



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 12 April 2018

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 12 April 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 welcome to the public gallery the St Paul's GyMEA English as a Second Language Group.

[Notices of motions given.]

Announcements

MEMBER FOR SHELLHARBOUR

The SPEAKER: I am pleased to announce to the House the recent marriage of the member for Shellharbour. Congratulations!

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2017-2018

Debate resumed from 11 April 2018.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (10:13): In the one minute of speaking time remaining to me, I will summarise my contribution. As the member for Terrigal, I have been delighted to provide more than \$700,000 of Community Building Partnership funding to my electorate over the past three years. I am proud that more than half of those funds have been delivered to public and high schools across the Central Coast through the hard work of parents and citizens associations. A plethora of community organisations has also benefited from the \$700,000 in Community Building Partnership funding. In addition, numerous grants have been provided across the Terrigal electorate, including \$170,000 in Water Safety Fund Community Grants from Minister Grant's office for Surf Life Saving Central Coast to continue its outstanding work in delivering a water safety program to our young schoolchildren.

I am so proud to be the member for Terrigal and to have been able to deliver for my community over the past three years. I congratulate the Premier, who has, on her many visits to the Central Coast, reminded everyone what a beautiful area it is and said that every region will receive its fair share of funding. As the member for Terrigal and a member of the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government, I pledge to continue delivering not just for the people of Terrigal, but also for the entire Central Coast. I congratulate the Government on its excellent budget.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (10:14): Last year before Christmas I visited Eurongilly. Eurongilly is situated in the southern reaches of the Cootamundra electorate. It is a settlement comprising one corrugated iron hall, a school, one bush fire brigade shed, three tennis courts and a flagpole. On 23 December 2017 the surrounding community had gathered for a cricket match in a paddock—so I estimate that well over 24 people were present. With a gift in hand, I proved to be very popular. It is not often that a roll of toilet paper carries such favour, but mine was pink ribbon wrapped and bore a card announcing that the Eurongilly community hall would receive \$20,000 in funding for a toilet block upgrade under the New South Wales Government's Community Building Partnership program. A new toilet upgrade for a small bush community is something else—it means no more darting behind trees, for one thing.

As the member for Cootamundra and a proud National Party representative, I am thrilled to be part of a Government that promises—and that delivers on those promises—to serve the people of this great State, particularly those working and living in rural and regional New South Wales. The NSW Community Building Partnership program delivered \$300,000 in funding to my electorate. Now, together with many other worthy projects, the ladies at the Woodstock Country Women's Association have a new \$10,656 kitchen, West Wyalong Meals on Wheels volunteers have two new freezers and the stunning old grandstand at Cootamundra Racecourse will get a lick of paint. Possums will also be prevented from gaining entry to the Gundagai Scout Hall. Our Government's outstanding record of fiscal management has allowed this to happen. We inherited a \$5.2 billion

deficit, courtesy of the former Labor Government. In 2016-17 we recorded a \$5.7 billion surplus and we are on track for a surplus of \$3.3 billion in 2017-18.

This State has evolved from a model of slash and burn under Labor, with a \$30 billion infrastructure backlog, to what we see now: a fertile catchment where astute management has yielded prime investment in infrastructure across the board, from the coast to the outback. Now, small towns and villages like those in my electorate have an opportunity to take stock and rebuild towards a better future—promises this Government made and delivered on. For instance, at the 2015 election this State Government promised to deliver 150,000 new jobs over four years. As at September 2017, there were 220,100 new jobs in the New South Wales economy. This means that we are tracking 70,100 jobs above the 150,000 new jobs target. For a decade under Labor, New South Wales had the lowest jobs growth of any mainland State.

But this Government is not resting on its laurels—no. We have already laid the groundwork, the foundations are poured, and now throughout New South Wales we are shoring up our future for generations to come. Right now we have more apprentices and trainees in training than any other State—20,000 more than Victoria. New South Wales is now the largest provider of government-funded vocational education and training in Australia. You may ask how this is possible. We are investing \$130 million in TAFE facilities across the State for seven major capital works and 26 ongoing major capital works projects. What better evidence is there of our determination to futureproof our economy than the Government's tailoring of training to the rapidly changing jobs market? By contrast, NSW Labor slashed more than \$550 million from its annual vocational education and training budget between 1997 and 2007.

But that black cloud has passed. Last year I had the pleasure of opening the final stage of the \$10.4 million development at Young TAFE. The facilities include a simulated hospital for health and aged care; an early childhood education centre, with indoor and outdoor learning spaces; a state-of-the-art hairdressing and beauty therapy salon; and electrotechnology trade facilities. These facilities benefit not only the local community but also the wider region, and help more people to get the skills they need for tomorrow's jobs. The Government is cognisant of the changing needs of employers and students—who need flexible, on-demand and industry-relevant training—and is investing in facilities, technology systems and staff to ensure that TAFE NSW changes to meet the new demands. These changes are geared towards rural and regional areas so that students can access quality vocational education wherever they are located. The education system supports education.

Last year the New South Wales Government announced that it would fully fund the university degrees of 60 new teachers and pay their Higher Education Contribution Scheme debt if they accepted a posting at one of the 150 eligible rural public schools, including Grenfell Public School, Narrandera Public School and West Wyalong Public School. The free degree is one of several changes in the New South Wales Government's \$140 million rural and remote package, which boosts education standards in country schools and ensures that schools are well staffed and resourced.

We all love a sod turn and, in February, I was joined by the Assistant Minister for Skills, Adam Marshall, to do one at Narrandera. The sod turn triggered the start of construction of the Government's new \$4 million state-of-the-art connected learning centre [CLC] at TAFE NSW Narrandera. Students at the new digitally powered facility—and one mooted for Grenfell—will be able to connect into TAFE's statewide network of campuses and courses. The network gives students access to the 1,200-plus courses on offer and allows them to study the right course for their chosen career without having to travel to larger towns such as Wagga Wagga, Young or Albury. Many students from the Cootamundra electorate are rejoicing in this development, with some saving up to six hours of travel time on their nominated day of study.

The CLCs also give students choices in their own backyard and allow them to remain among family, friends and local businesses, all the while contributing to an agile, innovative and enduring future for regional New South Wales. This is happening not only in Young, Narrandera and Grenfell, but also in the most unlikely of places. Last year students at the Junee Correctional Centre TAFE campus put the finishing touches on a slick, red 1980 Holden WB ute. The ute, which was restored by motor, spray-painting and panelbeating students over an eight-month period, was raffled to raise \$70,000 for Junee Can Assist—which was \$20,000 above expectations.

Government reforms are seeing TAFE NSW and industry collaborate to provide the best possible outcomes for students, the State's economy and communities. And it keeps going. A new \$30 million New South Wales Government initiative, Skills for Business, gives small businesses and their staff access to free business skills training. Bringing together TAFE NSW and other government business support services, including the Business Connect initiative, ensures that free TAFE courses will be delivered online—with a face-to-face component—to allow small businesses to learn when it suits them best, with live tutorials also on offer. My former chippie mate Deputy Premier John Barilaro will agree with me when I say that I do not just want to see small businesses in the Cootamundra electorate survive; I want to see them thrive.

Let us take a step into our schools. Nestled in each of the towns and villages in the Cootamundra electorate are buildings filled with young students learning and paving the way to their future. Since April 2011, the New South Wales Government has delivered 59 new or upgraded schools; funding for more than 3,000 new classrooms, providing approximately 70,000 additional student places; and 4,569 additional teachers. A further 153 new schools and major upgrades are currently under construction or in the design planning phase. I like this because the Cootamundra electorate has received a \$890,000 grant from the New South Wales Government to support planned improvement works for St Mary's War Memorial School in West Wyalong. The funding contributes to the school's \$1.2 million upgrade project, which will include refurbishment of classrooms, the school library, and administration and staff facilities.

The Building Grants Assistance Scheme grant for St Mary's is part of a \$33 million New South Wales Government program—directed towards independent and Catholic schools—to help schools improve the learning environments of their students, giving schools contemporary facilities that reflect modern learning needs. For the Cootamundra electorate, it has also meant total funding of \$100,000 for new and improved facilities for students and teachers at Temora West Public School, Gundagai Public School and Aria Park Central School. These projects will enhance students' learning and leisure time outside in the fresh air, with school communities matching the Government dollar for dollar under the joint funding program.

In addition to this program, the New South Wales Government is spending \$4.2 billion over four years on 120 new or upgraded schools and \$747 million on school maintenance. This is the biggest investment in public school infrastructure in the history of New South Wales. More than 90 schools were closed under the former Labor Government, including Macquarie Boys' Technology High School, Beacon Hill High School, Maroubra Bay High School and Redfern Public School. Over the summer holiday period, \$1.9 million was spent on school maintenance projects in the Cootamundra electorate. The 18 projects included \$376,796 for Cowra Public School, \$269,941 for Junee High School, \$172,905 for Narrandera Public School, \$52,799 for Quandialla Public School and \$25,000 for Illabo Public School. The summer holiday blitz was part of the New South Wales Government's record \$747 million school maintenance investment over the next four years, which was announced in the 2017 budget. The investment allows schools across the State to slash their maintenance project list by December 2018.

And there are the little wins too. The students of St Michael's Primary School in Coolamon now arrive at school a little more safely thanks to an additional safety zone installed by Roads and Maritime Services [RMS]. Speaking of RMS, last year it was announced that \$84 million will be ploughed into Cootamundra electorate roads, including \$19 million to continue Gocup Road improvements, \$7 million for the Newell Highway realignment at Grong Grong, \$4 million for a truck bypass at West Wyalong, \$2 million for Mid-Western Highway pavement upgrades west of Cowra, \$300,000 for the planning of the Lignum Creek Bridge replacement, \$250,000 for an intersection improvement at the Hume Highway and Annie Pyers Drive near Gundagai, and \$8 million for local councils for road maintenance and safety work. We are on track.

So too are many farmers, thanks to \$1.1 million in vital upgrades to 12.5 kilometres of Greenethorpe-Bumbaldry Road. The road upgrade reduced the travel distance for B-double freight by 52 kilometres. Works to replace the Burrangong Creek Bridge on Bribbaree Road are now also complete, eliminating a 20-kilometre detour that B-double freight previously had to take from Bribbaree silo to Young. Work is also under way elsewhere. We have reached the midway point in works to widen and resurface a one-kilometre section of the Olympic Highway at Bethungra. Another key \$1.95 million project for the Cootamundra electorate to repair and strengthen a section of the Burley Griffin Way at Stockinbingal, approximately 45 kilometres west of Harden, has started and a \$1.1 million project to widen sections of Goldfields Way near Barmedman is nearing completion. All of this was achieved thanks to the New South Wales Government's foresight in reserving \$500 million for the Fixing Country Roads program.

Just a fortnight ago the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, Melinda Pavey, and I opened the \$1.67 million Tara-Bectric Road bridge replacement near Temora, for which funding of \$1.45 million was provided through the Restart NSW Fixing Country Roads program. The new bridge allows better heavy vehicles access to the GrainCorp and Preston Grain sites. I have done a few miles and travelled a few roads around my electorate since October 2017. To country people, roads are like the weather—oft discussed and frequently underwhelming. Roads certainly get a battering, and that, I am afraid, is a daily occurrence, but these vital links are the veins of our existence. When we talk about futureproofing, we should go to the Transport 2056 report. Transport is what we are talking about out west of the divide, where dust meets dirt meets bitumen meets highway.

I am looking forward to better regional inter-connectivity, enhanced east-west links and easier access to ports and other facilities, along with improving safety, reliability and efficiency and integrating services. The commitment to building the Inland Rail through New South Wales, partly through the Cootamundra electorate, provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reconfigure the regional freight network in New South Wales.

An additional \$1.1 million has been committed for feasibility studies into the Junee North Triangle and the Narrandera to Tocumwal rail line. This demonstrates the importance of rail to the electorate, and I am determined to see the Cootamundra electorate benefit from this once-in-a-generation Inland Rail project.

This Government has made a commitment to improve east-west connectivity to open up areas west of the Great Dividing Range to the east and vice versa. This will better connect regional New South Wales to global markets. Since coming to government, the New South Wales Liberals and Nationals have invested \$1.35 billion in the Country Regional Network alone and have continued to invest \$210 million annually. This investment is in addition to the \$400 million in Fixing Country Rail funding. I thank roads Minister Melinda Pavey for championing our cause. Speaking of champions, I hope there will be thousands streaming from the Cootamundra electorate as a result of the Regional Growth Fund.

Already the first regional infrastructure projects to receive funding from the Stronger Country Communities Fund have been announced, totalling more than \$11 million. Round one brought \$1,554,059 for 26 revitalising projects in the Cootamundra electorate, ranging from a \$113,500 refurbishment of the rugby league club's facilities in my hometown of Young to the \$432,900 playing surface upgrade in Junee's regional sporting and recreation hub. But the funding is not all about sport: West Wyalong is receiving \$451,572 to create a community cinema and performance space in the town's historic Masonic Hall. I am looking forward to seeing what can come of the additional \$200 million available for regional towns and cities across New South Wales as part of round two of the Stronger Country Communities Fund, which sports, community, local government and arts groups in my electorate are working towards right now.

There is still so much investment to talk about and so little time. Late last year we announced \$5 million to overhaul the sewerage plant at Junee. Council would not have been able to do this upgrade alone, and the Government stepped up to fund infrastructure that will support the growth of Junee and the huge population boom as the jail grows, injecting an additional 130 extra full-time jobs into the town. Faced with a deteriorating plant in Grenfell, we got behind Weddin Shire Council and contributed \$8.1 million to the \$9 million upgrade in May last year, under the Restart NSW Water Security for Regions program. Construction is scheduled to begin in early 2019. We have also committed \$10 million for the upgrade of the 100-year-old plant in Gundagai, finally taking action to fund works that will improve the lives of its residents. Ardlethan also received a \$3.3 million boost for the Ardlethan sewerage scheme from the Regional Water and Wastewater Backlog Program. [*Extension of time.*]

These are not empty figures; travelling around my electorate, I see action. Surveyors were in town in the last two weeks, with construction flagged to begin in the new financial year. We are committing and collaborating with our local councils to deliver. A testament to this commitment is that the completion of the massive \$11.4 million upgrade of the Wyangala Sewerage Scheme is imminent, ensuring a reliable system for residents of Wyangala village and the Wyangala Waters Holiday and Recreation Park. Work on the Temora Hospital operating theatre upgrade is on track for completion later this year. The upgraded theatre will complement the recently completed upgrade to the hospital's medical ward, ensuring patients receive optimal care. More people in the Murrumbidgee Local Health District now have better access to elective surgery, thanks to a \$3 million injection from the State Government, which includes \$128,000 for more cataract procedures. I thank the Minister for Health, Brad Hazzard, for his efforts in caring for our communities. New South Wales has the best on-time elective surgery performance in the country.

In 1995, Labor promised to halve public hospital waiting lists. When Labor left office, waiting lists had grown by more than 50 per cent and wait times had doubled. The number of elective surgeries delivered by NSW Health increased by 5,000 in 2016-17, as well as increasing efficiencies and reducing waiting times across a number of categories. I know this extra funding will enhance this performance. In the interests of good health, it was a delight to announce local sports clubs in the Cootamundra electorate had been awarded \$29,900 to assist with the purchase of 23 lifesaving defibrillators under the New South Wales Government's Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program. While still on health funding, I say well done to the New South Wales Government for its new annual \$100 Active Kids voucher, which helps all parents with school-aged children to cover the cost of sports and active recreation fees. Funding of \$207 million has been allocated over the next four years to this initiative. To my mind, physical activity keeps kids in good shape and it teaches them persistence, teamwork, and the value of dedicated hard work. Anything that gets kids moving and involved with others is good for them, so it is wonderful to know that mums and dads will be given help to fund such activities.

Our grants programs are not just about the kids. I cannot speak about funding without mentioning the Minister for Racing, Paul Toole, who visited my electorate in January to announce \$203,700 in funding for major upgrade to Cowra Golf Club's clubhouse, which includes a new kitchen and dining facilities, upgraded bathrooms, new floor coverings and paint, and improved health, safety and accessibility features. The Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, was only too happy to travel to Grenfell in February to attend the official opening of the new Grenfell

Aquatic Centre. In temperatures in which most of us would have welcomed the opportunity to take to the pool's new splash pad, the competition of the day gave way to a ribbon-cutting ceremony to pay tribute to the New South Wales Government's \$950,000 contribution, which resulted in not only a brand-new 50-metre pool but a new toddlers pool, kiosk, change rooms, toilets, meeting rooms, office area and first aid room.

I will focus on management for a moment. My compliments to the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services, Troy Grant, for his focus on giving regional and rural areas the targeted policing they deserve. The new policing model, which was rolled out across the State, allows for a more dynamic and flexible approach to investigations and proactive operations and a focus on important community issues like domestic and family violence and mid-level drug supply. The establishment of the NSW Police Rural Crime Prevention Teams across the State means greater support for victims of stock theft, illegal hunting and trespass.

My electorate includes many remote and rural communities, and it is a sad statistic that such communities suffer some of the highest rates of domestic and family violence in the State. This Government, recognising the gravity of this often unseen crime, in June 2017 allocated \$4.9 million to tackle this issue. Part of this funding goes towards the Linking Communities Education Van, a three-year project that is bringing domestic violence education and support to communities in the western Murrumbidgee region, which takes in part of the Cootamundra electorate. Starting in September 2017, the van covers a road map of 110,000 square kilometres and takes the program to festivals, shows, agricultural days and other major events to provide support and guidance to those who need it. In addition to the funding for this truly worthy project, in 2017 the New South Wales Government allocated a further \$10 million to fund new and innovative approaches to prevent or respond to domestic and family violence in New South Wales.

Further strengthening our support for communities, we have new ambulance stations in Harden, Coolamon and Ardlethan, with additional new stations in the pipeline for Cootamundra, Grenfell and Cowra, as part of the New South Wales Government's \$122 million Rural Ambulance Infrastructure Reconfiguration program. I was lucky enough to be invited to attend the official opening of the Harden station. It certainly delivers a better working environment for the local paramedics, who are thrilled with the state-of-the-art facilities. I welcome also the introduction of high-tech smartphones for paramedics under a \$314 million trial to tackle mobile black spots in rural and regional areas. In and around all of this investment and futureproofing, we have the cherry on top of our rather large slice of the State cake.

The latest International Visitor Survey, released last month, demonstrated that the New South Wales Government's tourism and major events strategies were delivering for our region. The Riverina alone has achieved its highest number of overseas visitors on record. In the year to December 2017, 30,600 international visitors spent a whopping \$46.2 million here. That is an utterly staggering increase on spend of 76.2 per cent. I am thrilled that so many tourists are experiencing the sights, tastes and sounds that the Cootamundra electorate and wider region have to offer. I welcome our Destination NSW plans, which provide us with a template to strengthen our assets and enhance future planning. I thank all Ministers who have taken the time to visit the Cootamundra electorate and to champion our causes. I also thank the Premier and Deputy Premier, who have worked hand-in-hand to ensure our State is well managed and that the people of rural and regional New South Wales, including the people of Cootamundra—the electorate of small communities—are heard and supported in every way.

Debate adjourned.

Bills

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (MORATORIUM AND RESTRICTIONS ON RECOVERING ENERGY FROM WASTE) BILL 2018

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Stephen Bali, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (10:44): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am proud to introduce the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Moratorium and Restrictions on Recovering Energy from Waste) Bill 2018. Today is a landmark day for the communities and families of Western Sydney, who stood up to the State Government and the planning process by declaring, "We will not allow the world's largest waste-burning toxic incinerator to be dumped next to our homes, schools, and businesses." I am proud to stand alongside the community and my Labor colleagues against this incinerator, and I congratulate people across the breadth of Western Sydney on their passion and persistence in this campaign. The proposed

incinerator brought together members from both Houses of Parliament and from many political parties to declare their personal opposition to the proposal at Eastern Creek.

Yesterday, the New South Wales Department of Planning and Environment put its weight behind NSW Health, the Environmental Protection Authority, Blacktown City Council and the many community members and organisations regarding the problems with this incinerator and rejected the proposal. Many may believe that the issue has come to end. It is simply another significant battle that has been won, but the war continues. The Planning Assessment Commission still has to go through its process. All members will no doubt be aware of the reasons for this bill. The well-publicised and controversial development proposal for a large energy from waste incinerator, known as The Next Generation, is to be built at Eastern Creek next to the Genesis recycling facility operated by Dial A Dump Industries, all of which are owned by the proponent of the proposed incinerator, Mr Ian Malouf. The \$700 million proposal would burn more than 552,000 tonnes of waste per year with expansion potential to 1.3 million tonnes of waste, making it one of the largest facilities in the world.

According to a Legislative Council committee report, two more energy from waste incinerators are being considered in New South Wales and four in Western Australia. I note that the total combined capacities of these six other plants would be less than the novice operator of the single plant at Eastern Creek. I thank the New South Wales Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 6—Planning and Environment for its seminal report on energy from waste technology. The committee's chair, the Hon. Paul Green, MLC, has a profound insight into the operation of the waste industry and its interactions with State and local governments. The committee's findings provide a clear road map on tackling issues in the waste industry. The committee had cross-party representation from the Christian Democrats, The Greens, the Liberals and Labor. I also thank committee member the Hon. Penny Sharpe, MLC, and her staff member Lliam Caulfield. The Hon. Penny Sharpe has led the voice of reason and clarity in the investigation of energy from waste incineration, which has resulted in a credible, well-researched report being produced.

The following are the key findings of the Legislative Council's committee report, which are addressed in the bill before the House. In 2014 and 2015, New South Wales generated 19 million tonnes of waste. This State is currently the second highest per capita producer of waste in the world. Therefore, a comprehensive waste management plan is essential for New South Wales. After much debate, the committee sees some role for energy from waste incineration but under limited circumstances and within a strengthened regulatory framework, including an expert advisory body, chaired by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer, to examine and report on the energy from waste incineration framework and create certainty for the market and communities. There is no clarity as to what are the international best practices for emissions from existing or proposed new plants. The current energy recovery facility guidelines need to be amended to incorporate world's best practice.

Further key findings include: licensing conditions meet current international best practice for emissions standards as well as licencing conditions should be drafted to incorporate future improvements; new community engagement practices and outcomes that a proponent must comply with prior to approval; for approval, the proponent must receive community support to operate the energy from waste incineration facility; further transparency and clarity of information to be provided by the proponents and for this to be made publicly available; and a fit and proper person test for proprietors and company directors who work in the waste industry.

The Department of Planning and Environment also rejected the plant because, amongst other concerns: the impacts to air quality and risk to human health are unknown; the applicant has not adequately justified the scale of the facility; the development has the potential to result in waste being used for energy recovery rather than higher order resource recovery outcomes; the development is not supported by the local community, local councils, special interest groups and local businesses; the applicant has not obtained community acceptance for the proposal; and the development is not in the public interest.

The bill takes into account all these issues raised by the Legislative Council committee report focusing on the energy from waste industry as well as issues raised by the Department of Planning and Environment. Rather than relying on-out-of-date New South Wales standards or the hope that commonsense applies when the Department of Planning and Environment is assessing these issues, we need to modernise legislation and regulation before any approval is considered into the future. This bill allows members from both Houses and all political parties to come together to endorse a modern framework to be developed so that the community can have confidence in the planning assessment process.

