make the surfing competition really spectacular.

The Tweed is home to Surfing Australia headquarters where this Government, in conjunction with the Federal Government, has provided funding for aerial surf training facilities. I remind members that surfing will be a demonstration sport in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo. I have recently had the pleasure of meeting representatives of the Kelly Slater Wave Company in California. There is a push to install a wave pool in the Tweed, which will be one of the first in Australia. It will be absolutely sensational. The Olympic surfing event will be held indoors in a wave pool producing perfect 5½ footers all the way through. The large surf industry in the Tweed includes fibreglass manufacturers that employ about 30 people who shape surfboards. Once again, I am 100 per cent committed to surfing and 100 per cent committed to the Tweed. Hang ten.

CENTRAL COAST HOMELESSNESS

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:09): May homeless, gentle soul Mark rest in peace. On a Saturday night last month Mark passed away at the back of Woolworths in Woy Woy. He was 34 years old and had no direct family. He was alone but in regular contact with a community of homeless people who are suffering due to limited emergency accommodation on the peninsula and across the Central Coast. Each day local homelessness organisations work with hundreds of people who are sleeping rough or who are in need of a meal, and help them to transform their lives. Our town centres, where many services are located, have become inhospitable to people experiencing homelessness. Having to travel to a central point to access services means that many do not seek help.

I take my hat off to Coast Shelter, which is a world's best practice not-for-profit organisation that supports vulnerable members of our community who, for whatever reason, find themselves living on the street. Coast Shelter has been operating for 25 years. It will be with sadness but also a huge round of applause that we will congratulate founding chief executive officer Laurie Maher on his retirement on 30 June this year. Laurie has held that position since the organisation was founded in 1992. He has also served as the mayor of Gosford for four terms, being first elected to council in 2004, elected as mayor in 2007 and retiring as mayor in 2012. In 2009 Laurie Maher was presented with an Award for Services to the Aboriginal Community by the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council. In 2010 he was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to Gosford through social welfare and his work with local government organisations.

Laurie's incredible commitment and passion to make a difference is reflected in the efforts of the Coast Shelter staff. I cannot praise enough the hardworking staff and volunteers who, more often than not, go above and beyond the call of duty to support individuals who are doing it tough. Despite Laurie's well-deserved departure, Coast Shelter will continue its work by providing 64,000 overnight beds in 10 refuges and 72 outreach properties to approximately 800 men, women, young people and children. Coast Shelter has cooked close to 50,000 meals for people in need and has given out more than 1,500 food hampers donated by generous community members and businesses. It has provided showers and laundry facilities to 400 people and 105 people have been able to access no-interest loans totalling more than \$85,000. It has assisted more than 500 people with medical prescriptions, helped 302 people to pay their energy bills and provided 73 people with free legal advice.

Despite the generosity of the local community, and despite business and government support, one in five people seeking help from Coast Shelter is turned away. When the concerned shopkeepers of Woy Woy approached me to act on the increasing rates of homelessness in our community I heard stories of cuts to outreach funding taking their toll. Homelessness is not just about not having a roof over one's head. With the shortage of affordable rental properties and the increased cost of living, more and more people in our community face homelessness or live with the fear of becoming homeless. Failing to adopt an affordable housing strategy and to invest in social housing—along with the Liberal Government's rampant selling off of more than \$1.4 billion worth of social housing since 2011—has only made the situation worse.

Data from the Property NSW Property Asset Sales and Transfers Report reveals that more than 4,200 public housing properties have been sold off in New South Wales since the Liberal-Nationals Government was elected in 2011. New Australian Bureau of Statistics data released today reveals the lived reality of those sales—a damning increase in homelessness in New South Wales that is the highest rise across Australia. Homelessness has increased a staggering 37 per cent, from 28,191 in 2011 to 37,715 in 2016. The greatest increase comes from people living in severely crowded dwellings, which are defined as places requiring four or more extra bedrooms to accommodate the people who usually live there.

In 2016 the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experiencing homelessness was 23,437. More than two out of three were living in severely crowded dwellings that are extremely uncomfortable for them and their families. One quarter of the people who experienced homelessness in 2016 was aged between 20 and 30 years. I spoke to a man in our community who is living on the streets with his stepfather. These statistics exist in the same world in which this Government is raking in more than \$11 billion in stamp duty revenue as a result of selling off public housing in the Gosford electorate, which is being replaced with single-bedroom units. People have been on the Central Coast waiting list for more than 10 years for homes of one, two, three or four bedrooms and only 200 people homed in Sydney is not enough.