The bill identifies that in the most populated area in New South Wales, being the Greater Sydney Basin, the incineration process will be banned. This is particularly relevant in Western Sydney where air quality is significantly compromised and with an anticipated population growth of more than one million people. Never again will local residents be forced to fight a stressful and lengthy campaign, and worry about dangerous toxins spreading over populated areas. The bill stops energy from waste incineration within the Greater Sydney Basin as well as calls for a moratorium on all others until all the appropriate safeguards have been developed, as described

previously. This is a major step in modernising the standards of assessment. Many of the New South Wales assessment criteria for allowable pollution limits are inferior to European standards, including: hydrogen chloride or hydrogen fluoride, where New South Wales has no standard; nitrogen dioxide or carbon monoxide is 2½ times higher in New South Wales compared to the European Union [EU] standards; and five times higher for solid particulates allowed in New South Wales, compared to European standards.

Safeguards must be established so that the health, safety and environment of all New South Wales residents must be taken into consideration and dealt with appropriately. The incineration process brings about a range of airborne emissions, which have the potential to harm human health and the wider environment 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in an area nearby to homes and schools. The Next Generation proposal has been controversial throughout its progression through the planning approvals process. It has been subject to severe criticism from various sources, notably from many members of the community across Western Sydney, who campaigned passionately against the proposal, as well as members of Parliament, and the Government's agencies, such as the NSW Environment Protection Authority and NSW Health, and, obviously, Blacktown City Council, due to health, safety and environmental concerns.

More than a thousand submissions were made to the Department of Planning and Environment about the proposed development, with all but a couple objecting to the proposal. Yet even now, this Eastern Creek incinerator proposal is making its way through the planning process. This bill will create a powerful standing expert advisory body on energy from waste technology, chaired by the Chief Scientist and Engineer, which will conduct further scientific examination of the technology and its impacts, and provide expert advice to the Minister and consultation for development consent of any future energy from waste developments in areas outside the wider Sydney Basin that may be deemed suitable at a future date after much deeper investigation of the technology.

The bill defines what would commonly be termed waste incineration as the "thermal treatment of waste", with "thermal treatment" taking the meaning of "the processing of waste by burning, incineration, thermal oxidation, gasification, pyrolysis, plasma or other thermal process". Energy from waste developments is defined in the bill as "development for the purposes of the recovery of energy from the thermal treatment of any waste, or anything derived from waste." In addition, the bill ensures the exemption of a range of waste fuels to which these laws will not apply, so as not to capture those other forms of energy recovery from waste that do not hold the same health and safety implications as incineration. I will come to these later.

Division 7A.1 defines critical zones for air pollutants, specifying local government areas within the wider Sydney Basin. These areas are identical to the precedent set by the Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation 2009, and include all local government areas in the immediate Sydney Basin, from the west through the City of Blue Mountains down to Wollondilly and the Sutherland Shire, and up to Hornsby and the City of Hawkesbury and all in between, as well as the further local government areas of Kiama, City of Shellharbour, City of Wollongong, Central Coast, City of Cessnock, City of Lake Macquarie, City of Maitland, Muswellbrook, City of Newcastle, Port Stephens, and Singleton.

Division 7A.2 introduces a prohibition on energy from waste developments, such as the Eastern Creek incinerator, in any of the local government areas specified as critical zones for air pollution. Given the significant and unique geography of this large basin, and the nature of development and population in these areas, it is only right to ensure that they are permanently protected from the types of pollutants that may be among the emissions produced by such facilities, by way of a total ban on energy from waste incinerators.

Division 7A.3 provides that a moratorium will be placed on energy from waste developments in any area of the State outside of the critical zones for air pollutants. The Opposition is clear that we do not aim merely to prevent the unwelcome and potentially dangerous incinerator at Eastern Creek, or the Greater Sydney Basin but we believe energy from waste technology more broadly must be investigated in depth. A moratorium creates the space to do so responsibly. The bill provides a comprehensive pathway to progress on a very serious issue regarding energy from waste and places New South Wales as a world leader in dealing with this process. We must not resort to simply quick fixes of some arbitrary distance separation simply to be seen to be doing something. This bill will ensure the hard work is done to fully examine whether there is a place for this form of energy recovery anywhere, and then decide on the most responsible course.

Division 7A.4 provides for regulations to be made that can lift the moratorium for a specific area, but only subject to a certificate from the standing expert advisory body being provided to the Minister indicating safety, no increase in net greenhouse gas emissions, and that it is appropriate that the moratorium no longer apply to the area in question. There is much work to be done before that can even be considered, and that is why the work of the standing expert advisory body will be so important.

Division 7A.6 describes the advisory functions of the standing expert advisory body, including advising and providing recommendations to the Minister in connection with matters including: the lifting of the moratorium established by division 7A.3 and, in particular, whether energy from waste development should be permitted in any particular area; if the moratorium were to be lifted, any conditions that should be imposed on development consent so as to adopt world's best practices in emissions, emissions monitoring and residual waste disposal; and any scientific or technology advances that have an impact on energy from waste development, including whether such advances should be incorporated into conditions of development consent or otherwise be incorporated into the operations of the proposed facilities.

Other matters include the operation of the current Eligible Waste Fuels Guidelines or other guidelines regarding energy from waste technology, published by the Environment Protection Authority [EPA]; the impact of energy from waste development on human health; the impact of energy from waste development on current recycling rates; and any specific proposal for energy from waste development. The advisory body is designed to fill what is currently a significant gap in the State's regulatory and planning systems when it comes to considering energy from waste technology and developments, both in terms of knowledge of the impacts and best practice for this technology, and for applying adequate rigour to whether such a development is appropriate. The advisory body is also given the function of advising and giving recommendations to the Minister in relation to the application of the fit and proper person test in section 83 of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 for the type of energy from waste developments covered by this bill.

The fit and proper person test is an absolute necessity for this type of process. Too much is at stake. We have seen the bullyboy tactics used with the current Eastern Creek proposal. Mr Malouf likes to intimidate people in the local community by sending letters with threatening legal undertones or just resorting to calling people liars. Ian Malouf sent a letter to a prominent local community member demanding that she remove her Facebook posts. What were her outrageous statements? She wrote, "Your health will be affected by every breath you take," and, "Waste incineration create toxic pollution including dangerous particulates that impact on human health causing cancer and leukaemia. Look up on the internet." And she inserted the web address. So it was an articulate Facebook post.

Mr Malouf's letter states, "Incorrect and potentially defamatory statements have been made that negatively affect the reputation of The Next Generation and Managing Director Mr Ian Malouf." I say to Mr Malouf that he was rejected by the Department of Planning and Environment, the EPA, NSW Health and Blacktown City Council. He has overseen three submissions in an attempt to get it right and he has failed. His reputation has been trashed by his own actions.

Importantly, this bill stipulates that development consent cannot be granted for energy from waste development unless the advisory board has been consulted and conditions subsequently imposed that adopt world's best practice in emissions, emissions monitoring and residual waste disposal, and incorporate any scientific or technological advances that have an impact on energy from waste development. The bill imposes necessary exemptions for a range of waste fuels to which the bill does not apply so as not to capture other forms of energy from waste recovery that do not hold the same health and safety implications as the thermal treatment of waste, or incineration. These exempt fuels include biomass from agriculture, clinical and related waste, forestry and sawmilling residue, landfill gas, biogas, organic residue from virgin paper pulp activities, recovered waste oil, source-separated green waste, uncontaminated wood waste, and waste tyres.

Finally, and importantly, the bill stipulates no compensation by or on behalf of the State due to the enactment or operation of these amendments, including transitional provisions that any development consent or approval that is in force immediately before the commencement of these amendments ceases to have effect to the extent to which it authorises the carrying out of energy from waste development, except as provided by the regulations. The bill also provides that any pending application for development consent under division 4.3 or 4.7 to carry out energy from waste development that was made but not finally determined before the date of commencement is to be refused. For completeness, the bill provides that the application for consent for State significant development that involves the construction and operation of the incinerator facility at Eastern Creek is to be refused if it has not been finally determined at the date of these amendments.

The member for Mulgoa and the Premier have had encouraging words in relation to their disapproval of the proposed facility at Eastern Creek. We need more than words; we need actions. This bill provides an opportunity to modernise the approval process. Failure to support this bill will lead the Eastern Creek proponents simply to resubmit the proposal to get approval at some time in the future. I call on the Government to work with Labor and put politics aside, as people's health is more important.

I thank the many people involved in the campaign, including Blacktown City Council staff, my fellow councillors, and Kerry Robinson, Glennys James, Vanessa Parks, Vincent Shepherd and Alan Gale, amongst many others. There are too many people in the community to name, but they include Maya Uluc, Kerry Bradbury,

Melinda Wilson, Kim Vernon, Julie Martin, Penrith City Council and so many more. I also thank my fellow Labor members Edmond Atalla, Prue Car, Hugh McDermott and, in particular, the Leader of the Opposition, Luke Foley, who met with many members of the community and gave a firm commitment to oppose this incinerator and others in the greater Sydney Basin and to put in safeguards to protect the health and safety of the community of New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House for members' positive consideration.

Debate adjourned.

Visitors

VISITORS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I recognise former member for Strathfield Charles Casuscelli, who is present in the gallery. It is great to see him here.

Bills

PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION AMENDMENT (NOTIFICATION OF SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF PRIVACY BY PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCIES) BILL 2017

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 16 November 2017.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (11:06): The Government does not support the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2017, which was introduced by the member for Liverpool on 16 November 2017. The Government does support ensuring that New South Wales has a strong and robust privacy framework in place. It also supports efforts to encourage New South Wales public sector agencies to identify and report potential and actual privacy breaches. However, the Opposition appears to have developed this bill without considering whether the existing scheme for privacy breach reporting in New South Wales is adequate; without considering whether a mandatory reporting scheme is necessary or would be useful in New South Wales; without considering the resource and regulatory implications of its scheme for this State's hundreds of public sector agencies of various sizes and functions; and without consulting public sector agencies, the Privacy Commissioner or the Information and Privacy Commission, which would be responsible for receiving and responding to reports.

At present no Australian State or Territory has a mandatory privacy breach reporting scheme in operation. In February 2017 the Commonwealth enacted the Privacy Amendment (Notifiable Data Breaches) Act 2017, which I will call the Commonwealth Act, establishing a mandatory privacy breach reporting scheme at the Commonwealth level. The Commonwealth scheme will apply to Federal level public sector agencies and many private and non-government organisations. The Commonwealth scheme was adopted after more than two years of extensive consultation and development, and the commencement of the Act was delayed for a full year to 22 February this year to ensure that affected agencies and organisations would have time to prepare for its commencement. As the Commonwealth scheme only started on 22 February this year, it is not possible to evaluate the scheme's efficacy or success at this time. It would be premature to introduce a mandatory reporting scheme in New South Wales now without taking the opportunity to learn from the implementation of the Commonwealth scheme.

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 outlines how New South Wales public sector agencies are required to manage the collection, use, storage, disclosure and destruction of personal information, as well as the functions of the NSW Privacy Commissioner. Public sector agencies bound by the Act are New South Wales government departments and agencies, statutory authorities, universities, local councils, and other bodies whose accounts are subject to audit by the Auditor-General. The Act does not cover State-owned corporations such as RailCorp and Sydney Water.

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act provides a principles-based approach to the regulation of information privacy and personal information. The Act defines personal information to include information or an opinion, including in a database, about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion. This may include names, addresses, fingerprints and other biographical and biometric identifiers. The Act regulates privacy and personal information principally by the application of the Information Protection Principles. The 12 principles cover collection, use, disclosure, storage, access, and destruction.

A public sector agency must collect personal information for a lawful purpose that is directly related to a function or activity of the agency. The collection must not be unreasonably intrusive, and the agency must take reasonable steps to notify individuals of what it will do with the information and the individual's rights to access

that information and to amend it if inaccurate. Collection should be directly from the individual, except in limited circumstances. The Information Protection Principles also deal with use limitations. Subject to exceptions, a public sector agency must generally use personal information it has collected only for the purpose for which it was collected unless the individual has consented to the use for another purpose.

The Information Protection Principles also contain disclosure limitations. Subject to exceptions, the general rule is that a public sector agency can disclose the personal information to another person or body only if the individual consents, or is reasonably likely to have been aware, or has been made aware through a notice, that information of this kind is usually disclosed to that person or body. The principles also deal with storage and disposal. A public sector agency must take reasonable steps to ensure that the personal information it has collected is relevant, not excessive, accurate, up to date and complete. The agency must take reasonable security safeguards against loss and misuse, and it must dispose of the information securely once it is no longer necessary for the purposes for which it may lawfully be used.

The Information Protection Principles also deal with access. The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act gives individuals a right to access personal information about them that is held by public sector agencies. Individuals are also able to request that their personal information be amended to correct any factual inaccuracies. However, there are some exceptions. The Act allows for some exceptions from the Information Protection Principles; for example, public sector agencies that are law enforcement agencies are not obliged to comply with the principles where to do so would compromise their ability to perform their duties. The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act also gives powers to the NSW Privacy Commissioner to investigate and to mediate complaints about privacy and handling of personal information made against public sector agencies. The commissioner also provides advice to public sector agencies and prepares guidance on the application of the Act and the Information Protection Principles.

The powers and duties of the Privacy Commissioner include: to promote the adoption of, and to monitor compliance with, the Information Protection Principles; to prepare and to publish guidelines relating to the protection of personal information and other privacy matters, and to promote the adoption of such guidelines; to initiate and to recommend the making of Privacy Codes of Practice; to provide assistance to public sector agencies in adopting and complying with the Information Protection Principles and Privacy Codes of Practice; to provide assistance to public sector agencies in preparing and implementing privacy management plans in accordance with section 33; to conduct research, and collect and collate information about any matter relating to the protection of personal information and the privacy of individuals; to provide advice on matters relating to the protection of personal information and the privacy of individuals; to make public statements about any matter relating to the privacy of individuals generally; to conduct education programs, and to disseminate information, for the purpose of promoting the protection of the privacy of individuals; and to prepare and to publish reports and recommendations about any matter, including developments in technology, that concerns the need for, or the desirability of, legislative, administrative or other action in the interest of the privacy of individuals.

New South Wales public sector agencies vary considerably in size and function, from individuals to government departments. They include: public service departments and agencies; the New South Wales teaching service; Ministers and ministerial staff members; political officeholders; statutory bodies; local councils; New South Wales universities; and the NSW Police Force. Under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, individuals can make complaints to the Privacy Commissioner about violations of and interference with their privacy by public sector agencies. Under the Act, the Privacy Commissioner can receive, investigate and conciliate complaints about privacy related matters, conduct inquiries and investigations into privacy related matters; and advise on matters relating to the protection of personal information and the privacy of individuals.

The Privacy Commissioner and Information and Privacy Commission administer a voluntary breach reporting scheme and work with public sector agencies to encourage and assist them to voluntarily report potential and identified breaches of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and to determine appropriate responses. These may include advice on steps to mitigate potential consequences, how to identify and to respond to future breaches, and whether affected individuals should be notified. The current system allows for some flexibility in how public sector agencies respond to breaches, which recognises that New South Wales public sector agencies vary considerably in size, resources, function and responsibility, and the type of information they hold, and that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be appropriate.

It appears that the bill introduced by the member for Liverpool, which I will call the Opposition bill, has been developed without evaluating the adequacy and efficacy of the existing voluntary breach reporting scheme, or whether serious breaches are currently going unreported, without demonstrating that the bill's provisions are suitable and proportionate; without considering or addressing the scheme's potentially significant regulatory impact and resource implications for public sector agencies, the Privacy Commissioner and the Information and

Privacy Commission, and without consulting with key stakeholders, including the Privacy Commissioner or the Information and Privacy Commission, which will be affected by the scheme's implementation.

If there is no significant underreporting at present, the Opposition bill's scheme will be of limited utility, and alternative options such as reform to the existing voluntary reporting scheme may achieve the objective of encouraging more reporting with less regulatory burden and resource implications. Without appropriate research and consultation on the effectiveness of the voluntary reporting scheme it is simply impossible to determine if the Opposition bill is a proportionate, or even necessary, policy response. Further, the resource implications for the Privacy Commissioner and the Information and Privacy Commission as recipients of reports in particular do not appear to have been considered or addressed.

The member for Liverpool stated in his second reading speech that the Opposition bill "has precedent" in and is "broadly consistent with" with the Commonwealth Act. However, the efficacy of the Commonwealth Act is not yet clear because it has only recently commenced. In addition, the Opposition bill differs in some material respects from the Commonwealth Act. That Act and the Opposition bill have differing thresholds to trigger reporting obligations. The Commonwealth Act required individuals to be notified where a breach has caused or is likely to cause serious harm. The Opposition bill requires reporting where there has been or is likely to be a serious violation of an individual's privacy; that is, reporting not linked to harm.

The Commonwealth Act is designed to avoid duplication and provides that where more than one agency is involved in a suspected or actual privacy breach, only one must conduct an assessment of whether a breach has occurred, and only one agency must notify the Australian Information Commissioner and affected individuals of the breach. The Opposition bill includes no provisions to avoid such duplication. This has potential to create confusion, to create multiple reporting to the Privacy Commissioner and individuals, and to skew statistics on numbers of breaches, if that is based on the number of reports.

The Commonwealth Act has clear provisions on when agencies are exempt from making notifications because to do so would be contrary to secrecy provisions, and where a law enforcement agency would be exempt from making a notification because to do so would prejudice law enforcement activities. The Opposition bill's exemptions seem to be less clear, in particular about how to determine whether a notification would prejudice a law enforcement activity. The Government agrees it is important that New South Wales public sector agencies have appropriate systems in place to protect personal information they hold and to ensure the privacy of individuals to whom that information relates is not violated or unlawfully interfered with. The Government also recognises that a mandatory breach reporting scheme has the potential to increase privacy protections for New South Wales residents, as well as the transparency of New South Wales public sector agencies' management of personal information, if privacy breaches are not already currently being reported. I have therefore instructed the Department of Justice to commence a review into privacy breach reporting in New South Wales to determine whether the existing scheme is appropriate, and whether a mandatory breach reporting scheme should be adopted in New South Wales.

As New South Wales has more than 100 public sector agencies of varying sizes, resource capacity, functions and responsibilities, determining what processes are currently in place, and what new processes may be needed, as well as what resources the Privacy Commissioner, the Information and Privacy Commission, or any other oversight body may need to administer a mandatory scheme, may take some time to look at thoroughly. The review will also take time to consider, and learn from, the Commonwealth introduction of mandatory breach reporting. For those reasons the Government opposes this bill.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (11:21): The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2017 is an important bill which was introduced by the shadow Attorney General. This bill is yet another example of the Labor Opposition introducing legislation because this Government has failed to act. This bill will amend the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act to ensure that all individuals affected by serious breaches of privacy by New South Wales government agencies are notified of these breaches.

This is a commonsense bill that will bring the privacy laws of New South Wales into the twenty-first century. This change was recommended way back in 2015 by the NSW Privacy Commissioner. Time after time, the New South Wales Labor Opposition has been forced to introduce bills into this place because successive Coalition governments have failed to implement the recommendations of their own reports. In this case it has nearly been three years since the Privacy Commissioner released her report and made a number of sensible recommendations. This delay is unacceptable and the people of New South Wales deserve better from this Government.

This bill will update the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, which will be 20 years old this year. Since 1998, the technology used by government agencies and our society as a whole has changed in

ways that could not have been imagined when the original bill was passed. The type of data that the Government collects is highly sensitive and personal, and the potential consequences of a data breach in the twenty-first century are severe. In the private sector, companies like Yahoo, eBay and Equifax have suffered massive data breaches. There is no reason to think that this cannot happen to government agencies. The information obtained from Yahoo, eBay and Equifax included email addresses, credit card details and passwords. Those types of information are, in the twenty-first century, integral to people's financial and identity security. In some instances, these companies tried to hide the data breaches, which meant that those affected could not take the necessary steps to protect their personal information.

The principle that underlies this bill is that people affected by a data breach by a New South Wales government agency have the right to be told about this breach. This allows them to take the necessary steps to secure their compromised data. This is a sound principle, and it is one that our community expects us to uphold. Last year, the Australian Community Attitudes to Privacy Survey was released. The results of this survey show that Australians are more concerned about their privacy than ever and expect governments to act to secure their privacy. The survey found that 69 per cent of respondents were more concerned about online privacy than they were five years ago, and that 95 per cent expected a government agency to inform them if that agency had lost their personal information. With the rise in the use of the internet and as people put more and more personal information online, it may be reasonable to assume that people had reduced their fears about privacy breaches, but this survey shows that their concerns are actually increasing.

Given the overwhelming public support for the measures in this bill, it is essential that it passes through this Parliament. Our constituents expect their Government to act to protect their interests, and it is clear that this bill does so. If it is deemed that a data breach at a public sector agency has led to a serious violation of an individual's privacy, this bill will require the agency to take reasonable steps to notify that individual. My shadow portfolio is in the area of domestic violence and sexual assault so I know that breaches of private information by a government agency—for example, data about a survivor of family violence—could lead to a life-threatening situation. The release of the home address or phone numbers of someone who has an unlisted address could lead to further perpetration of violence against that individual—and that is just one example.

The agency must contact the affected individual with a description of the breach and the type of information affected. That could allow a person in the example I outlined to take steps to keep safe. About a year ago, I was in this Chamber when I learnt of the release, by a government agency, of information about the whereabouts of a victim of domestic violence, to the perpetrator of that abuse. The resolution of that matter—ensuring that that woman kept her life—caused all sorts of stress. Some of our constituents are already sceptical about the use of the internet to store personal information. When the Government does not take adequate steps—such as those that have been laid out before it—to protect that information, it is right for those people to be sceptical. People need assistance to secure their personal information after a serious breach. This bill will also require the agency to give notice to the affected individuals as soon as possible, and not more than 15 days after they become aware of the breach. In critical and emergency cases I would say that that may be too long, but that is what is in this legislation.

Our public sector agencies have a social responsibility to the people of New South Wales to act in their best interests. The public expects those agencies to act with integrity in their day-to-day dealings. The New South Wales Government is steadily increasing the amount of contact it has with our constituents via the internet. Every day this Government is requesting citizens to share more and more information online. For example, Service NSW offers a wide range of transactions on its website. Any member of the public who has decided to take up the Government's offer of the Active Kids bonus has to set up an account with Service NSW. As the Government increases the amount of sensitive information it is storing, it must increase its security and put in place measures to protect that data. But, as we have seen in the private sector, even the most secure systems can be compromised by malicious actors or as a result of human error. That is why this bill is such an essential reform to our privacy laws. It will put in place a clear and transparent response to serious data breaches in New South Wales government agencies.

The Federal Coalition Government has pursued a similar reform for Federal government agencies and there is no reason why the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government cannot do the same. The people of New South Wales consistently question the priorities of this Berejiklian Government. I am astounded that it has been nearly three years since the Privacy Commissioner released her report and this Government has done nothing to act on this recommendation. I am astounded that the Attorney General has just said the Government will not support the bill that the Opposition has put before this House. It is crazy. This Government is focused on its fantastic policies around stadiums, giving fanciful names to new Sydney ferries, and banning industries—all sorts of crazy things—but not on protecting the privacy of individuals.

It is past time that this Government acted and introduced legislation into this House that will improve the lives of people in New South Wales. The Labor Opposition has introduced a bill that has widespread public support and that will improve the lives of the people in this State. It has been widely reported that the Premier has one of the slimmest legislative records of any new leader of this State. Members of this House have seen evidence of that. For weeks members have been debating last year's budget because there is just no legislation being introduced. The Opposition is helping out the Government by providing an opportunity to implement the recommendations of the Privacy Commissioner's report. I urge Government members to vote in favour of this bill.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of and extend a very warm welcome to Mr Wasny de Roure, a member of the Legislative Chamber of the Parliament of Brazil, and Mr Roberto Fromer, who is the Consul of Brazil in New South Wales, guests of the Deputy Speaker and member for Lismore. I hope both gentlemen enjoy their visit to the New South Wales Parliament, particularly the Legislative Assembly.

Bills

PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION AMENDMENT (NOTIFICATION OF SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF PRIVACY BY PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCIES) BILL 2017

Second Reading Debate

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (11:30): The Government opposes the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2017.

Mr Ron Hoenig: On merit?

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: The member for Heffron asks whether I object to the bill on merit. The answer is probably not. However, as the bill currently stands, it has not been subjected to proper scrutiny by the agencies that will be most affected by it. Responsible government, not thought bubble government, dictates that legislation be introduced after a process of consultation with those who will implement the legislation, such as the Privacy Commissioner and agencies that thereafter will be affected. The Attorney's response to this bill during the second reading debate indicates that the Government was in a process of conducting a significant review relating to mandatory reporting of privacy breaches. That undertaking by the Attorney signalled that the Government is serious about the privacy issue and takes on board the recommendations of the Privacy Commissioner. The "Report of the Privacy Commissioner under Section 61B of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998", which was received by the House in 2015 states:

Many of the issues raised by the public and public sector agencies concern the exponential growth in technology—

The member for Maitland referred to that—

and its impact upon how our society operates.

Every one of us is aware of the United States Senate inquiry into the manner in which Facebook uses people's information for the purposes of—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Politics?

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Potentially politics, which is a matter of serious concern, or, alternatively, for commercial benefit. It is not an issue that is not focusing the minds of the public because we have so many users of Facebook and other internet sites where people, including our own children, devolve personal information without giving much thought to privacy considerations. Privacy is a significant issue in people's lives. The Privacy Commissioner's report also states:

The public is concerned about 'big data' and data mining, surveillance, identity theft, on selling of personal information, 'big brother' and metadata interception, risks in the shared economy, vulnerability particularly of seniors and younger children, seemingly insecure storage of personal information by organisations including ammunition retailers and the excessive amount of personal information collected for mundane transactions – amongst other things!

The member for Maitland identified those issues during her speech. The report also points out that the New South Wales Parliament created an obligation on the Privacy Commissioner to report to Parliament on the annual operation of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection [PPIP] Act. The Privacy Commissioner's report provides an overview of the operation of that Act from July 2013 and 2014. The report also states:

Drawing on work undertaken during this period and feedback from members of the public, privacy practitioners, government departments, non-government organisations and the heads of oversight agencies, the report identifies issues for legislative action as well as action by the Privacy Commissioner, agencies and members of the public. In an increasingly global world, individuals, public sector agencies and businesses operate across State, Territory and national boundaries. One privacy regime covering all Australian jurisdictions would simplify the current legislative landscape, however, the processes to achieve this would be neither quick, easy nor necessarily successful.

Then the report makes the pertinent point in the context of the issue that the Attorney quite rightly identified in his response to the introduction of this bill:

Aligning NSW privacy legislation more closely with that of the Commonwealth, and other State and Territory jurisdictions, through amendment to the core principles of the PPIP Act will assist. I recommend, as have others before me, the introduction of provisions covering the movement of personal information outside of NSW and the right to anonymity where lawful and practicable.

Then the report refers to the recommendation that the shadow Attorney quite rightly identified and which is the subject of this bill:

I also recommend the introduction of mandatory reporting of serious data breaches particularly—

I emphasise "particularly" because it is the salient point—

if this provision is introduced into Commonwealth legislation. A shift from old style reactive compliance to proactive and effective incorporation of privacy in organisational governance and culture is the future and the adoption of the 'privacy by design' principle provides the vehicle to achieve this shift.

As indicated by the Attorney, the Government does not say that this legislation is not necessary but wants to get it right after proper consultation. The Attorney rightly stated that there are differences between the Commonwealth Act and the Act proposed by the shadow Attorney. The Attorney recognised the plethora of organisations that will be affected by this type of legislation and the necessity of obtaining feedback from those organisations on how they would implement such a mandatory regime and what would be the impact on budgets of introducing such a regime. All those matters must be taken into account. But to come into this House, introduce a bill and say, "This is the appropriate response because effectively the bill adopts the Privacy Commissioner's recommendations", without having tested those recommendations with the agencies involved, would be irresponsible government. A government that did that would attract serious criticism.

The Attorney identified distinct differences between this bill and the Commonwealth legislation that the Privacy Commissioner recommended the New South Wales Legislature should align its legislation. After engaging in a proper consultation process, hopefully an appropriately drafted bill would adopt a scheme that would properly allow for best practice mandatory reporting of data breaches. In what respect does this bill differ from the Commonwealth legislation? The Commonwealth scheme that this bill was designed to replicate differs, first, by setting a different seriousness threshold to trigger reporting obligations. Secondly, there is a lack of provisions to avoid duplication of assessments and notifications when more than one public sector agency is involved in a potential or actual violation. Thirdly, there is a lack of clarity around how exemptions from notification requirements apply to law enforcement agencies and secrecy as well as other non-disclosure provisions of other Acts.

The Attorney rightly said that there is a voluntary reporting scheme for privacy breaches. One glaring omission from the shadow Attorney's contribution to the second reading debate was a practical example of why this legislation is urgent and necessary now. All he needs to do is say, "Here is an issue that needs identifying" and identify where there is a legislative gap. I get that everyone is concerned about potential privacy breaches. How many of us get emails and think, "How on earth did this person get my email address?" We receive emails from them because they have mined data from somewhere. The shadow Attorney could have identified a specific breach by a public service agency where, if a mandatory reporting regime had been in place, that information would have disseminated to the affected persons. [*Extension of time*]

Although I said that the recommendation on which the shadow Attorney relies for the purposes of introducing this bill has significant merit, he has not demonstrated that there is enough urgency surrounding the delivery of a mandatory reporting scheme that today the Government should bypass every responsible step of government to consult with public sector agencies and law enforcement agencies to test the extent to which the budget will be impacted by those agencies complying with mandatory reporting requirements. A voluntary reporting scheme is in place. The Information and Privacy Commission website has extensive instructions on how complaints related to breaches can be dealt with. It is a user friendly website and I encourage people to use it if they want to make a complaint about an alleged privacy breach. There is a voluntary reporting scheme for public sector agencies. There is no demonstrable issue before this House today that establishes a need to act immediately and to bypass proper process for the delivery of comprehensive legislation that will deliver the outcome that the shadow Attorney General wishes to achieve. I join with the Attorney General in opposing this bill.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I welcome to the public gallery students from across New South Wales who are taking part in the Secondary Student Leadership Program, which is being conducted by the New South Wales Parliament. We are currently listening to debate on the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill, which was introduced by the shadow Attorney General, the member for Liverpool.

*Bills***PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION AMENDMENT (NOTIFICATION OF SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF PRIVACY BY PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCIES) BILL 2017****Second Reading Debate**

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (11:43): Today I have heard the greatest load of piffle from the Attorney General that I have heard from an attorney; an Attorney who, I must say, at least demonstrates the courtesy to respond to legislation within his portfolio. Many within the Executive Government would send down a lackey and not show their face, but the Attorney has the courtesy and the ethics to respond. The Attorney is highly regarded by many on this side of the House. He was well trained as a barrister. He read with an outstanding public defender when he first came to the bar. However, whatever he learned from me has obviously worn off, based on in his contribution to debate on this bill. I welcome the concession made by the member for Epping that the bill is a good idea, but he, like the Attorney, has sought to do find reasons to do what, in the New South Wales Parliament, members refuse to do, and that is: be legislators and consider bills on their merit.

As one member said to me privately just a short minute ago, "Ron, dream on." I would like this House once, in the five years that I have been here, to at least consider a bill on merit, irrespective of who proposes it, and to at least make some contribution to debate on a bill in the interests of the people of New South Wales and not find ridiculous reasons to comply with the standard political operation in New South Wales, which is: Unless it comes from the Government it is no good. I heard the member for Epping say that what is needed is consultation and discussion with agencies about what the member for Liverpool is proposing. I remind the House that it was February 2015 when the Information and Privacy Commissioner, under section 61 (b) of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, recommended this change in recommendation 10, "That the Act be amended to provide a mandatory of notification of serious breaches of an individual's privacy by a public sector agency similar to that proposed to be provided in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)." That is three years and two months ago.

For three years and two months the Government has had every opportunity to consult with every agency it wanted to consult with. For more than three years the Government has known that the legislation has substantial failings. The principal Act has existed since before iPhones, before social media and before the ability to disclose sensitive information in the way in which it can now be disclosed. One would have thought that three years would have been enough time for a Government that is really in control. The member for Epping might have had a responsibility in his former occupation—before he was elected as the member for Epping—to consider this. I would have thought that was enough time. The member for Liverpool gave notice of this bill in November 2017—it is now April. In five months, if the bill was a good idea as the member for Epping conceded, one would have thought that the Attorney General and the entire resources of the Attorney General and the Department of Justice could have run around their agencies to get some input into the value of this bill and its possible cost.

What has the Government done in the past five months? Nothing! So far as this Government is concerned, any view, idea or bill that comes from the Opposition gets knocked over, no not matter how good it is. The Government has done nothing. Now the Attorney says, "We are going to have a consultation process." What has the Government been doing for three years while people's privacy has been seriously eroded? Absolutely nothing! In the intervening period since the shadow Attorney introduced this bill—the member for Epping wants examples—only one month ago, on 2 March 2018, the Auditor-General produced a report. I will read onto the record what the Auditor-General said because neither the Attorney nor the member for Epping—who wants to know why there is a hurry—made reference to it. There is a hurry because the Government has done nothing in three years, and the Auditor-General has exposed the Government and major problems with privacy legislation. The Auditor-General said:

There is no whole-of-government capability to detect and respond effectively to cyber security incidents. There is limited sharing of information on incidents amongst agencies, and some of the agencies we reviewed have poor detection and response practices and procedures. There is a risk that incidents will go undetected longer than they should, and opportunities to contain and restrict the damage may be lost.

Given current weaknesses, the NSW public sector's ability to detect and respond to incidents needs to improve significantly and quickly. At the end of the day, the Attorney General should not jump up in this place and say, after the matter has been brought to

his attention and to the attention of his predecessor, that the Government needs to consult on this matter, although he and his predecessor have done nothing on this matter for three years. The member for Epping should not have said that this issue does not have to be tackled quickly, when the Auditor-General has told the Government to tackle it quickly. Those opposite have said that they want to know where the bill comes from; the member for Liverpool has not pulled the bill out of his large intestine.

The member for Liverpool has proposed a bill that mirrors the Commonwealth provisions, that the Commonwealth has enacted. The bill is not a magical set of words produced by the member for Liverpool; it reflects current Federal legislation. The only effective difference between the Federal legislation and this bill is that this bill provides for New South Wales statutory organisations, while the Commonwealth bill also provides for larger corporations, because the New South Wales Constitution does not allow this Parliament to legislate for corporations. Privacy is a significant issue, and the Auditor-General has told the Government to act quickly. Those opposite should not find reasons not to implement this legislation.

The Attorney General made a poor contribution to the debate on this bill, bearing in mind that he has known about it for five months. If he wants to argue about the wording or does not like a definition in the bill, where is his amendment? In the past five months has he spoken to the member for Liverpool about perhaps amending the bill? If he does not want to speak to the member for Liverpool, why has he not produced an amendment to propose a change? Where was the Attorney's response to the observations by the Auditor-General, who told him to act quickly? There has been no response from the Attorney. The Government's attitude to this bill reflects the way in which politics operates in New South Wales—that is, if it comes from the Labor Party, it is no good and the Government will knock it over.

There are some pretty eminent people on the Government side of the House. The member for Ku-ring-gai is an eminent silk, who can read a bill and make a sensible contribution. The protection of the privacy of the people of New South Wales must be taken more seriously than the member for Epping conceding that he thinks it is a good idea. The protection of privacy deserves a genuine contribution from people such as the member for Ku-ring-gai, who understands the provisions of the bill and knows the Government has been sitting on its big, fat backside for three years and two months despite a recommendation from the Privacy Commission. For once, under the New South Wales Constitution, the Government should act as a legislator and make a contribution to this bill on its merits, rather than simply reacting by saying it will knock over the bill because it has been introduced by the member for Liverpool, a member of the Labor Party.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (11:52): It is always a pleasure to see the old jury advocate, in the member for Heffron, fire up in this place and to try to make something seem to be a massive Coalition conspiracy, because that is the way that members of the Labor Party like to play: They like to play the man, rather than the ball. Let us reflect for a moment on the operating environment in which this private member's bill has been brought before the House. I note that the member for Heffron was a distinguished member of the bar before he came into this place, which those in the public gallery probably would not know. He knows as well as I do that in 1990 the High Court decided, in *New South Wales v Commonwealth*, reported at 169 CLR page 482, that incorporation of corporations is a matter for the Commonwealth Parliament.

Mr Ron Hoenig: That is why the bill does not refer to corporations.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Exactly, and that is my point. This bill is dealing with a pinprick in the area of privacy: an issue that must be dealt with by governments in Australia. We saw on last night's news and read in this morning's papers that Mark Zuckerberg was grilled by the United States Senate because of privacy breaches committed by Facebook, a private corporation. Because it is a private corporation, it is a body that is entirely outside of the power of any legislation of this Parliament. It is important that people's privacy and private information be protected, but it is equally important that it not be done piecemeal by the shadow Attorney General, who, with all due respect, is hardly at the cutting-edge of digital technology. We see the shadow Attorney General sitting on the bench, and we know that he has spent many years in this Parliament. Probably like me, he did not first touch a computer until he was well into his twenties—I suspect he may even have been in his thirties.

Technology in this area is complex, and tackling issues of privacy relating to technology should not be done in a piecemeal fashion, and without proper consideration and consultation. At the end of the day, all we are talking about with regard to the constitutional competency of this Parliament is the protection of private information held by New South Wales government agencies. That is the entirety of the constitutional remit of this Parliament, so when we consider the pinprick of private information that is within the legislative competency of this Parliament, the somewhat boisterous, blown-up balloon of a speech by the member for Heffron quickly loses its air because it is shown to be the puff of hot air that it really is.

It is not as if this Government has done nothing to protect the privacy of residents of New South Wales in so far as their private information is held by public authorities. The Government has established an independent statutory authority called the Information and Privacy Commission, which administers New South Wales legislation dealing with privacy and access to government information. The Information and Privacy Commission

was established to support the Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner in fulfilling their legislative responsibilities and functions and to ensure that individuals and agencies can access consistent information, guidance and coordinated training about information access and privacy of information concerning government instrumentalities in New South Wales.

The Information Commissioner is the head of the commission and is responsible for the strategic direction and management of the staff of the commission. The integration of information access and privacy is aimed at achieving meaningful outcomes by successfully balancing the two functions within a mature operational model. The new Privacy Commissioner was appointed in the middle of June 2007—Samantha Gavel. She has a distinguished background that well equips her to contribute to this area of regulation. She was the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner, and previously held the role of Private Health Insurance Ombudsman for six years. She has also held various other positions that qualify her to perform her role.

We should take this opportunity to commend the Information and Privacy Commission [IPC] on the hard work it is doing. Since its establishment, it has strengthened its operational effectiveness in case management based on an internally robust foundation of sound procedures, systems, governance, prioritisation and investment in capability. Its approach has enabled it to project its work externally and adopt a strategically regulatory approach. It is guided by a risk-based and intelligence-informed approach to regulation. Risk-based regulation and using intelligence to inform its regulatory activities enables the commission to prioritise and target resources to those areas that pose high risks to the achievement of its regulatory objectives.

The commission's service standards require 80 per cent of complaints and reviews to be finalised within 90 days of lodgement—which is a fairly impressive record. Since July 2016, the commission has finalised 93 per cent of information access reviews within service target time frames, which is a substantial improvement on the previous year's result of 43 per cent. The outcome reflects the improvements in timeliness and case management processes in an environment in which there is no longer a case backlog. This regulator is dealing with complaints in an incredibly efficient fashion. Notwithstanding a 5 per cent increase in the number of complaints, the commission has been able to maintain its case efficiency with regard to people's concerns about privacy breaches. This is a complex area with existing protections and we do not want ad hoc developments. This is an area where the Federal legislation, which governs probably 99 per cent of privacy issues in our community, is in harmony with the New South Wales legislation.

I note that the Attorney General informed the House that complete consultation with regard to this private member's bill was not undertaken and that he is conducting investigations into how current New South Wales legislation can be improved. On that basis, in the interests of consistency, harmonisation and thoroughness, it is important that the Government proceed with this matter in a more comprehensive and consultative fashion than has occurred in preparing this private member's bill.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (12:02): In speaking to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2018, I start by commenting on the contribution of the member for Heffron. Like Henny Penny, he claimed that the sky was going to fall in and that we are facing disaster. The member for Heffron referred to the Auditor-General's report. I serve on the Public Accounts Committee, which has oversight of the Auditor-General, and I heard the briefing by the Auditor-General and was part of the deliberations. The member for Heffron conveniently failed to mention that when we met with the Auditor-General each government department had set in place its response to the report and the Auditor-General was happy with those responses and how the departments planned to implement her recommendations.

Change cannot happen overnight, but government departments are implementing recommendations to protect privacy. The Information and Privacy Commission [IPC] was set up by this Government. When we came to government in 2011, there was no privacy commission. Those opposite said that we have had five months to introduce legislation, but they had 16 years and did absolutely nothing in this area. We came to government and established the Information and Privacy Commission to protect the people of New South Wales. The role of the Auditor-General is to continually examine government departments and their procedures and to make recommendations. Departments examine those recommendations and set about implementing them. That does not happen overnight, but government departments are implementing the recommendations. The Auditor-General and her staff were pleased with that, and were satisfied with the departments' responses.

As I said, the IPC was established in 2011 with bipartisan support from this Parliament—it is a shame that bipartisan support is no longer. It is a fitting time to debate privacy reform as it is Privacy Awareness Week next month, from 7 to 13 May. Privacy Awareness Week is a reminder of the importance of privacy and the protection of personal information. This year's theme is Privacy in the Digital Age. It recognises that new technology offers both opportunities and challenges as the ever-changing landscape in which we operate is making it faster and easier for information to be collected, analysed and shared. The IPC annual report for 2016-17 reveals

that in that financial year the IPC website received 352,223 page views and a 15 per cent increase in unique visitors. It also received 3,317 inquiries over the phone and 939 in person or in writing.

Business interrupted.

Motions

CENTENARY OF ANZAC

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (12:07): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes the Government has a legacy of honouring all service men and women who have served and who have served this country.
- (2) Notes that Anzac Day is an important day of commemoration to all people in New South Wales to reflect on what life was like for those who lived and died on the battlefield.
- (3) Notes that 2018 marks 100 years of service and sacrifice by Australia's service men and women and their families.

Anzac Day is a significant day in Australia, when communities commemorate the great sacrifices that were made by our Anzacs and that continue to be made by our current service men and women. Our State and our country have a proud history of people serving for the good of the country and to protect our freedoms. On 25 April 1916 the Anzacs landed in the place we now know as Anzac Cove. Those men were young and many were inexperienced fighters, more used to farming or to city life and certainly unprepared for the industrial-scale slaughter that they were about to face. The Great War marked a new kind of combat as new technologies, coupled with the huge number of men fighting, made the battlefields deadly and horrific places. The men who landed at Anzac Cove fought their way through mud and ravines and up cliffs and, by the end of the day, 2,000 of them were dead.

The Government is proud to continue the commemoration of service personnel with a range of projects. We have refurbished the Hyde Park Memorial, which is the pinnacle of our Centenary of Anzac commemoration. This refurbishment will allow for the completion of the original memorial plans. The memorial was built because the dead from the Great War were not returned to the shores whence they came. Communities across Australia built memorials, and this was the largest of them. It was not completed because the Depression came along, but it was raised and funded by subscription. Our Government has committed \$37 million to complete this building in Hyde Park. Work is progressing well for completion by 11 November 2018—the 100th anniversary of the end of the Great War. Soil samples will be taken from 1,700 cities, towns, villages and hamlets from where men had enlisted to join the Australian Imperial Force. It is a project of very large proportions and a wonderful opportunity for RSL clubs, schools and communities to come together to embrace the spirit of the Centenary of Anzac.

I took part in gather soil in Wagga Wagga. The Government is also collecting soil from 100 foreign battlefields, ranging from the mountains of Kokoda to the depths of the Indian Ocean, where HMAS *Sydney* lies, and from our first conflict in South Africa to our most recent in Afghanistan. The Government has invested \$20.3 million into the project, which includes education and interpretation facilities beneath the Anzac memorial and the inclusion of the southern water feature. The original design for this from 1930 was not completed because of a lack of funds. That project is on track. From Broken Hill to Bemboka, more than 60 New South Wales communities have received funding to commemorate veterans. Earlier this year, local organisations received more than \$175,000 to protect and repair local war memorials and support projects to commemorate the sacrifice of service men and women. Some \$126,760 was awarded under the Community War Memorials Fund for 21 projects across the State, and \$49,000 was allocated under the Anzac Community Grants Program, which funded 43 projects in rural areas.

There are grants of up to \$2,000 for schools and community and veterans' groups to recognise Australia's war service history, to educate a new generation and to support the New South Wales veterans' community. This month and this debate are good opportunities for members of Parliament to acknowledge the great service and sacrifice of men and women who have served locally and overseas. Just as importantly, we acknowledge the veterans' families and carers—the widows and the widowers—who are involved in commemorations and who have paid a heavy price for their loved ones' defence of this country. We always say at Anzac services that we will never forget. I note also that many organisations will commemorate 100 years of service this year. For example, the Returned Soldiers Association, which was formed in Wagga Wagga in 1918, will commemorate 100 years of serving the returned service men and women in local communities. That is important too.

I do not often have the opportunity to talk about Australia's service men and women. It all began with Gallipoli and the Great War. Australian service men and women have served this country in many countries and fields of conflict, such as the Pacific and Europe, and they continue to serve in Afghanistan and elsewhere. I have been deeply affected by a book entitled *Somme Mud* by Edward P. F. Lynch, which gave me a greater

understanding of the First World War. The book was edited by Will Davies, a friend of mine, and it chronicles the experiences of Private Lynch.

I recommend this book to all students in this country. It will change their perceptions of war and of the sacrifices and difficulties faced by service men and women during the First World War, particularly in the Somme. Lynch signed up in 1916, served and was repatriated in 1919. He was a runner during the war and was wounded three times. He recorded his very moving experiences in 20 exercise books. This book will enlighten people about the commitment and the great sacrifices that were made not only by this one soldier, but also by all service men and women to protect our freedom.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (12:14): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing this important motion to the House. The Centenary of Anzac has been commemorated for the past four years. World War I began with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in August 1914. At that time Australia had the Australian Imperial Force [AIF], not the Australian Defence Force. When Britain and Germany went to war so did we. There were different alliances in the lead-up to World War I and a number of countries were involved in the conflict. That is why it is called the Great War. In Australia, men were quick to join up for a number of reasons. Before I came to this place I was a history teacher and I taught my students the most obvious reason that kids—and they were just kids—enlisted was they viewed it as an adventure and thought they would be back home by Christmas. They thought it would give them a chance to spend some time with their mates, to go and see things and to enjoy the world. They did not know the disaster that awaited them. They also enlisted to assist the mother country.

The date 25 April and the ensuing seven months were a defining moment for Australia as a nation, and it was then the Anzac legend was forged. Against the odds, our men made it up the cliffs from the beach. I have visited Anzac Cove and walked in the trenches. As I stood in the cove and looked up at the mountain I wondered how anybody could possibly climb it and survive. And yet many did just that. One thing that stands out for me is the amazing relationship between the Turks and the Australians. In one area of the battlefield the trenches are no more than about six metres apart—they are incredibly close. I encourage those who have not had the chance to do so to visit Gallipoli—it is an eerie and amazing place. Our war memorial there is beautiful, but so are the words of Atatürk that are etched in sandstone. They say something like, "Don't worry, mothers of Australia, your sons who are resting here are part of our nation."