TAFE NSW OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (18:14): I express my disappointment that TAFE Outreach programs have been disbanded across the State, but I am particularly concerned about the Wyong electorate. TAFE Outreach programs were established in 1976 in response to the Kangan report to provide technical and further education as a means of our social responsibility to engage the most marginalised members in our communities. These programs evolved as a means of adult education, equal opportunity, access and equity, social inclusion, employability and community development. Unfortunately the New South Wales Government saw fit, as part of its Smart and Skilled scam, to cut TAFE funding to such a point that local TAFE Outreach programs were decimated as dodgy private providers collected millions. This Government must understand that many of the Outreach programs were funded by fees collected from other courses and that funding was cut when the Smart and Skilled reform was introduced.

Reviews and revisions were conducted over four decades to ensure that Outreach programs remained relevant and effective. The rationale was to develop programs to engage, enable and equip disadvantaged and dependent learners to develop their confidence and ability to participate as effective learners in vocational education and training, employment and community development. Programs were developed in keeping with government, TAFE NSW and institute policies, priorities and corporate social responsibilities as well as resource allocations, collaborations, contestability and commercial opportunities. Despite this, we are told that Outreach programs will no longer be available at Wyong TAFE later this year.

The Central Coast has above average unemployment and youth unemployment and below average wages. Our unemployment is 1.6 per cent higher than the New South Wales average and our youth unemployment is a staggering 7.7 per cent higher than the State average of 18.5 per cent. Those figures should encourage the Government to spend more on TAFE Outreach programs, not less. On Monday night the Central Coast Council unanimously passed this motion moved by its Labor councillors:

That Council call on TAFE NSW to restore the Outreach programs to Wyong Campus given their great success in supporting a diverse range of students to access the skills needed to participate in further tertiary education.

This motion was supported by the Liberal councillors and should be supported by the Liberals in this Government. The development and delivery of Outreach programs in TAFE NSW has made a tremendous difference to the lives of many thousands of individuals, their families, communities, employment and enterprises over the past four decades. Many current tradespeople owe their current professions to an early introduction to TAFE through these programs. The educational, social, cultural, ecological and economic returns have more than justified the investment in Outreach programs by State and Federal governments, local communities and businesses. It is important that, through good governance, agencies continue to invest and develop the TAFE Outreach programs in the decades to come. Unfortunately, this Government does not think the skills of our community are important and it is intent on destroying everything that has made TAFE great.

We continue to hear rhetoric in this place—we heard it in question time today. The Government was crowing about what it is doing with TAFE. The reality is that TAFE was for the people who needed it most and its Outreach programs were one of the key elements for getting people who had been out of the education system into courses. Those who struggled in high school and did not achieve a Higher School Certificate were able to study Outreach courses to access further education. Under this Government's model, people who would normally access TAFE Outreach courses and eventually study at other institutions such as university will no longer be able to access those courses. It is an absolute tragedy for the Wyong community. The Government must rethink how it funds TAFE Outreach programs. Government members talk about the good things they do but skills cannot be attained and infrastructure cannot be built unless trades courses can be accessed by everyone in the community and not just those who can afford them.

WILLIAMTOWN SAND MINE PROPOSAL

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (18:19): This week the Independent Planning Commission held a public hearing to hear directly from my community about a proposed sand mine in the Williamstown contamination zone. I find it difficult to believe that I am standing here today discussing the reasons

that a sand mine in a contamination zone is a bad idea. I feel the same sense of disbelief, fatigue, fear and outrage that people spoke of when they attended the Independent Planning Commission meeting on Monday. Not only does the proposed sand mine lie within the area identified as having ground and surface water contamination as a result of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances [PFAS] leaching from RAAF Base Williamstown, the proposal also has a shady history to say the least.

Port Stephens Council purchased the land in 2002 and sought tenders for it to be mined in 2012. The former sand mining Mayor of Port Stephens Council submitted his own company's tender for the work, then withdrew the tender on the day council was to decide on it. His own words were, "I knew the tenders ... but we weren't the preferred tender. But I did not want Collins to get it either." The tender was ultimately awarded to Castle Quarry Products—a shelf company related to Buildev and Nathan Tinkler—against the advice of council staff who had preferred another tenderer. The council's millionaire mayor, who has a significant interest in local sand mining operations, was not only aware of the council staff tender deliberations for a job his own company had bid on but he also withdrew his own tender so that he could influence the outcome.

That is not all. Castle Quarry Products subsequently asked Port Stephens Council to reassign the lease to a different company—Williamstown Sand Syndicate Pty Limited. Without any further tender or due diligence, the lease was reassigned and my community is now battling a sand mine being pursued by Williamstown Sand Syndicate. Given this history the situation has been referred to both the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Minister for Local Government. Surprise, surprise, nothing has been done and my community is yet again left to fight its own battles. What is even more surprising is the environmental assessment report prepared by the New South Wales Department of Planning and Environment. On page one of this document the background section states:

In 2012 council sought tenders from the interested parties for the extraction of sand from the site. Williamstown Sand Syndicate was selected as the preferred tenderer and has entered into a 15 year lease agreement with council to develop and operate a sand quarry.

The Department of Planning And Environment is charged with determining whether the sand mine is "approvable", but most of that sentence is factually and blatantly incorrect. Williamstown Sand Syndicate was not registered with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission until 2015 and it certainly was not the preferred tenderer in the initial and only tender process. The sentence is either a misstatement or a convenient massaging of the truth to gloss over the dodgy history of this entire project. My community should not still have to battle this project. Given this blatant untruth, how can my community or the Independent Planning Commission have any faith in the content of the environmental assessment report. The potential impact of the sand mine cannot be underestimated.

The people who will be impacted by the sand mine are those who are already living the nightmare of the Williamstown contamination. These residents have learned that more than 50 of their neighbours have suffered with cancer over the past 15 years. This tragedy has occurred on just a five-kilometre stretch of road and this sand mine will be in their backyards. This week a number of residents spoke at the Independent Planning Commission meeting. They shared their deeply personal stories, including the daily fear that they are exposing themselves and their children to harm as a result of the PFAS contamination. Their lives are difficult enough without adding the risks imposed by airborne silica, dust, truck noise and vibrations, exacerbation of PFAS contamination, radiation from previous mine workings, and 124 truck movements each day as well as the trucks that already race down Cabbage Tree Road.

There are also significant impacts on the environment with 42.9 hectares being cleared, which includes preferred and supplementary koala habitat. There are so many reasons against this development proceeding, not the least of which is its unique circumstances, but if it is approved these residents will not be able to move—their properties are worthless because of the PFAS contamination. Indeed, if this sand mine is approved it will only continue the sorry legacy of corruption in my community—one rule for developers and another for residents—and it will place more of a burden on residents who can least bear it. The Independent Planning Commission was my community's last roll of the dice because of the Government's inaction to date. I am hopeful that some decency and compassion will finally put an end to this sorry saga.

VAUCLUSE ELECTORATE LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENT LAYA SLAVIN

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (18:24): On 5 March I had the honour of presenting Rebbetzin Laya Slavin with the 2018 Vaucluse Local Woman of the Year Award, which is an initiative run by the New South Wales Government. Each year on International Women's Day, women from across New South Wales are recognised for the exceptional work they do in their local communities. Laya was truly deserving of this recognition. She is the co-founder of Our Big Kitchen, or OBK as it is called, with her husband, Rabbi Doctor David Slavin. OBK was founded in February 2005. This community kitchen in the heart of Bondi inspires

individuals to come together to help those in need. OBK has now become a beacon of community action that brings people from all walks of life together. Laya believes that food is a "currency" by which we live—the language that brings comfort and inclusion to allow those who otherwise feel excluded to be part of our community.

Our Big Kitchen now has 650 volunteers and each year it makes more than 70,000 meals for those in need. Indeed, it is hoped that one day OBK will operate across Australia with several kitchens. Many years before becoming the member for Vacluse I visited the kitchen, and I have been a regular visitor since. In fact, I recently visited OBK again and witnessed firsthand the warmth that Laya inspires amongst the volunteers. That day the volunteer local high school children were making hamantaschen for Purim, a Jewish festival. This community kitchen is a wonderful place. It encourages people to cook and to freely give to others. Volunteers include local school students, mothers' groups, sporting groups and businesses that use the opportunity to build their team-working skills. Through this exercise these volunteers learn skills to help them, the local community and beyond. Laya clearly has a drive to go above and beyond for all people in need in this country, not just for those in my electorate. She is an exemplar of community spirit.