From Gallipoli, Australian soldiers travelled to the Western Front—where the true carnage occurred. The conditions were miserable and many lives were lost. When I talked about the Battle of the Somme with my students, I would line them up and ask them to take a step forward. I would tell them that for every step they took—every metre—another 270 people died. The Allies lost 300 men for every metre of the Somme. By using examples such as that, kids truly understand the Centenary of Anzac is not about celebration; it is a commemoration and an acknowledgement that our finest Australian men went to fight and made the ultimate sacrifice. At the time the Australian population was only five million, and about 2.5 million were women. So only a very small percentage were eligible to enlist. Some 416,000 men enlisted—which was about 30 per cent of that population. Who can forget the words of Billy Hughes at the Palace of Versailles, where Australia was looked down upon by the big powers? When asked whom he was there to represent, he replied, "I speak for 60,000 Australian dead." When we consider it from a mathematical perspective, we understand the sacrifices that were made.

Of course, it not just about what happened during the war. Things changed on the home front too—it was the moment we lost our innocence and grew up. The role of women in Australia changed, as they had opportunities to be involved in things they had never done before. Schools got involved. There was a holistic approach to the war. For example, comfort packs were prepared and sent to the soldiers. Two divisive things also happened at that time: first, white feathers were put in the letterboxes of men who did not enlist; and, secondly, there was a divisive conscription campaign. Against that backdrop, our finest men went to war. It was not easy to enlist in the AIF—men had to pass height and sight tests—so it was our supermen who went to war. They are the people our nation gave up to war.

It was a war where we lost our innocence. As the member for Wagga Wagga mentioned, there was also the development of destructive machinery and the use of gas, tanks and machine-guns. Such things have nothing to do with nobility. There was an idea that war was noble. In his poem Wilfred Owen talks about the lie that is *dolce et decorum est*—the nobility of war. There was no nobility. Our Light Horsemen did not get a chance to ride their horses into battle; they were cut down in their absolute prime. Those who make the decision to go to war are not the ones on the front line. Those on the front line believed in a greater purpose and were sometimes taken advantage of.

But we were all part of the war effort. Moving forward 100 years, we take a bipartisan approach and acknowledge the sacrifices that were made. The four-year commemoration of the Centenary of Anzac has been tremendous. I have enjoyed hearing the Centenary of Anzac speech every Tuesday. Minister Elliot joined me in

Lakemba to collect soil. On Monday thousands of children of different faiths and colours from government and non-government schools gathered in Hyde Park to acknowledge and commemorate the Great War effort. This is what we do. What is Anzac? That spirit was not left on the battlefield; it is in all of us.

I know that members of this House have served in the armed forces, and I have enormous admiration and respect for them and the things they have done. Anzac has shaped us as a nation. When we talk about what it is to be Australian, it comes a little from the spirit of Anzac. At the Isurava Memorial on the Kokoda Trail there are four massive blocks of granite inscribed with the words: courage, mateship, sacrifice, endurance. The creed continues and those elements are part of what makes us great as Australians. Of course, we then throw in the anti-establishment attitude and the laconic mentality. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing this motion to the House. We remember the words from the *Ode of Remembrance*:

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (12:23): I support the motion moved by the Parliamentary Secretary for Veterans Affairs, the member for Wagga Wagga. As the member for Lakemba said, on Anzac Day undoubtedly all members in this place will join their communities in pausing to reflect on the great sacrifices made by our Anzacs—and we will do so as a free and confident people because of their sacrifices. While we join together a century on from our nation's most tragic and damaging period, Anzac Day has as much to do with Australia's future as it does our past. We are all driven to believe in a better future. We make good on the sacrifice of the thousands of lives lost by the way we live our lives and shape our nation today. The solemn ceremony of Anzac Day—in particular, the last post—is our offering, to give meaning where there is none.

The silence that surrounds the last post is one of the most powerful sounds we will hear on Anzac Day. In that silence, we are all witnesses to the future given to us by our Anzacs. This simple gesture of us being together as a community on Anzac Day is our national tribute. Great Australian war historian Charles Bean wrote at length about the tragedy and hopelessness of conflict. He recounted the last words of a digger, "Well, at least they'll remember me in Australia." And we certainly do. In my maiden speech in this place I spoke about my perspective as a son in a military family, for more than half my life moving from base to base with my brother and sister, and living the nomadic life of an army family. My parents contributed a combined 30-plus years to the Australian Army, and I am proud of my brother-in-law and his operational duty in Afghanistan.

However, I have observed and experienced the challenges facing our modern veterans and their loved ones. As we turn the chapter on 100 years of the Anzac tradition, we can and we should fully appreciate the importance of ensuring that appropriate support and rehabilitation services are available for our younger and contemporary veterans. It pains me to bring to the attention of the House this troubling statistic: We have lost more of our younger veterans to suicide than were killed in both the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. We now understand that the wounds of war can be just as ferocious when they are mental as when they are physical. It is the mental health aspect of war that consumes so many of our younger veterans. This is especially hard on families grappling with how to best help someone they love who has given so much yet who struggles to reintegrate into civilian life—something we all take for granted.

They have done their bit, and so too we should do ours. The Veterans Employment Program, overseen by the hardworking Minister for Veterans Affairs, David Elliott, is one such example of the type of real and meaningful support that we can provide to our modern veterans. The success of the program demonstrates the value that our community places on the skills that our veterans possess from their time in the defence force. The legacy of our Anzacs belongs to us all. It is a shared point of pride, a shared opportunity to reflect and a shared experience that, no matter who you are, you can feel a sense of ownership of.

I believe the best way that we can respect the legacy of our Anzacs is to care for our modern veterans. In doing so, we demonstrate a real appreciation for the sacrifices of the original Anzacs by caring for their modern equivalents. It is not just the single soldier we pause to reflect on, but his or her family and community. Buried at the Bethlehem Farm East Cemetery near Flanders is Private Webb. Aged 26, he was killed on 19 July 1916. His father wrote the words for his headstone, "To Live In The Hearts Of Those We Leave Behind Is Not To Die". Those words are as relevant now as they were then. Lest we forget. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (12:26): I speak to this important motion brought forward by the member for Wagga Wagga regarding Anzac Day—the legacy and the legend that continues. Over the past four years we have commemorated those who lost their lives so that we can live the life we have in this country today—and we should never forget that. All members will have seen over the past few years many of the solemn commemorations in their communities at the local RSL or other clubs, and particularly in schools. Schools have embraced the commemoration of the First World War by placing plaques, commemorative stones and plinths in their gardens, or by creating new memorial gardens.

In my electorate of Fairfield I have seen the beautiful memorial gardens at Fairfield High School and Guildford West Public School. All schools have paid tribute to the Anzacs. It is something that stays with me, particularly after I visited Canley Vale Public School and saw a special area marked out for a lone pine. All members will be aware of the significance of the lone pine. As descendants of those who fought for our country, we must keep the legend alive and ensure that the Anzac spirit continues. Even though we will formally close the commemorations of the First World War in November, we should continue those commemorations for years to come. The member for Manly touched upon the battle of the modern soldier. I place on record my thanks to those who have served us from 1914, when men set off from Albany, to today. I particularly thank those who are now suffering the effects of frequent rotations of deployment in areas not well known to Australians and in difficult circumstances.

The member for Manly spoke about recent veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD]. I put on record that many veterans suffer from PTSD. But modern warfare, with high deployment rotations, has contributed to the terrible scourge of post-traumatic stress disorder on our men and women who serve. The rate of suicide as a result of modern warfare and post-traumatic stress disorder is concerning and rips families apart, much like occurred 100 years ago. Families then were left in anguish and despair when someone came to their door and delivered the telegram saying that their loved one would not be coming home. We should put ourselves in the shoes of the families left behind and do whatever we can, as proud Australians across this great State and across the country, to commemorate the spirit of Anzac and all of those men and women who have served us so proudly.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I welcome to the public gallery the Hon. Tim Fischer, AC, former Deputy Prime Minister, former Ambassador to the Holy See and, more importantly, the former member for Murray and former member for Sturt in the New South Wales Parliament. I thank him for joining us.

Motions

CENTENARY OF ANZAC

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (12:30): I support the motion on the centenary of Anzac, as moved by the Parliamentary Secretary and member for Wagga Wagga. With 2018 being the final year in the centenary of Anzac, we mark 100 years since the Battle of Villers-Bretonneux and the Battle of Hamel, and we continue to commemorate the lives that were lost defending our freedom. Anzac Day marks the start of the Gallipoli campaign on 25 April 1915. It was originally a day for commemoration of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the First World War. Now it goes beyond the anniversary of the landing on Gallipoli and is a day that we, as Australians, come together and remember all Australians who have fought and died for our country. Anzac Day embodies the virtues of courage, mateship and sacrifice, and the Anzac spirit continues to shape the identity of our nation.

On 25 April 1915 Australian troops landed on the shores of Turkey at what is now known as Anzac Cove. On the first day of the Gallipoli campaign, more than 800 Australian troops were killed. The number eventually rose to more than 8,000 Australian deaths by the end of this campaign. The scale of the loss of Australian life at Gallipoli is difficult to comprehend. To put it into perspective, the most successful operation of the campaign was, in fact, the evacuation of the troops, which resulted in the Turks being able to inflict fewer casualties on our retreating forces. Last year I accompanied six high school students from around New South Wales to follow the footsteps of the Anzacs to the little-known Greek island of Lemnos, as part of the Premier's Anzac Ambassadors tour. Lemnos is where my family is from, but more importantly it is forever entwined with our Anzac story. Lemnos is where Australia's Gallipoli campaign began, it is where 120 Australian nurses treated 4,000 Australian soldiers, and it is the resting place of 148 of our fallen servicemen.

Last year we commemorated also the centenary of the often forgotten Battle of Beersheba and the great sacrifice and feat of those men of the Australian Light Horse regiment. The Australian Light Horse attacked enemy lines defending the town of Beersheba. After two failed attempts to attack Gaza frontally, the plan shifted and instead the Australian Light Horse regiment decided to outflank the enemy by turning the Turkish line around Beersheba. The final phase of this all-day battle was the famous mounted charge of the Australian Light Horse Brigade. It stands as one of the greatest cavalry charges and, in fact, remains the last successful cavalry charge in history. About 800 Australians from the 4th and 12th Light Horse regiments were involved in the charge. Thirty-one Australian Light Horsemen lost their lives and 36 were wounded.

To see the students laying a wreath at the commemoration service brought the reality of the Australian heroic sacrifice to light. I thank ClubsNSW and Chief Executive Officer Anthony Ball for facilitating this extraordinary experience for me, the Minister for Veterans Affairs, and the member for Rockdale, as well as the

six high schools students who participated in the program: Eloise Cooper, Brindavani Sritharan, Eeva Lehtonen, Hunter Leech, Billy Foster and Oliver Litchfield. We owe so much to the many who have granted us our freedom. That has never been as clear to me as it is now, having recently visited so many of their graves. On Anzac Day we honour those who have served and died for our country. We pay tribute to the sacrifice that they were willing to make and remember the more than 102,000 Australians who have made the ultimate sacrifice. I encourage everyone to attend a service this Anzac Day and reflect on the sacrifices that have been made for the freedom that we enjoy today. Lest we forget.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (12:34): I speak in debate on the motion about the centenary of Anzac and I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing it to the House. We can never spend too much time remembering and commemorating those who have served our country to give us the life that we enjoy today. Last month my grandfather passed away. He was 95 years old. He served in the Second World War and he was at Cowra when the infamous breakout occurred. Over the years, he shared with us many stories about that time; it was an infamous part of the history of New South Wales and Australia. My grandfather's greatest story about Anzac Day was the fact that his great-uncle Duncan Chapman—my grandfather was named after him—was recognised by historian Charles Bean as the first Australian to land at Gallipoli. Chapman was a lieutenant in the 9th Battalion and was at the head of the lead boat that landed at Anzac Cove in the early hours of 25 April 1915. A letter from Chapman to his brother from that time detailed the dawn landing and confirmed that he was recognised by Army brass to have been the first man ashore. He wrote:

To me was given the extreme honour of being actually the first man to put foot ashore on this peninsula, to lead a portion of the men up the hill in that now historic charge. What a living hell it was too, and how I managed to go through it from 4 o'clock in the morning of Sunday, the 25th April, to Wednesday the 28th, under fire the whole time, without being hit, is a mystery to me.

For the centenary of Anzac, \$60,000 was raised by the community in Chapman's hometown of Maryborough to install a statue commemorating his place in history. The bronze, life-sized statue depicts Chapman looking up towards the ridges of Gallipoli with his hand on his pistol, as if he is just stepping ashore. Nancy Bates, president of the Duncan Chapman Memorial Appeal committee, said, "Duncan has very much become a part of Maryborough." He is celebrated there.

My grandfather passed on to me the original letter that was written to his great-uncle, and the letter goes into great detail about that morning. Unfortunately, although Lieutenant Chapman survived Gallipoli, he was killed at Pozières. As part of the centenary of Anzac, my niece went on a school tour to the battlefields of France and laid a poppy at his gravesite. The history of the Anzacs holds a special meaning for many people in Australia. It is part of our history. As a teacher, I think it should be a major part of our school curriculum. More and more young people are attending Anzac Day ceremonies, which is a very honourable thing to do. I now have both my great-uncle's and grandfather's medals, which I will proudly wear on Anzac Day in a few weeks' time.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myll Lakes) (12:38): By leave: I acknowledge in the public gallery retired 2nd Lieutenant Tim Fischer, who served in our Armed Forces. Anzac Day is a day when we commemorate the sacrifices, in particular, of the First World War and now those who have served in all wars. Australians served not only in the First World War but also in the Maori wars in New Zealand, the Sudan wars and the two Boer wars. Those wars are particularly relevant in my electorate because the local tradition of service started with them and continued on to the First World War and the Second World War. We also remember those who were left behind—the wives and families of those who served. During the Second World War, John Curtin said that the strength of a nation is determined by the courage of the people at home. He was talking about needing a national effort to protect Australia, and particularly because of the impending Japanese invasion.

Many grants have been made and programs implemented to commemorate the centenary of Anzac Day. An Anzac Community Grants Program allocation of \$1,301 was recently used to upgrade the swathe at the Wingham Museum, which is managed by the Manning Valley Historical Society. Work has also commenced on the local Remembrance Drive, which starts at Wingham and goes up Bulga Road to Elands and then over to Wauchope. A number of memorial halls and other remembrance sites are dotted along the route. One of Destination NSW's top 10 tourist sites is at Elands at the turnoff to Ellenborough Falls, which is the longest single-drop waterfall in the Southern Hemisphere. On a knoll on the left is a memorial plaque commemorating Sir Neville Howse, VC, who was the first Australian to receive a Victoria Cross in the Boer War. The people of Orange lay claim to Sir Neville, but he was a doctor in the Manning Valley before he went to the Boer War and the First World War, after which he went to Orange to practise and later became the member for Cowper.

Anzac Day is an extremely important event on the Myll Lakes community calendar. The number of people attending the Dawn Service, the mid-morning service at Old Bar, and the lunchtime service is increasing every year. It is fantastic to see so many young people attending memorial services across the electorate. I pay tribute to the member for Wagga Wagga for moving this motion because the House will not be sitting during the week of Anzac Day. It is a pleasure to be able to make a contribution to this debate.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (12:42): By leave: I appreciate being able to make a contribution on this important motion dealing with the commemoration of Anzac Day on 25 April. As the daughter of a former serviceman, it is always a significant day for me. My father served in the Second World War and with the Royal Australian Air Force in Borneo, New Guinea and Darwin as a fitter. I do not know as much about his service as I would like to know. My father passed away about 12 years ago, and he was always uncomfortable talking about his experiences. He would tell stories about funny events, which seemed to suggest that it was all hilarious. However, if someone comes back from war having lost about 20 per cent of their body weight and weighing only nine stone, and not having seen their family for years, it is obvious it was not a particularly enjoyable time. He did tell us a story about his twenty-first birthday, which he did not get to celebrate. The only gift he received was the person occupying the bed next to him polished his boots. He made up for that by having a big celebration on his thirty-first birthday.

My father had a lot of very close friends and he certainly loved getting together with them on Anzac Day. It was a very significant event for him. I appreciate the sacrifices that everyone made, and I love to see that commemorated on Anzac Day. It is also wonderful to see the increasing number of people commemorating the day. Of course, it is also tinged with sadness because I miss my father and I wish I knew more about his service. Anzac Day commemorations are increasing in Granville every year, and particularly at Merrylands. The centenary Dawn Service at the newly refurbished Charles Mance Reserve Memorial attracted more than 5,000 people last year. Charles Mance was the last of the First World War veterans and he passed away recently at more than 100 years of age. He fought for Australia and after the war became a strong advocate against violence and war. He spoke at local schools about the horrors of war and its pointlessness, and how it is better to solve differences peacefully. He was a much-loved member of our local community.

The first person from Granville to die during the First World War was Private Frederick Gordon Howse, who died of malaria on 24 January 1915 in New Guinea, which was long before the Gallipoli campaign commenced. It is not well known that Australia was fighting in New Guinea at that time. Merrylands and Granville were also home to a number of Victoria Cross recipients. Of course, we also remember those who fought in many other wars over the years, including in Vietnam and in more recent conflicts. The Anzac Soil Collection Program is contributing to a fantastic installation at the Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park. The ceremonies held at Granville and Merrylands were poignant, particularly the event at Merrylands, which is the site of the Cooee March commemoration. These ceremonies have made Anzac Day so much more pertinent to our community.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:46): By leave: As the granddaughter of two Second World War servicemen and members of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force, I congratulate the member for Wagga Wagga on moving this motion. Being raised in part by veterans has been an important feature of my life. We can never forget the war service and sacrifice of earlier generations. The three wonderful local RSL branches at North Sydney, Kirribilli and Mosman hold a number of ceremonies on the north shore to commemorate Anzac Day, and I will be joining them in attending a number of different events this year. There will be moving services at Kirribilli and Mosman and at Cremorne Synagogue. Dawn services will be held at Mosman at Georges Heights, which I attended last year, and at North Sydney, which I will attend this year at the Cenotaph. I was very pleased to be able to obtain \$10,000 for the upgrade of the North Sydney Cenotaph and for the Crows Nest Uniting Church to upgrade its rolls of honour, which commemorate our servicemen and servicewomen. As we stand here overlooked by those who lost their lives in war, I acknowledge and thank the Anzacs and every other generation of servicemen and servicewomen for their sacrifice.

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (12:48): In reply: I thank the members for the electorates of Lakemba, Manly, Fairfield, Miranda, Wyong, Myall Lakes, Granville, and North Shore for their considered contributions to this debate. I will focus on a couple of comments made by members. The youngest soldier reported to have served in battle for Australia was Jim Martin, who was born in January 1901 and perished on 25 October 1915 at Gallipoli at 14 years of age. The member for Lakemba referred to the Nek, a battle involving the Light Horse Brigade. Of the 600 horsemen, minus their horses because of the terrain, 372 were killed. The area became known as Godley's abattoir.

The member for Manly raised issues relating to young soldiers who have suffered post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD]. The Liberal-Nationals Government has established a veterans employment program. Recently I was proud to join Caroline Mackaness, the Director of Veterans Affairs at the Department of Justice, and her staff in Canberra when she received the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Sector Management for recruitment in the veterans employment program. This is a prestigious award, and New South Wales leads the way in this area. The Government set a target of employing 200 people over this term of government. We have employed more than 530 people, and by the end of this term we expect to have employed more than 700 former veterans in the public sector.

The member for Miranda referred to Australia's involvement during times of war in the Greek islands and her heritage relating to the island of Lemnos. I thank her for her contribution. The member for Wyong mentioned that a memorial statue was being built to honour his relative Duncan Chapman. It is important for communities to honour people in such a way. Communities are building statues and memorials right across Australia, and particularly in New South Wales with the assistance of the Government through grants and programs. In Tumut, a memorial statue is being constructed for Corporal Jack Ryan, who won the Victoria Cross.

In his contribution to the debate, the member for Granville spoke about connections with local identities. Families all across New South Wales, Australia and the world are reconnecting with loved ones—family members whose service and sacrifices have been lost in the mists of time. It is heartening to see people rediscovering the service given by those men and women. They are learning about their aunties and uncles—or great aunties and great uncles—who served their country and recognising the men and women who have served in one of the many theatres of war that this country has acted in, from the time of the Boer War in South Africa through to today.

The member for North Shore mentioned the good work that is being done through government grants. That will continue in the lead-up to the Centenary of Anzac, when the final piece of the Anzac War Memorial is opened. The memorial was built in memory of those who served in "the war to end all wars". Sadly, that war did not end all wars. From the sentiment that has been expressed here today, I acknowledge that all members understand the sacrifice that was made and the need for us all to work for peace. I thank members for participating in the debate, and I commend the motion to the House. Lest we forget.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MATILDAS HOME BASE PROPOSAL

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (12:53): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that the Australian women's soccer team, the Matildas, played at the Hunter Stadium before a record crowd of 16,829 people in their 3-2 win over Brazil on 19 September 2017.
- (2) Notes that the member for Wallsend supports Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes' offer to make Newcastle the Matildas' home base, a plan that brings economic and cultural benefits to the Hunter.
- (3) Urges the Minister for Sport to consider putting Newcastle forward as the home base for the Matildas.

I begin by saying that last night the Matildas thrashed Vietnam 8-nil. Australia is well and truly on track in the Asian Cup campaign. Australia's team rocketed to the top of group B, and now our thoughts turn to the game against Japan tomorrow night. We all remember the A-League slogan, "Ninety minutes, 90 emotions". It is the perfect description of a football match, especially the showdown in Newcastle on 19 September 2017 between our Matildas and Brazil. The Matildas put on an incredible show. After sacrificing a goal in the first minute, they came back for a 3-2 win. It was an electrifying game and a true contest between two sides at peak performance. Superstar striker Sam Kerr proved she is one of the best athletes in the game. The team is one of the best, if not the best, in the world. Coach Alen Stajcic told the *Newcastle Herald*:

I thought the second half we completely dominated the game and started picking them apart and created probably more chances than the two we scored.

He went on:

I think it's good resilience and maturity from the group, even when the game got a bit rough and tumble.

Emily van Egmond, Katrina Gorry, Caitlin Foord, Chloe Logarzo and Sam Kerr were all stand-out players, but the whole side deserves the glory. The victory put the cap on a streak of wins against the Brazilian side and added to the Matildas' impressive win total. The match was something special. Coach Stajcic said:

I think we'll be looking back in 10 years time and saying that this was the week that football really turned in Australia.

To top it all off, the Matildas played to a record-breaking crowd of 16,829 at Newcastle's McDonald Jones Stadium on a Tuesday night. That beats even the stratospheric crowds at the Matildas versus Brazil match in Penrith and comes close to edging out the record for the crowds that watched the Olympic side in 2000. Coach Stajcic said:

To come out on a Tuesday night and have such a big crowd is a testament to how engaging the girls have been.

Given Newcastle's willingness to come out in force to back the Matildas, is it any wonder that locals started to ask me to call for the Matildas to set up a home base in Newcastle? Our city loves sport, particularly football and particularly in the western suburbs. Wallsend is a sporting community and encourages girls and women to get involved. The Matildas would be a perfect fit. Only yesterday I was talking about New Lambton Football Club

and the rise in the number of all-female teams in the western suburbs of Newcastle. It is a great game and all of the young women who play soccer will testify to the fact that it is a woman's sport as well as a bloke's sport. Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes said that having a home base in Newcastle would be "a fantastic idea for the city". She went on:

Particularly given that we have produced so many high quality Australian women footballers, it's a natural breeding ground for that type of talent. So basing their training camps here would be a really natural fit.

Football Federation Australia's Chief Executive Officer David Gallop told the *Newcastle Herald*:

We will continue to look for opportunities to play national team matches in Newcastle as part of our commitment to taking these important events to venues around Australia.

He added that he was very impressed with the turnout that night. Mr Gallop noted Newcastle's long support for football and the Matildas. He said:

We know the players felt the crowd was a big factor in their victory over Brazil.

I agree. I was at the game with my mum and we thought that the atmosphere was wonderful—90 minutes, 90 emotions—and you could see it in each one of the 17,000 faces in the crowd. They roared, they cheered, they held their breaths, and they counted every second. It was wonderful. There was an extraordinary sense of community at McDonald Jones Stadium on that Tuesday night. We will all turn our eyes to the Matildas game tomorrow night against Japan. It will be a tough game; Japan is always at the top of the ladder. I urge people to tune into the game at 11.45 tomorrow night.

I ask the Minister for Sport to seriously consider helping to make Newcastle the home base for the Matildas. That would be a cultural and economic boon to our city in the Hunter as well as to the State, and would cement support for one of the State's most successful international teams. I applaud each and every member of the team, as I know all members of this House do, and every person in the Hunter who came to watch the Matildas triumph so spectacularly. I wish the team all the best for tomorrow night's match. I will appreciate the support that I hope I will have from the Government.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (12:59): I join in debate on the motion moved by the member for Wallsend, which I wish to reiterate:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that the Australian Women's Soccer Team, the Matildas, played at the Hunter Stadium before a record crowd of 16,829 people in their 3-2 win over Brazil on 19 September 2017.
- (2) Notes that the Member for Wallsend supports Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes' offer to make Newcastle the Matildas home base, a plan that brings economic and cultural benefits to the Hunter.
- (3) Urges the Minister for Sport to consider putting Newcastle forward as the home base for the Matildas.

I have good news to share: The New South Wales Government will continue to support the Matildas by making the McDonald Jones Stadium available to host international fixtures or provide the stadium as a training venue, as required. Venues NSW is currently positioning McDonald Jones Stadium as an important piece of sporting and entertainment infrastructure in Newcastle, and is seeking to draw national and international events, as outlined within the Vision for the Hunter Sports and Entertainment Precinct. Venues NSW will continue to work with the Newcastle City Council and Destination NSW to ensure that Newcastle is in the best possible position to compete with other States to host the Westfield Matilda's fixtures.

As has been mentioned, the 2018 Asian Football Confederation [AFC] Women's Asian Cup currently is being played in Jordan. What a result last night for the Matildas, with victory over Vietnam 8-0. As mentioned by the member for Wallsend, the Matildas are preparing to take on Japan tomorrow night and hope to book a spot in next year's FIFA World Cup in France. I take this opportunity to commend my team, Sydney FC Women's League, on making it to the grand final against Melbourne City in February this year. Although defeated 2-0, the team had an outstanding season. Those ladies did a great job and did Sydney very proud. I notice our Chamber assistant, Peter Tuziak—who is a mad FC fan—nodding in agreement. I also take this opportunity to mention the Macarthur Rams Football Club and all the wonderful committee members and volunteers, who give so much to the Macarthur district. The committee works tirelessly to ensure that the young men and women of my community have a fantastic and professional environment in which to play football.

With the indulgence of the member for Wallsend, I give an extra special shout-out to our future Matildas—the Macarthur Rams under 15s girls team: Salma Allie, Mihayla Bilaver, Monique Cassaniti, Jade Constance, Olivia de Pourbaix, Kaitlyn Doan, Samantha Galea, Sienna Hart, Giorgia Lintescu, Breanna McCormack, Melanie Napoli, Aleksia Ostojic, Sophie Patterson, Gabrielle Sarkis, Maddison Sparkes and Grace Stanley. I also mention their wonderful, hardworking manager, Nadine, and—imagine working with

16 14-year-old young ladies—their extremely patient coach, Troy. Nadine and Troy, you do an outstanding job and we really appreciate your efforts with those wonderful young ladies.

The past year has been a watershed for women's sport. Women's teams in netball, the Australian Football League [AFL] and cricket have all had enormous success, with national women's leagues not only having attracted record crowds but also having won unprecedented broadcast deals, television audiences and digital engagement. Late in 2017 rugby union and rugby league announced they will be launching elite competitions in 2018. Coupled with the international success of the Matildas, the Pearls, our female Olympians and our female Commonwealth Games participants are enjoying outstanding success. Each evening, as we watch the Commonwealth Games results televised from Brisbane and the Gold Coast, our sportswomen make us proud. Moreover, opportunities to become professional athletes are improving, with cricket and netball leading the way by offering unprecedented salary packages and conditions.

The rapid rise in the importance, influence and value of female fans has been a distinctive shift in the sports marketing landscape. Sporting codes are realising the commercial and social value of engaging with women and the power of female role models. Examples of the power of female role models are the Ellyse Perrys; the Sam Kerrs, as mentioned by the member for Wallsend; women in the Macarthur Rams first grade team; Hanna Trethewys, who is now playing for the Sydney Thunder; the Sydney Sixers' Lauren Cheatle; and Clara Iemma, who is the daughter of former Premier Morris Iemma. They are outstanding young ladies who are fantastic role models within my local community. I am extremely proud of their involvement in sport.

I commend the member for Wallsend for moving the motion. I assure her of the Government's absolute support in doing whatever is possible to ensure that Newcastle, which already is a fantastic home of sport in the State, fulfils her vision and passion of having as many Matildas games there as is possible. In conclusion, I state for the record that every member of this House supports the endeavours of our young ladies who play sport and those in the future who will be our young women in sport. Whether or not they reach the heights of the Matildas, the Sydney Sixers or the Sydney Thunder, the Government supports them in their quest to be the very best they possibly can be.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (13:06): I also thank the member for Wallsend for raising this matter, and I strongly support her insistence that the Minister for Sport consider putting Newcastle forward as the home base for the Matildas. As a proud father of a young daughter who currently plays football, I certainly agree with the comments made by the member for Camden on the great role models the Matildas are for young women. My daughter was thrilled to go to the McDonald Jones Stadium and see the Matildas play. She was energised and excited—and apparently played a whole lot better the next weekend. I was at that magic game in Newcastle on 19 September last year when the Matildas took on Brazil at the McDonald Jones Stadium. It was a sight to see. Two national teams at the top of their game were playing world-class soccer to a packed stadium in Newcastle. On that Tuesday night game, the Matildas set a new home crowd record with 16,829 fans flocking into the McDonald Jones Stadium to see the Matildas defeat the Brazilians for the third time in just over a month. It looked good, and it felt like this should be the norm.

Newcastle is the State's second largest city. It has the resources and the room to host the Matildas and see them thrive. The Newcastle Jets Women's League is a great example of a team that thrives in our city. Currently the team is third in the table and it is consistently a strong side—although, as a supporter, I could be a little biased. The men's Newcastle Jets also are a very strong force. Currently the team is second on the A-League table. The Jets combined forces are strong teams that live and play in Newcastle and have strong support from the city. The Newcastle Knights also enjoy a strong support network in the city and are currently enjoying excellent wins on the rugby league ladder.

This year the women's Newcastle Knights team has come out as a force to be reckoned with. It took out its first match against the St George Illawarra Dragons with an outstanding 54-10 win. With four successful teams in the Newcastle area, we must be doing something right. The city has the facilities and has proven that when it hosted the AFC Asian Cup in 2015. Newcastle hosted four games at what is now called the McDonald Jones Stadium, including Japan's opening match of the tournament and a semifinal. With strong transport links and a thriving hospitality industry, the games were a great boost to the economy of Newcastle. Currently, the *Newcastle Herald* is running a poll on its website that asks: "Will the Matildas eventually call Newcastle home?" At last count, the poll was running at 73 per cent in the affirmative. As I said, Newcastle loves its sport and loves its home teams even more. If Newcastle was home to the Matildas, the Matildas would be even more loved—more than in any other city in this country. I call on the Minister for Sport to seriously consider helping to make Newcastle the Matildas home base.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:10): I thank the member for Wallsend for moving the motion on the Matildas home base proposal. I am an avid supporter of women's sports and of football. In my own community, football is the number one sport, particularly for young people. My two local football clubs, Mosman

Football Club and North Sydney United Football Club, attract a diverse range of people from young kids to women over 35—such as me—and people up to the age of 45. Mosman Football Club has approximately 2,000 players, which is significant in a community of approximately 30,000 people. The North Shore community has football fever, and it is exciting to contribute to the debate on the member for Wallsend's motion. Other members who have contributed to the debate have already commented on the excitement felt during the Matildas game against Brazil and in more recent games in Newcastle. We wish the team luck for tomorrow's game against Japan.

The New South Wales Government is ensuring that the Matildas can continue to play in Newcastle. The member for Wallsend would be aware that the Government has committed to continuing support for the Matildas by making the McDonald Jones Stadium available to host international fixtures and providing the stadium as a training venue when required. The member might also be aware that the Government has developed a concept plan known as "A Vision for the Hunter Sports & Entertainment Precinct" for the McDonald Jones Stadium and the surrounding precinct. The plan aims to increase visitation, improve participation opportunities and ensure a better game day and entertainment experience—all elements of what the member for Wallsend is calling for in ensuring that the Government allows Newcastle to have the tourism benefits of these fantastic sporting events.

The plan aims to provide the foundation for a coordinated and staged development strategy. The precinct includes McDonald Jones Stadium, Newcastle Entertainment Centre and the showground, along with other commercial, sporting and entertainment facilities within the 63 hectares of government-owned land. The plan was released in 2017 and community consultation closed late last year. During the consultation period, Venues NSW received more than 465 submissions and engaged with more than 350 community members through roundtables, pop-up displays, and an open house forum. Feedback from the consultation is now being used to refine the concept plan and to identify any alternative options for the precinct for further consideration. The plan proposes new uses to boost Newcastle's offering as a sporting, entertainment and tourism destination.

The Government is investing significantly in Newcastle's infrastructure and the revitalisation of the city and will continue to do so in the future. The plan proposes a new multipurpose entertainment and convention centre; a consolidated multipurpose sports facility; an event plaza; a 3.5 star hotel; a multistorey car park; a mixture of residential, retail and commercial development on any surplus land; and improved green spaces with landscaped walkways and cycle pathways that provide better connections within and to the precinct. Historically, facilities within the precinct have developed separately and over time in an ad-hoc manner, and the land is under-utilised. The Hunter sports and entertainment precinct is a key piece of regional infrastructure that will contribute to broader economic and social wellbeing. A revitalised precinct is recognised as having great potential to deliver enhanced economic and social benefits to the region. I once again congratulate the member for Wallsend for raising this important motion and I wish the Matildas good luck in their game against Japan tomorrow.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:14): The Matildas chicks so rock. I celebrate women's sport and all it stands for on behalf of all of us. Wearing the green and gold is the best achievement for an athlete, and wearing it as part of a team in a magical bond of sisterhood that only a team of women could know is incredible. I admire all that the Matildas stand for in Australia and what they bring to the hearts of so many people. They are our heroes. Newcastle stood up and cheered for them when they played against Brazil last September—16,829 people on a Tuesday—and they beat Brazil 3-2. I pay compliments to Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes, who offered to make the Matildas home base in Newcastle—good on her. It is good to hear that the Government is talking about shifting more sporting events into regional New South Wales. The Government should bring some more to Gosford. As a fan of football—go the mighty Mariners!—I appreciate the community unity and economic and cultural benefits that landing the Matildas training ground in Newcastle would bring to Newcastle and the Hunter.

For us fans, the Mariners have brought and continue to bring the Central Coast a sense of pride and unity. I commend and thank the team owner and management for their ongoing commitment to the Central Coast. I welcome our new coach, Mike Mulvey, who was announced last night—bring on next season. I love sitting in the stadium and cheering on the Mariners alongside all of the other coasties fans, as well as those fans who drive in from outside of the coast. I send a shout-out to Michael Pilbrow, who regularly drives from Yass to cheer the green and gold. Aside from the ticket sales and goals, we rarely hear about the important value of sport in fostering positive social change. Sport engages people, fosters teamwork, releases endorphins, and teaches young people important life lessons about hard work, dedication and relying on others.

The member for Newcastle, member for Camden, member for Wallsend and member for North Shore mentioned the benefits of family and community members participating in and enjoying being part of that community celebration. On the Central Coast, the kids who attend the International Football and Tennis School, where the responsibility for learning is handed back to the student, sneak in more sport every day. They are very happy to be participating in sport and education. We learn communication, goal setting, mateship and leadership

skills and forge friendships and networks that continue well beyond the field of play. On that note, I congratulate female athletes around the world, who are role models to many young people in our community. There are real benefits for our society—for example, the member for Newcastle's daughter stepping up at her next game because she knows she can be something greater, having seen a role model do it right in front of her.

Most of all, I take my hat off to the Matildas for playing a vital part in promoting gender equality and health promotion for women in sport. I am all for supporting sporting glory outside the city of Sydney. The people of Newcastle and the Central Coast are disappointed with the Sydney stadiums splurge and would like to see more splurges in our communities. Let us get that investment to get the Matildas relocated out of the crazy Sydney traffic and delayed and packed trains to and from Sydney sporting events and see the Matildas play regularly in front of huge crowds. The New South Wales Government and Minister for Sport should put their support into real action in regional areas. Let us see the investment in women's sport. Go the Matildas. It might not look likely, but I am doing backflips next to Sam Kerr inside of my head—well done.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (13:18): The Matildas game against Brazil in Penrith was sold out almost two weeks in advance of the game. This followed world-class performances by the Matildas to beat the United States, Japan and Brazil at the Tournament of Nations in the United States of America, which captured the attention of football fans right across this country. They went on to win 2-1 in Penrith and 3-2 in Newcastle—what great results. The 2018 AFC Women's Asian Cup is currently being played in Jordan, and the Matildas are currently top of group B following their win over Vietnam. I take this opportunity to wish the Matildas all the best for the rest of the 2018 AFC Women's Asian Cup.

The New South Wales Government is investing hundreds of millions of dollars in community sport facilities, and some of this investment has been quite controversial. I am proud to say that members on this side of the House support stadia and investment in sporting infrastructure. Today the greater Sydney sports facility fund, which will provide \$100 million over three years, was announced. The fund has been established to maximise the provision and efficiency of sport infrastructure across greater Sydney. The fund will facilitate investment in new and existing sport infrastructure, so that communities can enjoy and participate in sport and physical activity at all levels. The Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund has been allocated \$100 million to increase the number and standard of regional sporting facilities, which is a big win.

An additional \$100 million has also been announced for sports projects as part of the second round of the Stronger Country Communities Fund. Both funds form part of the broader \$1.3 billion Regional Growth Fund. Any perception that this Government is not investing in sporting infrastructure, especially in regional areas, is a fallacy. We also continue to run the Local Sport Grant Program, Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program and the Surf Club Facility Program. This year we will also be introducing a T20 World Cup Legacy Funding Program for community cricket facilities, which was part of the New South Wales Government's bid to secure matches for the International Cricket Council World T20 in New South Wales.

This Government has also already delivered for a number of community facilities including: \$27 million towards the state-of-the-art Netball Central facility which will support the game at all levels, from grassroots players through to elite teams; \$5 million for Valentine Sports Park, with the redevelopment including upgrades to playing fields, an expansion of the Futsal gymnasium and a new home for Football NSW; \$4.25 million for the next stage of development of the Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence in Tamworth, which offers high quality modern facilities for multiple sports; \$3 million for an upgrade of Plum Park on the Central Coast, with works undertaken including an upgrade of the fields, upgraded amenities and upgrades to the grandstand; \$2.2 million for my beloved Lambert Park in Leichhardt, with works undertaken at the complex including a new full-size synthetic football pitch, new perimeter fencing, new warm-up gym, change rooms and office facilities as well as grandstand modifications.

The list goes on with \$500,000 for Centenary Park in Croydon, \$250,000 to improve the capacity and usage of Maitland Showground's Grandstand, and \$225,000 for Gosford City Council to upgrade the amenities at McEvoy Park in Umina. This Government is delivering for all of New South Wales when it comes to sport, from the grassroots all the way to high-performance stadia.

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (13:22): In reply: I thank the member for Camden, the member for Newcastle, the member for North Shore, the member for Gosford and the member for Drummoyne for contributing to this positive debate. I know many members from all sides of the House wanted to contribute to this debate and congratulate the Matildas, because we all love the Matildas for being great role models for Australia and for women. We will be thinking of them tomorrow night, as we will be thinking of the Knights when they play Melbourne City. I adore the member for Gosford, but I can tell her that the Mariners have no chance on Saturday night. We are looking forward to the Knight's twenty-seventh win, and I note that we played our grand final qualifier at McDonald Jones Stadium. We do not yet know who we will play; Peter Tuziak

probably has some idea because he is the go-to man on football. Although he supports Sydney Football Club, we still love Peter and acknowledge that he does a great job.

The member for Camden contributes to a lot of debates in this place, and his contributions are always interesting and entertaining. I was pleased to hear that Venues NSW has plans for hosting future matches and practice matches of the Matildas. I applaud him for talking to Newcastle City Council about those plans, but the member for Newcastle and I would be really keen to be involved in those discussions. The member for Camden spoke of his support for women athletes at the Commonwealth Games, and we all cheer on our athletes. The member for Newcastle spoke of his daughter being a big fan of the Matildas, and I know she is passionate about soccer. She is tall and has the right physique for playing soccer, so I can see her as a future Matilda. The member for Newcastle was at the packed stadium for the match, and I know he was keen to contribute to today's debate. He is a great supporter of McDonald Jones Stadium, the Knights and the Jets, along with all women's sports.

The member for North Shore is also a big fan of women in sport. She spoke about the Government's plans for McDonald Jones hosting international fixtures of the Matildas. The member for Newcastle and I would be keen to hear the details of these plans, because we want to contribute to the planning process. The member for Gosford is a huge sports fan. She is right that we need to make sure the Central Coast gets a guernsey for future events. We wish the Mariners all the best, because it is a great team and my second favourite after the Jets. I know the Jets will get up against Sydney FC. The member for Drummoyne has shown his support for women in sport. He outlined government initiatives for community facilities, including in the Wallsend and Newcastle electorates and on the Central Coast, and we welcome those facilities. I commend the motion to the House.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

SOLDIER ON MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:27): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Soldier On, in particular its CEO John Bale, on the expansion of its services to coincide with Mental Health Month.
- (2) Recognises the important work of current and former staff from the Commonwealth departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Immigration, Attorney-General, the Australian Federal Police and Australian Border Force who, in conjunction with the Australian Defence Force, play a vital role in national security.
- (3) Commends Soldier On for providing mental health and support services to current and former members of those agencies and looks forward to welcoming Soldier On to Manly.

As we approach the end of the final year of the Centenary of Anzac 2014-18, it is appropriate that we consider the legacy of our Anzacs and the role that we play as a community in recognising and supporting those who have served our country and the families who have supported members of our defence forces. Earlier today the Parliamentary Secretary for Veterans Affairs and member for Wagga Wagga moved a motion to commemorate the Centenary of Anzac, and it is timely that I move this motion in the House. Soldier On is a fantastic organisation that provides vital services and support to our contemporary veterans. Prior to becoming a member of Parliament I volunteered to help Soldier On by hosting a fundraising barbecue in November.

It is unique as an organisation in that it focuses on the support that younger veterans need and deserve by providing early intervention services, many of which centre on social connectedness. Its mission is to work side by side with those who have served and protected Australia and their families through the HELP model and it aims to help individuals to build resilience and create meaningful connections with family, community and employers. HELP stands for health and wellbeing, employment, learning, and participation. The participation aspect of the model includes social activities and programs focused on connections with family, friends and the broader community, and volunteering and sports programs.

In the past we understood the sacrifices of returned service men and women because their wounds were mostly physical and therefore visible. Following the Great War we came to see that war could inflict horrific injuries on a mass scale. Over time the nature of the conflicts we have been involved in have changed dramatically. We now understand the devastating impact that war can have on the mental state of our veterans. Perhaps this can be best appreciated by acknowledging the rather shameful statistic that we have now lost more young veterans to suicide than in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. If that does not drive home the importance of an organisation like Soldier On and its work I do not know what does.

A report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in collaboration with the Department of Veterans' Affairs found that while individuals who are currently serving in the military are less likely to take their own lives than the Australian public, the main problem comes after people have left the Australian Defence Force. Men aged between 18 and 24 who are no longer serving are twice as likely to take their own lives as someone of the same age in the general population. Those sorts of statistics show the importance of supporting organisations such as Soldier On.

But there is much to be hopeful about. During the by-election I made a commitment to help Soldier On to secure a site at the old School of Artillery at North Head. That has now been done. It is an appropriate reuse of the land that speaks to both the historical nature of the old School of Artillery as well as the sanctuary setting of North Head. It was great to open the facility one afternoon in January with the Governor and other dignitaries. We had a fantastic tour around the site where a number of services will be provided to help rehabilitate modern and young veterans and provide support to them and their families.

In addition, more than 500 veterans have found jobs in the New South Wales public sector through the Veterans' Employment Program. Importantly, the program deals with the critical point of their transition from the military into public life. Through the program we have managed to demonstrate that our young veterans have skills that are directly applicable to civilian life. In addition to that, the Invictus Games are coming to Sydney in October. The games have a fantastic program called Make Your Mark, which is about ensuring that the legacy of the Invictus Games endures beyond the event. It is about helping people understand that physical activity and mental health are connected.

We can learn much from the way in which many of our modern veterans have dealt with the mental and physical horrors of war. It does not need to be strenuous exercise, but getting out and about, going for a walk and talking with friends is beneficial. We can learn many lessons from our veterans that we can apply to supporting the mental health of others in our community. I congratulate Chief Executive Officer John Bale on his work. He is a tremendous leader of Soldier On, which does a fantastic job. Our community is incredibly proud to welcome Soldier On to Manly. We look forward to embracing all that it does and working together with it. I thoroughly commend my motion to the House.

Debate interrupted.

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

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome everybody in the gallery this afternoon. I welcome probably the incoming Speaker of the South Australian House of Assembly, member for Hartley and "dragon-slayer", Mr Vincent Tarzia, guest of the Speaker and the member for Kiama. I wish him good luck in his future endeavours, should he be elected. I also welcome Reverend Colin Watson of St Stephens Normanhurst Anglican Church, guest of the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation and member for Hornsby. I also acknowledge representatives from a number of organisations attending Parliament to support deaf students, including Hear For You, the Deaf Society, the Shepherd Centre, Cochlear, the Royal Institute of Deaf and Blind Children, Hearing Loop Australia, and Sound Scouts, guests of the member for North Shore. Also in the gallery today we have the Hon. Tim Fischer, former Deputy Prime Minister and guest of the member for Wagga Wagga.

Documents

INSPECTOR OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Reports

The SPEAKER: I table, in accordance with section 78 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1989, the following reports of the Inspector of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, entitled:

- (1) "Report concerning a Complaint by Mr Jeffrey McCloy about the conduct of the Independent Commission Against Corruption in Operation Spicer," dated 12 April 2018.
- (2) "Report and Supplementary Report concerning a Complaint by Mr John Atkinson about the conduct of the Independent Commission Against Corruption in Operation Jasper, dated 12 April 2018.

I order that the reports be printed.

SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER**Reports**

The SPEAKER: I table, in accordance with section 28 of the Small Business Commissioner Act 2018, a report of the Small Business Commissioner for 2017. I order that the report be printed.

NSW CHILD DEATH REVIEW TEAM**Reports**

The SPEAKER: I table, in accordance with section 341 of the Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993, a report of the Child Death Review Team, entitled "Spatial analysis of the child deaths in New South Wales", dated April 2018. I order that the report be printed.