Laya grew up in a close Jewish community. Her parents' place was always very open and welcoming to all. Laya has translated this experience into a large community kitchen, as well as inviting Jewish and non-Jewish neighbours into her own family kitchen on Shabbat, and on other occasions, to proudly share her family's beautiful traditions. She is also an amazing supporter of the Gift of Life Australia program, which inspires people to become potential blood stem cell donors to save the lives of blood cancer patients. While her commitment and concern for her local community know no bounds, Laya is also a mother to eight beautiful children. I am sure that Mordechai, Zevi, Chana, Mendel, Sheina, Shlomie, Sara and Rivka are very proud of the achievements of both of their parents, particularly Laya, and they appreciate the vast community spirit that flows through their home.

My decision to nominate Laya for the Local Woman of the Year Award was by no means tough. She is truly a unique member of my community. When I visit she always has a bright smile and a big hug. Indeed, her kindness and dedication are very keenly felt when one meets her for the first time. However, there are many women in my electorate who are doing amazing things each and every day to better our local community. I commend all of those women and I remind them that their contributions do not go unnoticed. As I said, International Women's Day is a day to bring women's achievements, big or small, to the fore. But we also need to look to the everyday acknowledgement of the position of women in our community. As women we are mothers, wives, sisters and daughters. We are also doctors, lawyers, pilots, chief executive officers and politicians. Women are the backbone of many a local community. Each and every day women such as Laya work tirelessly, without much thought of commendation or publicity of the roles they play, to provide the types of community and services that all our communities want and need. I commend my private member's statement to the House.

KIAMA ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (18:29): I stood for Parliament to deliver results for our community. I have grown up, gone to school, lived and worked in the Shoalhaven my entire life. I was not parachuted into my electorate. I am not a head office plant. I came to this place as an authentic and life-long member of a community whose people are not just my parents, my family and my friends; they are my neighbours, my old school, local businesses, local churches, local charities, the workers and the farmers and are part of the landscape. They are the essence and flavour of what the word "home" means to me. One of my key focuses in the Shoalhaven area of my electorate has been delivering infrastructure to help generate opportunities for businesses and jobs, and to improve the lives of my local community for the better.

The member for South Coast and I form a strong and united team when it comes to our lobbying efforts for the Shoalhaven. This evening I reflect on three projects that are important to the communities we both represent as members of Parliament, and we speak with one strong and united voice. On Monday 19 February I joined with the member for South Coast, the Hon. Paul Green, MLC, and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Andrew Constance to reveal Roads and Maritime Services' preferred option for a replacement crossing of the Shoalhaven River. The Roads and Maritime Services proposal is for a four-lane, south-bound bridge to replace the 137-year-old iron bridge. The old iron bridge was originally designed as a railway bridge. It was never built to carry an average of 50,000 vehicles each day.

But that is not the only reason why we need a new bridge. As a Bomaderry local I want to see a bridge design that helps to reduce congestion at key intersections such as Illaroo Road. Trucks of a certain size and weight cannot use the old bridge, and there are concerns about damage to and closure of the bridge due to the impact of an over-height vehicle. Roads and Maritime Services will review all of the submissions received and provide a submission report, which will help guide the project moving forward. Having been involved in numerous roads projects in my electorate, I can personally attest to the importance of community feedback both to me and to Roads and Maritime Services to get the best possible design for the future of our community.

Last Saturday I dropped into the Roads and Maritime Services listening station at the North Nowra shops. There were many interested locals keen to ask questions about the design and put forward their views. Many locals have raised with me the need to build a Nowra bypass. Although I support a future Nowra bypass, we cannot leave the people of the Shoalhaven with just one bridge. That project must come first. The 137-year-old bridge has reached the end of its serviceable life and a new solution is needed. Roads and Maritime Services figures indicate that about 85 per cent of traffic on the Shoalhaven River bridge is local traffic. This traffic is not seeking to go around Nowra, but to go into Nowra. A solution is required for traffic congestion at key intersections such as Illaroo Road to allow for a freer flow of traffic.

I have long been a supporter of the North Nowra Link Road. This project should have been built years ago, but after I left Shoalhaven City Council the newly elected councillors in 2012 withdrew their support for the best possible option, which had been lodged with the Department of Planning, to link Pitt Street with Nerang Road. To relieve congestion in Nowra, I strongly support the construction of the East Nowra Sub Arterial. This road was placed on plans during my time on council. This would take traffic off the Princes Highway, behind Nowra Fair and link in with Greenwell Point Road. I encourage all interested locals to put forward their submissions about the Nowra bridge project by 23 March. Please also ensure that copies are sent to the member for South Coast and me so that we can continue to campaign for the best possible option.

The member for South Coast and I are passionate about improving local health services. We secured an election commitment to build a new car park at Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital. I am pleased to advise that Health Infrastructure NSW will shortly go to tender for this project, with discussions underway for alternative parking arrangements during construction. Shoalhaven hospital is our local hospital. We have friends who work there, and we have visited sick family and friends there. The member for Shellharbour and I know it well. I take this opportunity to pay an enormous tribute to the hardworking and dedicated staff at Shoalhaven hospital and I look forward to seeing this car park project underway. For so many, there is nothing more frustrating than trying to find a car park when dealing with illness or caring for a loved one. We will not allow this situation to continue.

I am also pleased to advise the House that the member for Shellharbour and I have convinced the New South Wales Government to extend its Smart, Skilled and Hired program to assist with \$10 million towards the Youth Employment Innovation Challenge. This challenge encourages new ideas and solutions to get young people into work. Successful entries will be put into practice through the New South Wales Government's Innovation Launch program, to assist 15- to 24-year-olds who are not in employment, education or training. Information on how locals can access this funding will be available on 21 March at the Nowra School of Arts between 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m., and earlier that day at the University of Wollongong. From large infrastructure programs generating jobs to programs encouraging business and young people, the results the member for South Coast and I are delivering are real and tangible. We will continue to work harder to get even more results and to ensure that our community is never forgotten.

SHELLHARBOUR HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:34): On 20 March 2015 this Government first made a \$251 million re-election promise to the community of Shellharbour to redevelop our local hospital. We are now in March 2018. Almost exactly three years have passed since this announcement was made, and those opposite still have not released the plans for the hospital to the public. We still do not know what the redevelopment will include, what our hospital will look like, what services will be available and what services will not be available. My community wants to know how many beds the completed hospital will have. People in my community want to know what level and types of treatment they will be able to receive there. Our nurses and doctors want to know how many people they will be caring for and what their future workplace will look like.

This Government has shrouded this project in secrecy, but while it is all still up in the air I will put on record some of my hopes for the completed project. Shellharbour Hospital is the second busiest hospital in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District. According to the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District website, Shellharbour Hospital's emergency department has approximately 24,000 presentations each year. Wollongong Hospital to our north is the busiest hospital and has an estimated 50,000 presentations—a little more than double that of Shellharbour Hospital. According to the same website, Shellharbour Hospital has 87 medical, surgical and special inpatient beds. By comparison, Wollongong's bed base sits at more than 500, which is 5½ times the number of beds in Shellharbour.

These figures show us one thing: The demand for treatment in Shellharbour is high, but the number of beds is woefully low. I hope that after Shellharbour Hospital finally receives its redevelopment, the number of beds at our local hospital is dramatically increased and the hospital can finally begin to cater to the needs of our growing community. I also hope that this increase in beds will be accompanied by a massive intake of new doctors and nurses at Shellharbour Hospital. Nurse-to-patient ratios need to be increased in order to achieve the best possible outcomes and care for patients, and to ensure the safest possible working conditions for our State's nurses

and doctors. We have the best nurses and doctors in the world, but we need more of them. Similarly, I would like to see the variety of services and technologies available at Shellharbour Hospital extended to meet the diverse needs of my community.

I raise one issue close to my heart that I hope this redevelopment will address. Back in 2012, Chloe Swinfield went public about her three-year battle with anorexia. In October 2012 an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* recounted her experiences and exposed our Government's oversight and inability to provide for some of our State's most vulnerable. At the time that article was published Chloe was being treated in Westmead Children's Hospital, and that is where she had spent most of the previous three years. However, Chloe and her family still officially lived in Lake Illawarra. In the article, Chloe says that the distance and the hours that separated her from her family and support network in the Illawarra contributed to feelings of crippling loneliness and isolation. Why was Chloe being treated in Sydney? It was because there were, and still are, zero specialist eating disorder beds in the Illawarra.