*Question Time***SYDNEY CBD LIGHT RAIL PROJECT**

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:21): My question is directed to the Premier. Why is the Premier prepared to pay tens of millions of dollars in compensation to professional sports teams while she builds them a new stadium but still refuses to pay any compensation to Amelia Birch, whose small business, the Book Kitchen, has gone into liquidation because of her Government's Sydney light rail project?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:21): First, what does the Leader of the Opposition have against improving our sporting facilities across the State?

The SPEAKER: Order! Yesterday the Deputy Speaker asked many Opposition members to remove themselves from the Chamber. Many more will be asked to remove themselves from the Chamber today if they continue to interject. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Leader of the Opposition refuses to accept that New South Wales cannot afford to fall behind when it comes to our sporting infrastructure. He says that he supports a rectangular stadium at ANZ, that he supports Parramatta Stadium, that he is keeping his options open for Allianz, yet he still does not have a position. He should tell us what his position is.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: On the radio the Leader of the Opposition says that he supports it, but now he says that he does not. What is his position?

The SPEAKER: There is no need for the member for Port Stephens to interject.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: What does the New South Wales Labor Party have against our Government putting in \$200 million for regional sporting facilities or \$100 million against local sporting facilities?

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown will come to order. His interjection was out of character.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: In relation to the light rail route and businesses, we appreciate that some businesses are doing it tough and I understand from the Minister for Transport that about 50 businesses have been given assistance. The Leader of the Opposition asked a question. Do those opposite want to hear the answer?

The SPEAKER: Order! No, they do not. They want to interject, but if they do they will be asked to remove themselves from the Chamber. The member for Rockdale is being silly.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: You said he is being silly—

The SPEAKER: Yes, he is. The member for Maitland cannot see what the member for Rockdale is doing. If the member for Maitland continues to argue with me she will be asked to remove herself from the Chamber for the second day in a row. I will stop the clock if interjections continue. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: If businesses feel they need rental support or they are facing undue hardship, they can contact the Government. We have made that amply clear to them. I understand that about 50 businesses have received support. We appreciate the patience of the community during all major projects. Remember, we are the Government that brought in stronger recommendations to support those businesses and individuals who have their properties compulsorily acquired during the construction of major projects. We appreciate that, which is why we have increased provisions for all those things. The Government also

appreciates that those opposite did not have these challenges because they did not build anything. They were good at cancelling projects.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They were good at cancelling projects, but were not very good at delivering anything. I again—

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Maitland to order for the first time. I direct the Clerk to stop the clock. One question in and the level of interjections is completely unacceptable. I will continue to stop the clock until the House is quiet and comes to order. The clock will be stopped for however long it takes. I suggest that Government members do not make a noise or interject either. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say again to those businesses that feel impacted, or to any individual who feels they are being adversely impacted: Please contact the Government because we have various processes through we can support the business community. I stress that again today. As I said, the Government has already supported several businesses along that route. The Government has additional information from other businesses that are recording the tripling of foot traffic. Some businesses are already experiencing an increase in their business. We know when the project is finished that foot traffic will increase significantly and boost opportunities for businesses. In the meantime—

The SPEAKER: The member for Maitland will cease interjecting.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Those on the other side of the House should not say they care about business.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The question was about the response—

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

Ms Jenny Aitchison: The question was about the response to Amelia Birch.

The SPEAKER: And the Premier has been relevant to the question she was asked. The member for Maitland interjects so much that sometimes she does not hear what the Premier is saying. I suggest that the member—

Ms Jenny Aitchison: I have not heard her say what she is saying to Amelia Birch.

The SPEAKER: If the member for Maitland argues with me she will be asked to remove herself from the Chamber. Arguing with me is the worst thing the member can do.

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:27): I thank the Premier for her answer. I ask a supplementary question. Amelia Birch is in the gallery today. She has written to the Government, but the Government has refused to give her any assistance whatsoever.

The SPEAKER: Is there a question?

Mr LUKE FOLEY: Why?

The SPEAKER: Order! That is the question, is it? Why?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:27): Madam Speaker—

The SPEAKER: I direct the Clerk to stop the clock. The member for Keira and the Minister for Corrections will stop arguing across the table. It is unbecoming.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: There is a process in place and the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure has said that he is more than happy to meet with Ms Birch.

[*Interruption*]

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has had his opportunity to ask his question.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Minister is more than happy with her. We request businesses to provide us with information when they are requesting support and assistance, as is the case. If Ms Birch has information she wants to present to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure he will make himself available. I say to any person who feels impacted—

[*Interruption*]

The SPEAKER: Order! The member Cessnock knows it is not his turn. I direct the Clerk to stop the clock. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As I was saying, if people want to go through the processes we have set up, they are welcome to do so. The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure has just said to me that he is more than happy to meet with Ms Birch.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 129. Amelia Birch has gone through the process.

The SPEAKER: This is entirely irrelevant.

Ms Jodi McKay: Will the Premier meet with her after question time?

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

Ms Jodi McKay: Will the Premier talk to her?

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

Ms Jodi McKay: Will the Premier offer her an apology?

The SPEAKER: I place the member for Strathfield on two calls to order for twice refusing my directions.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The member for Maroubra should be very, very careful about not knowing the full facts or circumstances. I would not be getting up today, if I were the member for Maroubra. If the member for Maroubra genuinely cared about people affected he would ask them to contact the Government, contact the Minister, and we will be—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order, including the member for Gosford. Does she want to be asked to remove herself from the Chamber for the second day in a row?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As I said, once this project is completed, as all our projects are completed, it will be a huge boost for the business community. It will transform the community. I will place some very interesting quotes on the record. Recently this was said, "Here we are on the corner of George and Martin Place where the light rail will be running up and down. They are going to make it a boulevard. It sounds fantastic. They don't muck around here; they just get in and do it. We're building tomorrow's Sydney." That was said by the Labor candidate for the Lord Mayoralty of Brisbane.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bankstown will come to order. The member for Swansea will come to order and stop shrieking. I call the member for Keira to order for the second time. If he is called to order once more, he will be asked to remove himself from the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Another comment is, "I think this is going to be great for the future of Sydney. Having light rail you can see all the way down our main street. George Street is going to really change the face of Sydney. It will mean there is better integration between light rail, public transport, green spaces. It will leave more room for cycling and walking, et cetera, et cetera. It will activate our businesses around our central open public space."

The SPEAKER: There is far too much noise coming from Opposition benches.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: That was from Linda Scott, a Labor councillor on the City of Sydney Council. We also note another quote, which says, "We need to examine further how modern trams might operate in this city, including in the long term the potential for a Central Station to Circular Quay link to fit in with the broader tram network in urban areas. Our own investigations show that doing nothing is not an option." Guess who said that? It was the Labor Minister for Planning and Environment in 2004. I make this point: Even the Opposition side of politics knows what is in the best interests of our city and our State. We will build the infrastructure. We will ensure our communities have the infrastructure they need.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time. She will cease interjecting. It is not the turn of the member for Newcastle. I call the member for Newcastle to order for the second time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Opposition did not support the light rail; now they do. They want even more extensions. We are the builders. We are the party of the workers. They are the wreckers.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has completed her answer.

URBAN GREEN SPACE

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (14:32): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government improving open and green spaces across Sydney creating better communities and improving the quality of life for families?

The SPEAKER: Surely there is no objection to this question from the member for Port Stephens.

Ms Kate Washington: She sold my wetlands.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is a most inappropriate interjection. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the second time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:32): I thank the member for Coogee for his question and I appreciate how important open space is to his community. He represents an urban environment where there is open space, but the Government takes every opportunity to improve the quality of that open space. Today, together with the member for Coogee and the Minister for Sport I was pleased to announce that the Government is committing an extra \$100 million to upgrade 120 sporting facilities across Greater Sydney to make sure that synthetic surfaces, lighting and other amenities can be paid for through this fund. We appreciate that not only do communities want to use the open space available, but also they rely on this extra funding to ensure that they can use these facilities before and after school, before and after work, on the weekends, and for all months of the year.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. Members who are not interested in what the Premier is saying can leave the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am very pleased that this caps off a week for us in announcing a huge Open Space Strategy. On Monday, we began talking about land that we can acquire to give back to the community where possible. We have already done this in several parts of Western Sydney and in regional areas, and we will continue to do it. If we see opportunities to acquire land and keep it for the community forever in terms of open space, we will do that. We will also commit \$20 million for upgrading playgrounds. This funding will support about 200 new playgrounds or upgrades to existing playgrounds throughout Greater Sydney. We know how much our communities will appreciate those. Many of them are inclusive playgrounds to ensure that those with different abilities are able to use them as well. We are very pleased to announce, with the Minister for Planning, that we will be planting 5 million trees—380,000 trees every year—to ensure that we have the greenest possible city.

It is very important to us to know that we are setting up our city and our State for the future. That means having greener suburbs but also, where possible, where we are building car parks or other infrastructure, any type of greenery on that infrastructure is deeply appreciated. Not only is this Government a strong economic manager, not only is it delivering the infrastructure our community needs, but it is also accepting, acknowledging and taking action on what we call liveability. All of our suburbs and communities want to know that they have the opportunity to have the best environment they can have. That is not just being able to get to and from work efficiently; it is not just being able to go to the local school or hospital for world's best practice health care or education; it is also about making sure we have those cultural facilities and environmental opportunities that give people so much pleasure. As a Government, that is very important to us.

This morning's announcement is critical for a number of reasons. Of course, we want to incentivise our young people, but also people of all ages, to lead more active and healthy outdoor lifestyles. If there is natural grass on a sporting oval, communities are often unable to use it if there has been rain or other circumstances. Sometimes synthetic turf on an oval can make the difference between that oval being used for a couple of hours a week and being used virtually at any time, all seasons of the year. Many local facilities do not have amenities—for example, change rooms or kiosks—that enhance sporting activities. Some communities might need lighting. But this enhancement today is extremely important to how local communities view their ability to use that open space. This is on top of what we have announced for rural and regional New South Wales. The Deputy Premier and the Minister for Sport recently announced \$200 million for communities outside of Sydney that want to improve their local sporting facilities.

For many communities outside of Sydney, not only are they sports-crazy communities, but they also appreciate that hosting greater events attracts visitors and enables their communities to grow and thrive. Our announcement today again demonstrates our ability as a Government to really appreciate what our citizens want from us. Our citizens want to know that we are building for the future, they want to know that we have a plan, and they also want to know that we care about their quality of life. Regarding Western Sydney, the Minister for Planning and the Minister for Western Sydney have commented about additional tree canopy. No other State Government in Australia has talked about tree canopy. The member for Port Stephens does not seem interested in trees or tree canopy. She does not care about environmental issues. She cannot hear well either.

The SPEAKER: I reiterate to the member for Port Stephens that if she is not interested in the subject matter, she can leave the Chamber. She is either interjecting or having another conversation, so she is not interested and should leave the Chamber. We would all be much relieved if she did so.

[Extension of time]

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I thank the member for Coogee for allowing me some extra time, because I am extremely proud of the fact that no other State Government has ever had a target for tree canopy. The Greater Sydney Commission set us some targets, and this week the Minister for Planning and I, on behalf of the people of New South Wales, were happy to not only accept those targets but also to act on them. We are committing \$38 million to provide extra tree canopy across Greater Sydney. For the people of Western Sydney, it makes a big difference: the more trees there are, the greater the reduction in temperatures. They will assist to promote healthier lifestyles and improve air quality. We appreciate what that means. We have a target of 40 per cent—raising the target from the current figure of 16 per cent tree canopy coverage to 40 per cent by the time that period is finished.

Our Open Space Strategy is not just about today; it is about the future, but also making sure it is multi-pronged. We are not just looking at it from one angle; we are looking at it from all opportunities. This week has been a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate to our communities, whether in Sydney or in our rural and regional areas, that we care deeply about the kind of communities in which they live. We want to see them not just survive, but thrive, and for everybody to feel proud of where they live and to feel comfortable with where they live. That is why open space, greenery and trees make a huge difference for us. I thank members who have already given positive feedback about what this means to their communities. To the people of New South Wales, I say that we will continue to invest in them and their communities, because for us quality of life and amenity is such a critical factor.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (14:40): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. How is the New South Wales Government's \$80 billion infrastructure pipeline creating housing and other building opportunities, and are there any alternative plans?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (14:40): I thank the member for Riverstone for his question. With an infrastructure program that has delivered more than \$110 billion since this Government came to office—and with \$80 billion to be delivered in the next four years—one of the great advantages of that infrastructure is supporting housing growth. It is very important to note that this Government is about investing in infrastructure to support that housing growth and not allowing major development to happen across the State without that infrastructure support.

One of the greatest examples—where we saw a community the size of Canberra pop up—is, of course, in that backyard in north-west Sydney, where no train line built was built. For that reason, this Government has got on and is now delivering the Metro North West, which is coming into operation next year. We are supporting that community to grow in the way that it should into the future. This will deliver a train every couple of minutes—a turn-up-and-go service—to those communities. We are getting on with the job of extending the Metro North West under the city and out to the south-west to Bankstown. This is an important part of supporting the communities in that corridor in terms of their growth and supporting housing, particularly when affordable housing has been a critical issue over a very long period of time. The conversion of the T3 line between Sydenham and Bankstown will support those communities with a turn-up-and-go train service—a train every four minutes.

The SPEAKER: Members will resume their seats and stop wandering around the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It is also the catalyst for renewing 11 stations and improving accessibility at five of them. It is very important to integrate urban planning and transport planning. That is why the Minister for Planning has worked hard on a corridor strategy, particularly in the south-west, to ensure that there is appropriate and balanced development along that corridor over the next 20 years. It has to be supported with good infrastructure. That is why not only is the Sydney to Bankstown corridor about building capacity along that train line, but it also unlocks greater potential at the Sydenham junction, which is like a spaghetti junction. The train lines are intertwined in a way that does not allow the throughput to give greater capacity on lines such as the T8 and T4, and particularly the line out to Campbelltown. We are investing in this way for a very deliberate reason.

We are somewhat bewildered by Labor's opposition and decision to not proceed as part of its approach—I would not describe it as a policy, because I do not think that cancelling projects is a policy. We have to see that south-west line converted. The other day I referenced Morris Iemma about this, but it is interesting that the Labor Mayor of Canterbury Bankstown is also saying, "This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. It's a game-changer

for Bankstown, because it will put us on the map and reinforce our strategic position in metropolitan Sydney." That is from a Labor mayor. The key point is that we have to have good development alongside our infrastructure projects that we are building. On the matter of development, the story in today's *Daily Telegraph* about the member for Maroubra was interesting, was it not? I note that the Leader of the Opposition ran out of the Chamber when I started to answer this question.

Mr David Harris: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! I could not hear the Minister, which will make it difficult for me to rule on the point of order. What is the member's point of order?

Mr David Harris: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73. There are other avenues available to the Minister: He may move a substantive motion if he wants to talk about people on this side of the House in an unfavourable manner.

The SPEAKER: Order! I am sure the Minister is aware of that. Should he go down that path, he is aware of those options. But at present he has not contravened any standing order.

Mr David Harris: He is going down that path, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wyong does not know that. The Minister has the call.

[*Extension of time*]

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Development across the city is of interest to the House, and of particular interest to the Leader of the Opposition. He issued a press statement in February last year in which he used some interesting and choice words to describe one member on this side of the House.

Ms Jodi McKay: What were they?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The member for Strathfield asks what those words were. It is all very well for those opposite to take one stance for themselves—the Labor way—while holding differing views on standards for other people. To have the Leader of the Opposition call on members of the Government to be stood aside over allegations is interesting. Yet this morning the Leader of the Opposition failed to get the member for Maroubra to do the right thing.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will not tell the Minister to sit down. The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Liverpool has the call.

Mr Paul Lynch: My point of order is taken under the Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. Members will come to order so that the member for Liverpool can take his point of order. The member for Liverpool has the call.

Mr Paul Lynch: First, whatever the Minister is now doing is in no way, shape or form relevant to the question that he was asked. Secondly, given the way the Minister cavilled at the Speaker's ruling, his behaviour is clearly in breach of standing orders.

The SPEAKER: Order! I take the point of order on board. I will hear further from the Minister.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Those opposite have one rule for themselves, a protection racket around the member for Maroubra—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The reality is the member for Maroubra stood in this place on 12 occasions calling for people on this side of the House to resign, and he is not prepared to apply the same standard to himself over an illegal donation that appeared in the press this morning. That is the reality.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has concluded his answer. The member for Campbelltown will come to order. Many members believe they are experts, but they are not. Opposition members did not give their own member an opportunity to take a valid point of order. Members who interject while I am speaking will be removed from the Chamber. The level of interjections prevented me from hearing the Minister for much of his answer. That makes it very difficult for me to rule on points of order.

SYDNEY CBD LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:48): My question is directed to the Premier. The 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy prepared by former Liberal Premier Nick Greiner warned that a central business district light rail could "impose significant costs and delays" and that "an ill-considered light rail plan can lead to years of disruption and financial disaster". Given the disaster that is unfolding with the Government's light rail project, does the Premier regret not listening to her mentor, the former Premier?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:49): I welcome this question because the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy also said that we should not build the North West Rail Link. It also suggested we should build more toll roads and not invest in public transport. I do not apologise that this Government is investing more—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting or they will be removed from the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: —in public transport than any other government in this State's history. We are spending \$20 million on the metro and it will start in the north-west. Next year we look forward to having people use that service. That is why I cannot understand why the Labor Party does not support the metro going to Bankstown, because the people of Bankstown want it.

[*Interruption*]

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Infrastructure NSW back in 2012—and former Premier Greiner acknowledges this—wanted us to invest all our money in toll roads. It did not want us to invest in public transport.

Mr Jamie Parker: And now he is working for Transurban.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Balmain will come to order. This is not a debate.

Ms Jenny Leong: He is an expert.

The SPEAKER: I accept that he may be an expert, but this is not a debate.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: This Government has the vision to know that we need to invest in public transport. Cities around the world that have the capacity and the ability are investing in heavy rail, in metro rail and also in light rail. I say to those opposite: In 2012, we put out a transport master plan that listed 700 projects. Guess how many of those have been completed already? More than 400. That was a 20-year strategy and we have already completed more than 400 projects. Guess what else? More than 200 of those projects are under construction and about 200 of them are under planning. A few weeks ago, we updated the community on how we are going. We are so far ahead of where we said—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock will resume his seat. He will cease wandering around the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: In 2012 we made a commitment to the people of New South Wales about a 20-year transport and roads plan. We have delivered against that plan—in fact, not only have we delivered against it but also we have exceeded against delivery. I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved to date and of what we have got going. I congratulate the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and the Minister for Planning as well as Infrastructure NSW and the Greater Sydney Commission because a few weeks ago we provided an update to the community about what we will do in the next 20 years. It is exciting and we will deliver it.

In 2012, Infrastructure NSW also said the North West Rail Link would gobble up the budget and we should not deliver it. Even though those opposite had promised this rail line for years, we knew it had to be done. That shows governments can take advice but that ultimately we take the right decisions. We should invest in public transport as much as we invest in roads. That is what we have done and what we will continue to do. I do not apologise for one second for investing in public transport.

SEXUAL ASSAULT STRATEGY

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:52): My question is addressed to the Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Will the Minister update the House on what the Government is doing to combat sexual assault, and is the Minister aware of any alternative approaches?

The SPEAKER: Order! Do the member for Fairfield and the member for Lakemba have a problem with the question? There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Ms PRU GOWARD (Goulburn—Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (14:53): The New South Wales Government is building a system, as we did for domestic violence, that targets perpetrators and supports victim/survivors of sexual assault. Recently, this Government announced that offenders in New South Wales convicted of persistent child sex abuse will face a maximum penalty of life in jail. These are historic reforms that are designed to deliver survivors the justice they deserve and to impose tougher penalties on offenders for their appalling abuse of children. It is good, strong policy, and I congratulate the Attorney General on his work.

In 2017-18 this Government invested \$50 million in sexual assault responses across Family and Community Services, Health and Justice. We are currently developing the first sexual assault strategy for New South Wales. It has taken time and is now in the final stages of development. The strategy looks to the best in local and international evidence—and that, of course, is what good government looks like. However, the member for Holsworthy has asked me about alternative approaches. What approach are members opposite taking to tackle sexual assault and sexual harassment? Nothing, absolutely nothing.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members who continue to interject will be removed from the Chamber. Those members who are on calls to order are deemed to be on three calls to order. I place the member for Cessnock on three calls to order.

Ms PRU GOWARD: At five minutes to midnight in December 2010, hunkered down in the bunker with their puppet Premier, the best they could deliver with their so-called women's plan was a one-liner committing to develop a sexual violence plan.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Is that wrong? I thought that was a fact.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member's point of order relates to relevance, she obviously did not listen to the question.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. I am sure I heard the former Minister for Women refer to a "puppet Premier".

Ms PRU GOWARD: She was.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: That is outrageous.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maitland will resume her seat. I remind the member for Maitland that she is on three calls to order.

Ms PRU GOWARD: How ridiculous!

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

[The member for Maitland left the Chamber at 14:54 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock will not point at me. Does the member have a valid point of order? I hope so.

Mr Clayton Barr: I refer to Standing Order 74, which relates to quarrelling across the Chamber. While I do not condone the behaviour of the member for Maitland, there were two people participating in the quarrel. One was punished and the other was not. Madam Speaker, I ask you to reconsider the fairness and equity of the punishment just handed out.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Instead of policy, we get lectures about sexual assault strategies from the member for Maitland, who has now been removed from the Chamber. Government members will not be lectured by members opposite on sexual assault strategies when one of their own is facing allegations of sexual harassment.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira will not start to quarrel. I want to hear a valid point of order. No-one has been named.

Mr Ryan Park: The Minister should withdraw her comments.

The SPEAKER: Order! No member has been named. The member for Keira will resume his seat.

Mr Ryan Park: You are a disgrace.

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 14:56.]

Ms PRU GOWARD: The Leader of the Opposition claimed, "There is no place in the party I lead for the harassment of women."

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is being relevant to the question she was asked. The Clerk will stop the clock. I can see where this is going.

Ms Jodi McKay: I acknowledge that the question asked the Minister to address "other matters". However, it asked only what the Government was doing.

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

Ms Jodi McKay: No, the member for Holsworthy asked the Minister about alternative plans.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is the same thing.

Ms Jodi McKay: No. Madam Speaker, this is extremely important—particularly given that you must take a neutral position.

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

Ms Jodi McKay: You are investigating this issue. I believe we should focus on what is important—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will resume her seat or she will be removed from the Chamber. The Minister was referring to alternative approaches and was being relevant to the question she was asked. The member for Strathfield will not argue. No-one has been named at this stage.

Ms PRU GOWARD: The Leader of the Opposition told *7News* on 17 March that an investigation would be conducted by the Labor Party and by the Parliament. However, in typical Labor fashion—all talk and no action—no investigation is being conducted by the Parliament. Meanwhile, has the member concerned been moved to the cross bench while the secret party investigation continues? No.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73, which is very clear in stating that imputations of improper motives may not be made against a member. The way the Minister is delivering her answer, it can mean only one member—and everyone in the Chamber knows who it is. This is not acceptable behaviour. If the Minister wants to debate propriety, the Opposition is happy to oblige. We will start with the bottle of Grange and then go back to—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. There is no point of order. The member will be removed from the Chamber the next time he behaves in that manner.

Ms PRU GOWARD: The Leader of the Opposition said that the allegations would be assessed by the party. We are waiting.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Campbelltown will stop arguing across the Chamber.

Ms Jodi McKay: We could bring up the member for Miranda and the member for Hornsby.

The SPEAKER: Order! What is the member's point of order? What is the breach of standing orders?

Ms Jodi McKay: Nothing has been said in this place about them.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. What a disgrace!

Ms PRU GOWARD: The community is waiting. I am sure that members of the Opposition backbench are also waiting.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: Madam Speaker, I refer to Standing Order 129, Standing Order 73 and a technical matter in relation to the fact that you are technically the employer of the person who is the subject of this matter. I will not call it a complaint because I do not know whether a complaint has been lodged. It is completely and utterly unacceptable for you to allow employee matters to be canvassed in this manner.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will absolutely make a statement to the House on the actions I have taken if that is required.

Mr Michael Daley: This is not the normal course of events given the Minister's answer.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is entitled to make whatever statement she wishes to make. The Clerk will stop the clock. Some statements have been made about the role of the Parliament. I will certainly establish the status of the investigations, if there are any, and the matters referred to me, if there are any. I assure the House that my inquiries will be comprehensive. That information will be sent to all members of Parliament so that they know exactly what has happened. I did not want to make a statement prior to events unfolding, but I will have to do so now. Members will know exactly what is going on. I will not have members asking me questions. The Minister is entitled to say what she wishes. Apparently the member for Kogarah is an expert, as always. He spends only half his time in the Chamber and when he does wander back in he wants to tell me how to do my job.

Ms PRU GOWARD: The question before the House is what action the Leader of the Opposition has taken about his own member. [*Extension of time*]

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: Madam Speaker, you have just made a statement to the House, and we thank you for that. I understand that you will advise the House in due course—

The SPEAKER: Order! Hopefully the Clerk has stopped the clock because this is going nowhere.

Mr Michael Daley: —whether or not a matter even exists.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is correct.

Mr Michael Daley: To allow the Minister to traverse a potentially non-existent issue—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is entitled to make a statement. It is clear that the member for Maroubra is trying to shut down this debate.

Mr Michael Daley: The Minister is trying to impugn a member on this side of the House.

The SPEAKER: Order! As I said, the Minister is entitled to say what she wishes to say.

Mr Michael Daley: Madam Speaker, you just admitted that the issue may not exist. This is lamentable in the extreme.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is entitled—

Mr Michael Daley: This is the greatest departure from procedural fairness in dealing with an employee complaint that I have seen in my 12 years in this place. This is not acceptable.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The Minister is entitled to say what she wishes. I have no control over what the Minister says.

Ms PRU GOWARD: This Parliament provides leadership for the people of New South Wales and its members provide an example. The Parliament and the public have a right to know about a secret party inquiry that continues and continues. Meanwhile, we need to know what that investigation has found. Those members who were so vocal yesterday with respect to sexual assault should turn their attention to this and demand action of their own leader. Has any single member opposite demanded that their leader explain why a member of Parliament on their team is still sitting on their side of Parliament while the Leader of the Opposition kicks the issue down the road, hoping it will be forgotten and lost in an election campaign? Their hypocrisy is breathtaking.

Ms Anna Watson: Point of order: It is rare for me to take a point of order, but in this instance I feel that I have to. Madam Speaker, you have made a ruling.

The SPEAKER: No, I did not make a ruling.

Ms Anna Watson: You have all but advised the Minister that this is not the correct line to be taking.

The SPEAKER: No, I did not say that.

Ms Anna Watson: I ask you to draw the Minister back to the question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Shellharbour will resume her seat. The member may not have heard me. I did not make a ruling; I made a statement in relation to a statement that I will make.

Ms PRU GOWARD: The member needs to be moved to the crossbench today.

SYDNEY CBD LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (15:05): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Given that the Minister has spent \$200,000 flying bureaucrats to Europe to "extend working relationships" with Acciona, does he think this was money well spent?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Drummoyne will come to order. I do not require his assistance.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (15:06): It is interesting. New South Wales is part of the global economy. The Government procures services and brings in infrastructure experts from overseas. As part of that, the Government makes sure that officials go and inspect the places where trains are produced. They also meet with members of consortiums. The Government makes no apologies for doing that. The bottom line is that New South Wales cannot build \$80 billion worth of infrastructure in the next four years without relying on international expertise and homegrown expertise.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale will come to order. The member for Kogarah will come to order. If they have no interest in this matter they may leave the Chamber. The member for Port Stephens is on her final warning.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The Government uses expertise from overseas and from here in New South Wales and Australia. That is eminently sensible.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Port Stephens that she is on her final warning. I remind her that she is on three calls to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The Government is also hell-bent, when it goes to the infrastructure market, on making sure that there is contestability in the bids. That achieves a good outcome for taxpayers. That is the bottom line. I am very glad that officials are travelling around the world to garner international expertise and bring it back here to New South Wales. I would have thought that an open-minded, progressive government would do that. That is the responsible thing to do. It reminds me of the last election and some of the rather xenophobic comments that were made then in relation to poles and wires. Guess who they were made by? Those comments were made by those opposite. We all know what happened when the member opposite started making those comments.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Jihad Dib: If the Minister is so concerned about xenophobia he should rule out a deal with One Nation.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: That was very special—it was a Thursday afternoon special from the Opposition. It was crazy, but the member opposite is going to do it again.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: What is the breach of standing orders?

Mr Jihad Dib: First, I ask that the Minister withdraw the comment he just made about me.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lakemba will resume his seat.

Mr Jihad Dib: Secondly, if he thinks it is crazy to be asked to rule out a deal with One Nation then he has a problem.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Lakemba to order for the first time. There is no point of order. Will the Minister withdraw the comment?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: No, I will not. The bottom line is that the Government is getting on with the job.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Lakemba that his time in the sun is over.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: We are happy to go overseas to bring the expertise here, unlike those opposite who do not get it. They do not understand this. They do not build the infrastructure, and when we announce things they go and cancel them. That is what those opposite are all about. I note that the Government is tendering for work on the line between Sydenham and Bankstown and the Leader of the Opposition has announced that he will tear up the contracts. I do not believe he will ever form a government so I am not so worried about that.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bankstown will cease shrieking across the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I think those opposite are being irresponsible in terms of their attitude to the international market place. They made some very interesting comments about the Chinese during the debate on the poles and wires transaction. The Government is prepared to go and get the international expertise from places like Europe. There have been many light rail projects and metro systems built in Europe, so why would we not bring that expertise to Australia? That was another very bright question from the member for Strathfield. It was obviously based on enormous intelligence! The Government makes no apologies for sending people overseas to find out what is happening in the world.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock will come to order. The member for Maroubra will come to order. Members will come to order.

WESTERN SYDNEY HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:11): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research. How is the Government delivering better health care across New South Wales, and in particular Western Sydney?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members who are not interested in this matter may leave the Chamber.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (15:11): I acknowledge the member for Seven Hills and his advocacy, particularly on behalf of Westmead Hospital. I notice in the gallery today a group of people—including a young man called Stephen—whom I had the great pleasure to be with this morning, at the invitation of the member for North Shore, Felicity Wilson. The meeting was about the community and the Parliament listening to the issues of young people who have hearing impairments. A number of organisations were at the meeting and I acknowledge the presence of people from the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, the Deaf Society of New South Wales, the Shepherd Centre, Cochlear and a range of other organisations—nearly a dozen altogether.

I also acknowledge that it was a bipartisan recognition by this Parliament. Apart from me and the member for North Shore, other members who were present included the Minister for Disability Services and members representing the electorates of Gosford, Port Stephens and, I think, Newtown. It was a case of us, as members of Parliament, coming together to hear a message from young people. Stephen was amazing, and we were privileged to hear him speak about the challenges facing young people who have hearing impairment issues. Well done; we learnt a lot and we thank him.

The New South Wales Government is certainly spending more money than ever before on health infrastructure across this State. I think it is fair to say that it is an unprecedented spend. The Government is trying to make sure that right across New South Wales—metropolitan areas and in the regions—everybody is getting their fair share of new infrastructure. When we came to government more than 50 per cent of hospitals were more than 50 years old. In the seven years that we have been in government we have spent billions of dollars on renewing health infrastructure. Over the next four years, the Government will spend more than \$7.7 billion—close to \$8 billion; an amazing amount of money—to renew the aged hospital infrastructure that was left to us as a result of 16 years of the former Government.

The Government is focusing its attention on Western Sydney. The member for Seven Hills has been one of the very strong advocates for the Westmead Hospital, where the Government currently is spending almost \$900 million, with more to come. Recently I visited the hospital to speak with the medical staff council, who expressed their needs in relation to the hospital's children's section. The Government has listened and will take those views on board. In any case, \$900 million is money well spent on the people of Western Sydney.

The Government has spent approximately \$700 million on the Blacktown Mount Druitt Hospital, which serves a large population. Members of the staff of that hospital have an amazing array of interests and talents. This Government recognises its obligation to do what the former Labor Government did not do, that is, to make sure the district has the very best medical and health services. As recently as approximately a month ago, the Premier and I opened the hospital's new renal dialysis unit. It was a very proud day for us. As more and more facilities open, the Government experiences more proud days. Approximately three quarters of a billion dollars either has been spent or will be spent on the Campbelltown Hospital.

Mr Greg Warren: Thank you.

Mr Chris Minns: Good member.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I acknowledge the interjection. I thank the member for Camden for being a great advocate on behalf of the Campbelltown Hospital. In addition to the facilities already built, there is \$632 million in the pipeline, which is an amazing outcome for Campbelltown. The people of Campbelltown and surrounding areas are looking forward to the Liberal-Nationals Government's allocation of the three quarters of a million dollars that they did not have receive under Labor.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much noise in the House.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No hospitals work in isolation but as part of a network. The Nepean area of Western Sydney is a fabulous place. It is fair to say that the Nepean Hospital had relatively small amounts of money spent on it and definitely was left as a backwater by the former Labor Government. In contrast, the Liberal-Nationals Government has spent substantial amounts on the Nepean Hospital. [*Extension of time*]

The Nepean Hospital is the focal point of an amazing area of Western Sydney. Over the next 20 or 25 years, another one million people will move to Western Sydney. The Nepean Hospital is part of the amazing network of the Government's hospital redevelopments. The Liberal-Nationals Government committed \$550 million to stage one of the Nepean Hospital redevelopment. A few weeks ago I visited the hospital with the Premier, the Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing and member for Mulgoa, and the Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport. We delighted in meeting with members of the medical staff council, Dr Nhi Nguyen, Dr Peter Flynn and Dr Pardey, as well as other doctors—if my memory serves me correctly, Dr Pardey had delivered a baby girl and was still dressed in his scrubs—and announced that the Premier had decided that stage two would be proceeded with immediately after completion of stage one, at a cost of at least \$450 million.

The Government is doing everything it can to improve hospitals across the State by allocating funds. Coffs Harbour has been allocated \$156 million; Goulburn has been allocated \$120 million; Inverell has been allocated \$30 million; Maitland has been allocated \$450 million; Mudgee has been allocated \$70.2 million; Shellharbour has been allocated \$252 million; and \$282.1 million has been spent in Wagga Wagga with \$170 million to be allocated for the next stage of redevelopment. Lismore has received so much money, the member for Lismore does not know what to do with it. This Government is doing everything possible to rebuild the State's hospitals for the benefit of our community. I remind the House that during 16 long years of Labor governments almost nothing was spent on hospitals across the State.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Bring back Bob Askin.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale is showing his age. Some people have not heard of Askin. Members will be heard in silence.

RETURN AND EARN RECYCLING SCHEME

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (15:19): My question is directed to the Minister for the Environment. Given that the Keep NSW Beautiful community litter grants have been scrapped and that barriers, such as unreasonable wait times for planning and Environment Protection Authority [EPA] approval and high property and equipment costs, are impeding the recycling sector, I ask: What is the Minister doing to support community-based organisations that are keen to establish collection points under the Return and Earn Scheme?

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (15:19): I thank the member for Ballina for the opportunity to speak about the great work of the New South Wales Government in reducing litter and increasing recycling across our community. At the outset, I assure her that the Government is 100 per cent working with communities across New South Wales to help them do a job with us as a government to reduce litter in our community while increasing recycling levels. I also assure the member for Ballina of the continuance of litter grants. In 2019, \$1.5 million will be available to community groups to continue the important work of taking litter out of our communities, increasing recycling, and incentivising communities to do that.

I will continue to work with our great community groups, such as Tangaroa Blue, which the member for Ballina would know, Take 3—and Tim Silverwood from Take 3 is fantastic—and Keep NSW Beautiful to reduce and prevent littering. There are some great groups that the Government will continue to work with. I reiterate the important news delivered by the Premier this week about the Government's strong commitment to green space across New South Wales. Of course that commitment should be accompanied by a litter-free community in the State. The work that I as Minister and local members of Parliament do all goes towards ensuring that the State's

green space is beautiful and litter free. I will make some comments relating to Return and Earn, which is the single largest litter reduction initiative in New South Wales' history.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members who are not interested in the answer can leave the Chamber.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: More than 220 million drink containers have been returned as a result of that scheme, with an average of more than three million drink containers being returned per day. The State has more than 544 collection points and \$22 million has been returned in our community in places from Broken Hill to Bega and Ballina to Bondi.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease their conversations in the Chamber.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: They do not want to hear the good news. I remind the member for Ballina that the scheme has met with great success in her electorate. More than 1.6 million drink containers have been returned through reverse vending machines [RVMs]. Her electorate has one of the newest and busiest RVMs in the State. I know that the member for Ballina wants more collection points, and the Government is working with her on that important project. The great thing about Return and Earn is that community groups, charities and schools can use collection points to raise funds. There are some great examples of that.

Charities in each electorate of New South Wales can register to be donation partners. When people go to the RVM, they can choose one of four charities to which they can direct their deposit for fundraising purposes. Surf lifesaving clubs all along the coast are getting involved in the scheme. The member for Ballina might be interested to know that soon three surf lifesaving clubs in her electorate—Byron Bay, Ballina Lighthouse and Blackhead—will be involved.

The SPEAKER: Order! If members, such as the member for Cessnock, are not interested in the answer, they may leave the Chamber.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: Return and Earn gives automated depots the opportunity to be part of the Return and Earn Scheme. On a recent visit to the Camden electorate I met Anthony, who runs Nepean Distributors, an automated depot that does fantastic work and supports many local community groups. In the first week of the football season, Liverpool Rangers Soccer Club collected more than 700 drink containers to raise money for the club. That is one example of how local sporting groups are using Return and Earn, a litter reduction initiative, to raise money for their cause. Return and Earn is only one example of all the good initiatives the Government is undertaking to increase recycling and reduce litter in the community.

NSW LABOR REGIONAL CAMPAIGN

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (15:25): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on movements within regional New South Wales?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (15:25): I thank the member for Tweed for his question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale will remain silent.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: When the member for Tweed asked about "movements" within regional New South Wales, I had hoped that he was talking about the jobs that have been created, the investment in infrastructure, and the cranes that are going up in the sky. But I think he was referring to the movements of the big red bus going through regional New South Wales which we all know about and which was flagged by those opposite with great fanfare.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: NSW Labor started the regional tour in the great electorate of Tweed. On the side of the bus, it says "Schools and Hospitals."

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Port Stephens that she is on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The bus got to the Tweed and the Leader of the Opposition got out. As with everything else the Leader of the Opposition says, he did not make much sense. He did not talk about hospitals and he did not talk about schools in the Tweed.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Any activity by the Leader of the Opposition during his visit to the Tweed was non-existent, so I do not understand why he started in the Tweed. As the Labor members got on their way, the typical in-fighting that happens in the Labor Party started. The Leader of the Opposition was trying to pick a song to play and insisted, as the boss, that the theme song should be, *I Just Don't Know What to Do with Myself*.

Of course, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition chimed in with the Elton John classic, *I'm Still Standing*. I think he was talking about standing for the Leader of the Opposition's job. The member for Keira threw a spanner in the works when he screamed out the Britney Spears lyrics, "I'm not a girl". That threw the bus passengers. The member for Strathfield wanted to play Guy Sebastian's *Elevator Love*. I had a whole list of songs for the member for Port Stephens, but I will not say them out loud in case someone calls me a potty mouth.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order: My point of order is relevance. The Deputy Premier is talking about songs, not movements. I have a song for him, *Shaddap You Face*.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The member for Fairfield should be happy remembering that the Leader of the Opposition tried to do the numbers behind his back and tried to knock him out, aka Berlusconi. The first stop of the Labor bus of lies was at Lismore, where Labor members stood in front of Lismore Base Hospital and said that the people in the community of Lismore were getting a second-rate health system. Right behind them, a couple of hundred million dollars was being spent on the hospital. What was disturbing about that comment was that the Leader of the Opposition was attacking the doctors and nurses. If it is a first-class facility and he said it is a second-class health system, then he is attacking the great men and women who service that community and hospital.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Swansea will cease shouting.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: That is an absolute shame and disgrace. It is typical of Labor to make a quick statement and take off. Then they went down the North Coast and missed every electorate until they got to the Myall Lakes electorate.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: On the side of the bus it says "Schools and Hospitals", but did they talk about the schools and hospitals improvements in the electorate of Myall Lakes, the redevelopment of Manning Hospital, or the upgrade of Old Bar Public School? No, instead, the Leader of the Opposition decided to talk about one of Labor's key policies: recycling. But he did not talk about recycling as we would understand it. He talked about the recycling of candidates and announced Labor's recycled candidate. He did not talk about schools and hospitals, like the bus banner said. Then the bus went to the Upper Hunter and I thought, "Of course he will talk about schools and hospitals here."

Did the Leader of the Opposition talk about the \$20 million stage two development of Muswellbrook District Hospital, the \$7 million Singleton Hospital upgrade or the \$4 million Upper Hunter tertiary education centre? No, he snuck in, in the middle of night and under the cloud of darkness, to once again talk about his recycling policy, with the announcement of a recycled Labor candidate for the seat of Upper Hunter. Before the sun rose, he disappeared from the Upper Hunter. The bus rolled on and the wheels started to wobble—it was missing a few hub caps. As we know, the Leader of the Opposition has concerns with hub caps, especially in the Blue Mountains. [*Extension of time*]

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I had high hopes for the Leader of the Opposition when he ventured out to Dubbo, but, alas, the Foley Failure bus got worse. We thought he would talk about the schools and investment in Dubbo, especially the \$150 million spent on Dubbo Base Hospital, the \$70 million for Mudgee, and the \$10 million specialist school in Dubbo. But no, instead he again went to his recycling policy and announced another recycled Labor candidate.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Port Stephens that she is on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: While in Dubbo, he spoke about the imaginary visit he took to Tweed Heads—he mixed Tweed Heads with the Tweed. I was hoping that when he got to Barwon he would talk about hospitals and schools, but he failed yet again. He made no mention of the \$30 million Broken Hill Base Hospital reconfiguration, the \$6 million Cobar Multipurpose Service Program, the \$4.9 million Lightning Ridge Multi Purpose Health Service or the \$3.9 million Broken Hill Integrated health facility. In education, he missed the \$8.6 million Walgett Community College upgrade, the \$3.9 million Brewarrina Central School upgrade and the \$5.4 million Collarenebri Central School upgrade. Again, he forgot to talk about the most important issues. Eventually, they got to Queanbeyan—they got to the Monaro—where he made a commitment to one school. But he did not talk about the new \$16.1 million Finigan School of Distance Education, the upgrades of Queanbeyan East Public School, Monaro High School, Jindabyne Central School, and Braidwood Central School, or the \$10 million Cooma Hospital Redevelopment.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It is clear that those opposite treat people like absolute amateurs. The Leader of the Opposition does not talk about schools or hospitals, the shadow Treasurer cannot count the number of words in "regional New South Wales" and the shadow Minister responsible for TAFE stands in front of TAFE upgrades and tries to claim that they are not happening. The contempt that those opposite show for regional New South Wales will not be accepted.

The SPEAKER: Members will leave the Chamber in silence. The behaviour of some Opposition members is disgraceful.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

The SPEAKER: I announce that the following petition signed by more than 10,000 persons has been lodged for presentation:

Newcastle Transport Review

Petition calling on the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to instruct Keolis Downer to conduct a review of Newcastle transport services, received from **Mr Tim Crakanthorp**.

The SPEAKER: I set down discussion on the petition as an order of the day for a future day.

The CLERK: I announce that the following petition signed by more than 500 persons has been lodged for presentation:

Regional Taxi Licences

Petition calling on the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to reject the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal recommendation to increase the number of taxi licences in regional New South Wales, received from **Mr Troy Grant**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

The CLERK: I announce that the following Minister has lodged a response to a petition signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Andrew Constance—Newcastle Transport Services—lodged 8 March 2018 (Ms Yasmin Catley)

Committees

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 52/56

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:37): As Chair: I am thankful for the opportunity to speak to the Legislation Review Committee's fifty-second digest for the Fifty-sixth Parliament. In this digest, the committee examined three bills and one regulation. I will now discuss those legislative instruments which contain issues identified by the committee in this week's digest. First, the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 aims to make changes to the Working With Children Check process and implement the first tranche of recommendations of the statutory review of the principal Act.

As part of the changes, the bill provides that the Children's Guardian, who administers the Working With Children Check, can now take into account a person's criminal history in addition to their criminal record. A person's criminal history can include charges that were never heard or proven or which were dismissed or discharged. The committee noted that this may trespass on the presumption of innocence. However, this must be balanced against the best interests of children. Furthermore, the amendment is consistent with the Children's Guardian's internal practices and its existing statutory discretion to consider other related matters. The amendment also implements a recommendation of the royal commission. In these circumstances, the committee made no further comment.

The bill enables the Children's Guardian to grant a continuing residence approval so that young adults who have just turned 18 and live with a foster carer may remain at home, even if they have been denied a Working With Children Check clearance. This implements a recommendation of the statutory review and opens an avenue to remedy the situation where a young person who has not met the Working With Children Check clearance is then required to leave their home within 48 hours, often separating them from their siblings. However, the bill

does not expressly state that there is a review right for a young adult who is denied a continuing residence approval or whose approval is cancelled.

While the Act permits an administrative review by the New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal of certain decisions, this only relates to a refusal or cancellation of a clearance or an interim bar. The lack of an opportunity to challenge a decision not to grant a continuing residence approval may be seen to trespass on the right of certain vulnerable young adults to shelter. The committee draws this matter to the attention of Parliament. The bill also provides that the Children's Guardian may require a person to provide a statement or information to assess whether a person poses a safety risk to children. Failure to comply with this request may be an offence under the Act. The committee notes that this may involve certain types of privileged communication, such as that between health professionals and patients or between lawyers and clients, which attach duties of competency. However, the bill includes a defence of reasonable excuse by the person for not providing the requested information. The committee noted that it may be a reasonable excuse that providing this type of privileged or confidential information could be unlawful.

The Smoke-free Environment Amendment Bill 2018 makes amendments to prohibit the use of e-cigarettes and heat-not-burn tobacco products in places that already enforce non-smoking areas. This bill aims to restrict second-hand exposure to e-cigarette vapours due to emerging evidence of potential health risks from e-cigarette vapours, which may contain toxins, metals and chemicals that may be harmful to both users and bystanders. This bill provides for the Act to commence on a day or days to be appointed by proclamation. The committee generally prefers legislation to commence on a fixed date or on assent. However, the committee notes that the bill introduces measures to restrict the use of any e-cigarettes in smoke-free areas and introduces notification requirements on e-cigarette retailers for compliance purposes. The committee acknowledges that some flexibility concerning commencement may assist in ensuring that those that are required to comply with the Act are made aware of their obligations.