In fact, back in 2013, there were only 20 beds for children and young people up to the age of 18 struggling with eating disorders across the whole of New South Wales. Likewise in the same year, there were only five adult specialist eating disorder beds across the whole of the New South Wales public health system. In 2013 the New South Wales Department of Health produced a five-year Service Plan for People with Eating Disorders. That service plan has now entered its final year and still the Illawarra is without a single specialist eating disorder bed. I take this opportunity to renew my call for an eating disorder centre to service the needs of the Illawarra. I believe that our hospital's redevelopment offers us a golden opportunity. I am pleased that tonight the Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra is in the House to hear my private member's statement. I call on this Government to finally be clear with my community and to release the redevelopment plans for Shellharbour Hospital to the public. We have been kept in the dark for three long years too many.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (18:39): I thank the member for Shellharbour for her private member's statement. I am sure she joins me in commending the \$251 million of investment the Government is making into Shellharbour Hospital. I acknowledge her calls relating to eating disorders; I recognise that is something the member for Shellharbour has raised in the past. The clinical services plan for the hospital has been released and that indicates the sorts of services that are required. As communities change, so too do their medical needs, and currently the department is ensuring that prior to going to tender we have exactly the right mix of services that we can provide for that \$251 million. When I get a briefing and an update on where that is at, I will be more than happy to ensure that the member for Shellharbour is fully aware of those services. This investment is to be celebrated—it is not every day that a community gets to have \$251 million. I am sure that everyone will agree that this is an investment that is much needed, and I am sure that the staff will appreciate it too.

DAVIDSON ELECTORATE TRAIN TRANSPORT

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:40): A strong public transport network is essential infrastructure for a modern, growing city such as Sydney. Public buses are an important service, particularly on the northern beaches side of my electorate where they are the main form of public transport. On the North Shore, heavy rail trains are the major form of transport for commuters, supplemented by local bus routes. It is an efficient and effective way for people to travel around Sydney, as one eight-carriage passenger train can move 1,000 people across the network. Transport for NSW research indicates that a train line can move 50,000 people per hour, in contrast to a freeway lane that can move only 2,500 people in the same time. In comparison with private vehicles, trains also minimise negative environmental impacts, such as greenhouse gas emissions, noise, air pollution, accidents, infrastructure deterioration and congestion.

Like many other T1 North Shore Line commuters, I frequently use the train to travel to the central business district. In addition to being more environmentally friendly, catching a train is generally more economical than driving and parking a car. A train can also be a more relaxing journey, particularly when the weather is clear and one can admire the beauty of Sydney on the Harbour Bridge crossing. The train stations within my electorate are located at Gordon, Killara, Lindfield and Roseville. After 16 years of New South Wales Labor neglecting commuter car parks on the North Shore, I am delighted that this Government has delivered or funded substantial new car park projects for Gordon, Killara and Lindfield stations.

Gordon station also provides a notable recent example of good forward planning undertaken by Transport for NSW. I recently facilitated an onsite meeting with representatives from Sydney Trains, the office of the Minister for Transport, the Office of Environment and Heritage, Ku-ring-gai Council and local constituents. Those stakeholders discussed pertinent issues including plans to widen platform one and to install an extended canopy to shelter people on the platform. The planned works should facilitate more train movements on the line to cater for the expected increase of passenger traffic in the next year when the Sydney Metro project requires buses to replace trains between Epping and Chatswood. Importantly, the planned work will be actioned in a way that is sympathetic to the heritage of Gordon station, which was opened in 1890.

I am pleased that Gordon and Lindfield stations both enjoy excellent amenity for disabled people, with wheelchair-accessible ramps, elevators and toilets. However, while Gordon and Lindfield stations offer easy access to disabled passengers, unfortunately Roseville and Killara stations do not currently offer the same amenity. I have lobbied consistently for many years for disability access to be created at Roseville and Killara stations, informed by numerous constituents' requests that the New South Wales Government deliver this vital feature. Parents with prams, people with disabilities and many older people, including from retirement villages and nursing homes in the surrounding area, find it extremely difficult and tiring to navigate the flights of existing stairs.

We need accessibility features at Roseville and Killara stations to better enable people to travel where they wish to go. Roseville station is especially in need of an upgrade in light of recent urban consolidation from development projects completed nearby. As Sydney grows and more people use trains to commute, we need to increase future train services. This is especially so on the T1 line when construction of the Sydney Metro leads to some network disruptions. In the meantime, I am pleased that the Government has improved the punctuality of train services on the T1 line and commend the dedication and perseverance of Sydney Trains staff in helping ensure safe, timely and pleasant journeys for customers on the network. With \$12.1 billion budgeted for public transport this year, I look forward to the New South Wales Government continuing to deliver excellent public transport services across New South Wales, including for Davidson electorate residents on the T1 North Shore line.

CANNES RESERVE FLYING FOX COLONY

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Education) (18:45): Tonight I refer to an environmental and community issue that persists in my electorate of Pittwater and also in other areas of this great State. Over many years large numbers of flying foxes have been arriving in Pittwater and congregating in our beautiful greenspace areas. This is not inherently a problem; flying foxes are native animals that we would expect to see in our trees and parks. This becomes a problem, however, when their numbers get so large that they start damaging green spaces and rendering the areas they inhabit as unusable and unlivable for humans. Flying foxes may have lived peacefully in sustainable numbers as part of the fabric of our area's biodiversity but in larger numbers they become a menace that harms local environmental treasures, alienates bushland areas from the public and creates a whole host of problems for nearby residents.

This is what happened in my local community at a place called Cannes Reserve at Avalon Beach. This beautiful and much-loved public greenspace became imperilled when a large colony of flying foxes moved in, taking over the remnant bushland within the reserve. Because the grey-headed flying fox is listed as vulnerable under both New South Wales and Federal legislation, options to manage the flying foxes and look after the bushland reserve itself were severely limited. The precious little sanctuary of littoral rainforest and Pittwater spotted gum forest was overrun by weeds such as privet, balloon vine and black-eyed Susan. Combined with the deafening noise, putrefying smell and thickly scattered droppings from the bats, the reserve effectively became unusable to the general public. It also became a living nightmare and potentially a serious health risk for nearby residents as the noise, smell and mess bled into surrounding homes. This is an example of how regulation with the admirable intention of protecting the flying fox can have profound negative consequences for the community, and also, ironically, the environment.

It is worth noting that Cannes Reserve contains both remnant littoral rainforest and Pittwater spotted gum forest. These are both listed as endangered ecological communities under the same legislation that protects the flying fox. Ironically, the endangered ecological communities listing is supposed to give a higher level of protection than the protection for flying foxes. Yet regulations stipulate that because the weed infestations were in flying fox roosting sites little could be done as these precious bushland remnants were suffocated by the constant assault from the noxious weeds. So the privet, trad, balloon vine and other floral pests were effectively given priority over the endangered ecological communities that should have been nurtured and protected at Cannes Reserve, which is simply perverse. And that is before we even consider the impacts on nearby residents, unable to sleep because of the constant noise, and having to put up with the smell and the filth of the droppings, and the disease that the bats bring to their homes.

This goes far beyond simply being annoying. These grey-headed flying foxes pose a real risk to human health in this setting. For these reasons, we must act for the good of our community and our environment. I accept that flying foxes are an important part of our natural ecosystem. It is important that they be treated with respect to ensure healthy sustainable populations across the country. I acknowledge that problem bat colonies are often the result of natural habitat being lost to urbanisation and other human activity. That is a problem that we must address. The solution, however, is not to allow flying foxes to run amok in urban areas. We will not solve the difficulties that flying foxes face by allowing great swarms of these animals to populate bushland areas that cannot support them.

Existing regulations that would see existing wildlife driven out, food sources expended and bushland destroyed does not point to a sustainable fix for flying foxes. Instead, it is likely to fail the bats themselves in the long term. There is no easy answer to this issue. This is a truly wicked problem that we have before us—ensuring that we not only protect flying foxes but also protect humans from their impacts. Ultimately, we are here to find solutions to difficult problems and, where necessary, to make the hard decisions to do so. We have two environmental imperatives that are contradicting one another. On one hand we have the question of biodiversity and the importance the grey-headed flying fox as a native species.

On the other hand, protecting the bats is damaging important local areas of native bushland that also need to be protected. Bats are known as great vectors for spreading seeds in our rainforests. However, ironically, if their roosting sites contain noxious weeds the seeds they are spreading are those of the noxious weeds. Surely in these situations the biodiversity of scarce native bushland in urban settings should be the priority. As our cities become denser, access to such bushland and facilitating weed removal in these areas becomes more important. If that means bushland restoration involves disturbing flying fox roosting sites made up of undesirable weeds so be it. In this battle, bushland must be come first, not bats.

Bills

STATE DEBT RECOVERY BILL 2017

Returned

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovenamed bill with amendments. I order that consideration of the Legislative Council's amendments be set down as an order of the day for a future day.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:51 until
Thursday 15 March 2018 at 10:00.**