The committee also reviewed the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Miscellaneous) Regulation 2017. This amendment updates the existing regulation to provide that the disclosure or use of information or documents for the administration or enforcement of the Rail Safety National Law is excluded from provisions in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. These provisions would otherwise prevent a person from disclosing, giving access to or using the information or document. The committee noted that this may infringe on a person's right to confidentiality of any personal information that is ordinarily protected under the Act. However, the committee also noted that the information cannot be disclosed unless it is for the enforcement of other laws, which may be justified in certain circumstances, and made no further comment. This concludes my remarks on the fifty-second digest of this Parliament. As always, I encourage everyone to read the full digest, which is available on the committee's website. I thank my fellow committee members for their contributions and commend the digest to the House.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (15:42): I will comment on the fifty-second digest, dated 10 April, of the Legislation Review Committee. The committee considered three bills—the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018, the Companion Animals Amendment (Dining Areas) Bill 2018 and the Smoke-free Environment Amendment Bill 2018—and commented on two of those, the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 and the Smoke-free Environment Amendment Bill 2018. The committee did not consider any matters worthy of comment in relation to the Companion Animals Amendment (Dining Areas) Bill 2018. The committee also considered one regulation and commented on that.

It is worthwhile remembering that in exercising its functions with respect to bills as outlined in section 8A of the Legislation Review Act 1987 the committee will firstly consider any bills introduced to Parliament and then report to both Houses of Parliament as to whether any such bill by express words or otherwise, firstly, trespasses unduly on personal rights or liberties; secondly, makes rights, liberties or obligations unduly dependent upon insufficiently defined administrative powers; thirdly, makes rights, liberties or obligations unduly dependent on non-reviewable decisions; fourthly, inappropriately delegates legislative powers; or fifthly, insufficiently subjects the exercise of legislative power to Parliamentary scrutiny. Parliament may pass a bill whether or not the committee has reported on the bill, but the committee is not precluded from making such a report because a bill has been passed or has otherwise become an Act. I thank the secretariat for its support of the committee and I thank my fellow committee members. I encourage all members of the House to read the digest, and I commend the digest to the House.

Report noted.

*Matter of Public Importance***YOUTH HOMELESSNESS MATTERS DAY**

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (15:44): I thank the House for the opportunity to draw to its attention Youth Homelessness Matters Day as this week's matter of public importance. The Youth Homelessness Matters Day will be acknowledged nationally on 18 April. It is an initiative of the National Youth Coalition for Housing and is traditionally held in the middle of April. Youth Homelessness Matters Day is an opportunity for organisations, all levels of government and our broader community to acknowledge that there are real issues surrounding youth homelessness in Australia, particularly in New South Wales. We each have an obligation to do everything we possibly can to prevent instances of youth homelessness, to educate our community on how we can prevent youth homelessness and to also plan and invest in a range of different programs specifically for housing and wraparound services that young people need to ensure that they do not end up homeless.

In New South Wales Yfoundations, which has worked tirelessly for many years, is also organising an event next week. The National Youth Coalition for Housing was set up in 1982 and the day to acknowledge youth homelessness has existed since 1990. It is an opportunity for everybody to come together to use creative campaign goals and, through advocacy and information sharing, do everything we possibly can to eradicate youth homelessness in New South Wales. In preparing for this speech today I looked at some figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. The recent census figures make it clear that there is a very serious homelessness problem in New South Wales. Nationwide homelessness has increased by 14 per cent and in New South Wales it has jumped up by 37 per cent. Tragically, youth homelessness figures are also very high.

The ABS has said that collecting accurate data relating to youth homelessness is very difficult. It is clear that youth homelessness might be higher than the census figures indicate, and it is already quite high. Traditionally data for youth homelessness is collected under persons staying temporarily in other households, which may underestimate the actual number of homeless youth in New South Wales. Some of the statistics are alarming and there are issues members should be considering when we are thinking about the high rate of youth homelessness in New South Wales. There are specific issues that make it worse, such as youth unemployment, child protection, education, young people leaving out-of-home care, access to affordable housing—a real issue for young people—youth justice, and family violence, which continues to be a serious problem for young people.

Various organisations are undertaking a great deal of work to try to support young people. Statistics continue to show, for example, that there was a 92 per cent increase in youth homelessness since 2006 in people between the ages of 19 to 24. That means 1 per cent of the entire age group was experiencing homelessness on census night—that is a very dramatic rise in youth homelessness. There needs to be more focus on preventing youth homelessness. More than 90 per cent of young people who enter homelessness services have witnessed violence in their own home, and 50 per cent have been in out-of-home care. Many have been impacted not only by violence but also by substance abuse and other issues that have made life very difficult for young people trying to improve their situations. I acknowledge Homelessness NSW, Yfoundations and the many other organisations that work very hard to ensure that youth homelessness is always front and centre of any funding consideration by the Government. Youth homelessness is a matter that should be considered by all members of this place at every opportunity.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (15:49): I congratulate and thank the member for Bankstown for bringing this matter of public importance to the attention of the House. As the member for Bankstown so eloquently has explained, youth homelessness occurs across New South Wales and in every State in Australia. I am afraid the answers are not as easy as people may think. The member for Bankstown mentioned couch surfing and the hidden numbers of homeless youth. They are not necessarily registered anywhere and do not pop up anywhere. They are on friends' and relatives' couches, moving aimlessly around trying to keep a roof over their heads.

There are two organisations in my electorate: 3bridges and Cafe Y. Cafe Y brings in homeless people, gives them a secure and safe place to live, and then trains them in the hospitality industry so they are able to get a job to keep themselves afloat. Eddy's, which is just across from my office in Engadine, is in the business of identifying kids who are under stress at home and trying to accommodate them so they do not become homeless. The statistics quoted by the member for Bankstown are quite frightening when one considers the booming population in New South Wales. There is not enough affordable housing for adults with families, let alone youth with no means. I worry that this is an issue relevant to the entire Parliament. Every electorate has homeless youth in it. Once a young person becomes homeless, they can spiral quickly down into the depths of despair. They can become terribly depressed, which is sometimes a lifelong affliction.

I have been involved with an organisation in the Illawarra that brings in young, homeless girls and puts a roof over their heads. The girls can stay as long as they continue to be educated and finish their education. The organisation then points the girls in the direction of an employer and gets them a solid job. One of the success

stories of Southern Youth and Family Services is a young girl who wanted to be in the hospitality industry: She is now the maître d' of one of the Illawarra's best restaurants. A couple of weeks ago I was there presenting an award to a lady who has been in Australia for 60 years. The young girl came flying out of the kitchen, saw me, wrapped her arms around me and said, "Thank you very much for what you have done for the organisation."

The organisation takes over housing commission flats that have been decommissioned by the Government, does them up and allows the youth to live in them at minimal cost. The youth are given cooking lessons and taught how to grow vegetables, sew and dress for interviews. They go through all the processes to make a rounded human being. It is a great success. Narelle Clay, the head of the organisation, has done a fantastic job over the many years that she has been involved in it. I congratulate everybody involved in youth services but, as the member for Bankstown mentioned, it is not an easy fix. The New South Wales Government is throwing vast amounts of money at it. In each electorate, members need to identify organisations and support them as much as we can.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (15:54): I speak on today's matter of public importance, youth homelessness. I thank the member for Bankstown for raising this important issue. We all come to this place to represent our communities and to advocate for the most vulnerable people in those communities. There are few people more vulnerable than the homeless, and particularly young people who are sleeping rough. As a State, we need to do much more to address the growing issue of homelessness. Today the report "The state of homelessness in Australia's cities" was released, which showed that more than 4,000 people are sleeping rough nationwide. Tragically, the average time they spend on the street is six years.

In New South Wales the situation is deteriorating. Our youth homelessness rate is increasing, in contrast to the national trend of youth homelessness declining. This Government often boasts that under its leadership New South Wales is leading the nation. That may be the case for Government members' top-end-of-town mates and those who enjoy corporate boxes in Sydney stadiums, but this Government is failing our youth by failing to address the issue of homelessness. The true test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable. Right now in the State of New South Wales this Government is failing that test.

Today the shadow Treasurer and the shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault met with some representatives from the housing sector. The shadow Treasurer told a wonderful story about work being done in the Illawarra to reduce homelessness. He spoke about the importance of service providers such as real estate agents being in regular contact with support services to ensure that individuals who may be on the path to homelessness are supported in order that they can maintain their housing. Unlike this Government, the Labor Opposition will work relentlessly to reduce the rate of homelessness in New South Wales. It is a commitment of this party to support those in need of a helping hand.

Addressing the growing rates of youth homelessness in this State is not simple but it is possible. Labor is committed to ensuring that we tailor our frontline government services to wrap around and support people who are at risk of homelessness. Labor also has a strong plan to address housing affordability in this State, which is just one of many issues that contribute towards homelessness. I mentioned the member for Maitland, the shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, who is committed to ensuring that the victims of family violence, including young people, can escape violent homes and be housed safely and securely. In her absence, I give this speech on her behalf and echo her thoughts. Homelessness is a tragic issue that is affecting far too many people in the State of New South Wales. Under this Government the vulnerable are being neglected. Under Labor they will be a priority.

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (15:57): In reply: I thank the member for Heathcote and the member for Blue Mountains for their contributions to this debate today. Tragically, neither of their electorates is immune from youth homelessness. I share the concerns raised by the member for Heathcote about young people in particular having high rates of couch surfing, which was recently reflected in census data. The details of a number of young people were not accurately reflected in the census because they were classified as temporarily out of their own households.

I share the concerns raised by the member for Blue Mountains about funding issues. I also attended the meeting that the member for Blue Mountains mentioned earlier with a number of representatives from the homelessness and domestic violence sectors. Homelessness NSW today issued a document that states that in the 2016-17 period more than 74,000 clients were supported by its specialist homelessness services in New South Wales, yet it is only contracted and funded for 58,000 clients. That means specialist homelessness services supported 30 per cent more clients than they are funded for, which shows the level at which these organisations are working. They are not receiving the level of funding they desperately need to meet the very real need in our communities.

We are now reaching 37 per cent increases in homelessness in New South Wales, in comparison to only a 14 per cent increase nationwide. In specific statistics on youth homelessness, whether for people aged under 12 years or of 12 to 24 years of age, there sadly is no question that New South Wales leads in every single category; in contrast, a number of other States have seen reductions in youth homelessness. It is time for this Government to have a long, hard look at the lack of funding with which it has left these specialist homelessness services and its current long-term agenda of selling off public housing. More than 4,200 properties have been sold off in the last seven years, and there are more than 60,000 applicants—equivalent to 150,000 people—on the waiting list in New South Wales.

Community Recognition Statements

SAMUEL TERRY PUBLIC SCHOOL FIRST LEGO LEAGUE TEAM

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (16:00): I congratulate the teachers and students at Samuel Terry Public School for being chosen to go through to the World Championships of the FIRST LEGO League Jr. The FIRST LEGO League is a program that allows children to work through real-world problems and use research, coding and robotics to develop a solution. The team consisted of the following students: Lachlan Cross, Brayden Pearce, Jacob Nicholson, Brodie Hanson, Joshua Kinlan and Tyler Kenyon.

All students exhibited the core values that the FIRST LEGO League is based upon. I must say they made an awesome model out of Lego. The team was led by a dedicated group of teachers: Brodie Craig, Rachel Carter, Rachel Woods and Heidi Smith. The FIRST LEGO League community at Samuel Terry Public School continues to go from strength to strength and thrive under the guidance of their principal, Mr Stephen Lockley. I congratulate all involved and extend a special thankyou to the parents for their support and a big thankyou to everyone at Samuel Terry Public School who makes the Lego program such a success.

IRISH REBELLION COMMEMORATION

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:02): I recognise the Irish National Association [INA]. In particular, I recognise the role the association plays in the maintenance of the 1798 monument at Waverley Cemetery and in the organising of the annual Easter Sunday service there commemorating the 1798 Irish Rebellion. This year the service was held on 1 April. Michael Bailey was the emcee, with speeches from historian Dr Perry McIntyre and conservator of fine arts Grzegorz Dabrowa. There was also a contribution by Dennis O'Flynn, who for many years was president of the INA.

The monument is the grave of Michael Dwyer and his wife, Mary. Dwyer was a leader of the 1798 rebellion. Based in County Wicklow, he maintained a guerrilla war until 1803. He subsequently came to this land as a state prisoner in 1806. He received a land grant and opened a pub at a site located in what is now Warwick Farm, within the electorate of Liverpool. His pub was named the Harrow after a 1798 rebel victory. He subsequently was appointed as constable by Governor Macquarie. The back of the monument lists the names of martyrs from 1798, with a blank space for the name of Robert Emmet. Subsequently added to the monument were the names of the martyrs of the 1916 Easter Rising, and later those who died in the H-Block hunger strikes.

ROYAL EASTER SHOW CATTLE CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:03): I congratulate the Relf family, who had big wins at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. I congratulate Janelle and Paul Relf, whose winning cow, Warrigal Golden Caviar—a direct descendant of Levi, which won in 2016—was named Grand Champion Female at the 2018 show. Warrigal Golden Caviar took out the supreme prize after winning her class and then being named Limousin Senior Champion Female. The Grand Champion win saw her go up against the best of the females in the show to be in the running for the prestigious Urquhart Trophy, and she finished in the top three. The Relfs said they were delighted with their success against the best in the country. Ryan and Rachel Relf made their Sydney Royal Easter Show debut with a young steer they raised themselves as a hobby. Ryradan Park Ned was named Champion Middleweight Steer and went on to win his class in the carcass competition, scoring 90.5. The Relfs have been breeding Limousins for more than 10 years on their Wherrol Flat farm, Warrigal Stud.

KEGWORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL AUTUMN FARE

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (16:04): I draw the attention of the House to a fabulous event that took place on Sunday in my electorate of Balmain, the Kegworth Public School Autumn FARE. I commend and congratulate everyone involved in organising this event, including: Rachel Fabian, coordinator of the Autumn FARE committee; Shona Mulley, logistics coordinator; Michelle Casey, president of the parents and citizens association; Karen Laing, fundraising manager of the parents and citizens association; Belinda Perry, the principal;

Shonna Mulley, the previous coordinator; and the students, staff and parents who helped to make the event such a success.

The annual fair has been held for a decade and I have been lucky enough to attend and open the fair many times over the years. The first time was in my capacity as Mayor of Leichhardt and now it is as the member for Balmain. In that time, I have seen it develop from a small gathering of parents and students into the wonderful event that it is today. The committee has done a stellar job of mobilising local businesses to throw their support behind the event with stalls on the day, donations and sponsorship. I thank everyone who has supported it. With the involvement of 165 parent volunteers, the event raised more than \$45,000. That is an astounding result. Over the years the funds raised have contributed many wonderful improvements to the school. I commend the parents and staff for their incredible dedication to our children and to the wider inner west community.

MANLY ELECTORATE COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:05): I congratulate the Manly Country Women's Association [CWA] on 95 years of service to the Manly community and to communities across Australia. The Country Women's Association is the largest women's organisation in Australia. It aims to improve the conditions for country women and children and to make life better for women and their families. In true Country Women's Association spirit, members of the Manly branch have worked tirelessly over the decades to support the local Manly community as well as communities across Australia.

The Manly CWA branch has been involved in many projects over the years, from helping to fund the fit-out of a holiday home in Dee Why for country women and their families in the 1920s, to this year fundraising for the fire-ravaged Tathra community. The Manly CWA also provides space for women to come together, to create friendships and to share recipes. I know that members past and present would attest to the close friends and bonds that have been formed over the years. I thank Manly CWA President Edna Fairley and all members for the work they have done over many, many years. I commend their efforts to the House.

CHESTER HILL HIGH SCHOOL INTENSIVE ENGLISH CENTRE

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (16:06): On 16 March, I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the fortieth anniversary celebrations of Chester Hill High School's Intensive English Centre. I thank Principal Zena Dabaja; the Director of Public Schools NSW, Jan Green; the Intensive English Program Advisor, Christine Tiekle; Deputy Principal Sagar Maharaj; retired principals including Ross Pearce; and former students Karar Bohrea, Mun Mun Lahtaw and Ahmed Javid. I make special mention of the Chester Hill High School Ambassador, Hani Zahra, who delivered an inspirational address. The students who performed and spoke on the day were highly motivating. The centre has transformed the lives of many students over the years. I take this opportunity to acknowledge all of the staff and students who have made it such a great success. Forty years of teaching and learning English is something of which they can all be proud. I wish them tremendous success in the future.

ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL GRADUATES

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:07): Recently I was fortunate enough to visit Royal North Shore Hospital to welcome some of the 106 graduate nurses and midwives launching their careers and caring for patients and their families. They are some of this Government's record 2,400 graduate nurses and midwives who are beginning their careers at hospitals and health services across New South Wales. It was wonderful to meet Acting Director of Nursing, Brian Bonham, and Educational Consultant at the Centre for Education and Talent Development, Susan Gilbert, along with the hospital's new nurses and midwives: Hannah Florie-George, Meg Williamson, Alice Guzewicz, Grace Turnbull, Jessica Float, Benjamin Lewinsohn, Madeline Allsopp and Kellie Malone.

Around the clock, 365 days a year, our nurses and midwives are on the frontline of the New South Wales health system providing care to patients and support to their families. I was pleased to wish all our new starters the best of luck with their careers and again to welcome the invaluable contribution they make to our health system. The Government has already exceeded its election commitment to increase the frontline medical workforce by 1,000 positions. In fact, there are now 51,000 nurses and midwives working in the New South Wales public health system. I congratulate the Premier and the Minister for Health.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES COMPETITOR ANJA STRIDSMAN

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:08): I congratulate Anja Stridsman on her first-round win boxing yesterday and wish her good luck for tomorrow. I congratulate all of the boxing competitors selected to represent our great nation at the Commonwealth Games. Coached by Joel Keegan at PCYC Umina Beach, Anja has been in intensive training for months in the lead-up to her selection for the Aussie team. Anja says that boxing is about

empowerment. There will be no-one more fired up or empowered than Anja today and as she steps into the ring wearing the green and gold again tomorrow. Born in Sweden, Anja came to Australia to study, fell in love with the place and is now an Aussie citizen who is proud to call Umina home. Young women in our community have a hero in Anja, who has worked through serious injury and is constantly challenging herself, always working to "defeat those self-doubts that you have about yourself, and putting everything on the line to be the best you can be". Win, lose or draw, we are proud to have her as a member of our community. I thank all at our fabulous PCYC for supporting Anja in her journey.

KAREELA PUBLIC SCHOOL COLOUR DASH

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (16:09): I acknowledge the success of Kareela Public School's inaugural colour dash, which I attended on 24 March 2018. For those who are unfamiliar with the concept of a colour dash, Kareela Public School set up a two-kilometre track throughout their scenic school grounds, enabling participants to walk or run along it while having powdered colour thrown at them by enthusiastic onlookers. The colour dash was a unique and enjoyable fundraiser, and assisted the parents and citizens association finally to reach its \$120,000 target to install classroom air conditioning. The colour dash alone raised an outstanding \$14,000 towards this target to provide a cooler climate for students in summer. I commend the hardworking executive of the association who were instrumental in organising this event: President Caterina Zannino; Vice-President Maria Popova; Secretary Ainslie McLean; Treasurer Lorraine Murphy; and, of course, their dedicated principal, Nicole Arnold. I congratulate Kareela Public School's parents and citizens association on its extraordinary fundraising effort and extend my best wishes for the future.

WYONG ELECTORATE DALE YOUNG PARENTS PROGRAM

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (16:10): Run by St Philips Christian College, the Dale Young Parents Program in Wyong is a place for young mothers or fathers who have had or who are expecting a child. Based in the Wyong Better Future Hubs, it is partially funded by the Department of Human Services and kind donations. However, funding is still a continuous issue. It is an unconventional solution that increases opportunities for economic and communal participation of young parents and unemployed families. It is where young mothers, fathers and families can access high-quality learning, be presented with parenting advice and support, finish their year 12 studies, and be mentored and assisted into employment. I have had the pleasure of meeting with members on numerous occasions, and I am very impressed by what they do and hope to see the program continue into the future.

DARCY ROAD PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (16:11): I pay tribute to the exceptional work being undertaken by the teachers and support staff at Darcy Road Public School, Wentworthville in my electorate of Seven Hills. I was joined recently by the Minister for Multiculturalism, the Hon. Ray Williams, as we attended Darcy Road Public School and spoke with the great team headed by Principal Trudy Hopkins and Deputy Principal Sean McLoughlin. It is a multiculturally diverse school with pupils speaking 44 different languages. After English, the language most widely spoken by pupils is Hindi. The school applied for and received two part-time Hindi teachers as part of the Community Languages Program. This supports 170 students in learning Hindi in a formal classroom environment, ensuring the children's bilingual talents. The Minister and I attended one of the Hindi lessons and were delighted to see the happiness it brings to the kids to learn another language close to their heart. I am proud to congratulate Darcy Road Public School on its previous achievements, whether academic or on the sporting field. I wish all staff and students a successful and happy 2018 academic year.

SOUTH SUDANESE COMEDY NIGHT

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:12): On Saturday night I joined the South Sudanese community for a fantastic comedy night in Granville. This was the second such occasion organised by Kon Deng and Jieng Comedy Worldwide. It starred Chiefly Rouny, who came from the United States to perform at the event alongside local comedians. Alternating between dancing and stand-up comedy, with a pastor then leading everyone in prayer during the evening, the uplifting evening brought together hundreds of members of the South Sudanese community from across Sydney and Australia. Between the comedians, the pastor and the short play about domestic violence, the event covered many pertinent issues affecting the community today in an engaging format. They were supported by Mr Emmanuel Kondok, President of the Community of South Sudan and Other Marginalised areas, and other community leaders. I commend Kon Deng and Jieng Comedy Worldwide for their efforts and wish them every success into the future.

TERRIGAL ELECTORATE WATERWAYS FUNDING

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:13): This week the State Liberal Government announced that \$1.5 million is now available for local coastal councils, including Central Coast Council, to apply for funding for

maintenance dredging work. I am in constant contact with my constituents in the electorate of Terrigal, and one of the most frequent complaints I hear is that the council is not taking necessary action on and responsibility for the dredging in the Ettalong Channel. It is vital to ensure that the Ettalong Channel is maintained so that ferries and recreational boats can use this waterway, given the important tourism and economic flow-on effects. On behalf of the local area, including residents of Wagstaffe, Hardys Bay, Davistown and Empire Bay, I am calling on the council, and particularly the six Labor councillors, the Independent councillors, and the member for Gosford, to apply for this new Rescuing Our Waterways program funding.

ST MICHAELS CATHOLIC CHURCH FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:13): On Sunday 8 April 2018 I was pleased to attend St Michaels Catholic Church, Daceyville, for a special mass to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary. St Michael's is a unique church in a unique suburb. The original church was granted to St Michael's Catholic School and a new hall built in 1968, and dedicated as a unique war memorial church. Daceyville, the original garden suburb, housed many of the Anzacs—or their widows—upon their return from the First World War, and many of the local streets take their names from Australian war heroes. It was a pleasure to join the Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Reverend Anthony Fisher, the new parish priest Father Kim, and popular former parish priest Father Jersey, and other reverend fathers as well as the member for Maroubra—who almost attended on time—for a mass followed by lunch. The House should recognise St Michael's and commend the ministry to the precious and unique community of Daceyville.

JOHN POTTS ONE HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (16:15): Today I take great pleasure in recognising one of my constituents, Mr John Potts, as he celebrated his one hundredth birthday on 28 March. I first met Mr Potts when he visited my office and advised me of his approaching one hundredth birthday. Looking at him, I could not believe that he was at all close to that mark. Mr Potts is extremely capable for his years and has not let age deter him. He is living independently with his wife, Mary, at John Paul Village, and still holds a driver licence. After discovering Mr Potts was a veteran who served in World War II, I invited him and his wife to attend the veteran's morning tea on 16 March, which I was hosting with the Hon. David Elliot, Minister for Veterans Affairs. On this day it was an honour to wish him a happy birthday, and present him with his congratulatory certificates and photos alongside Mr Elliot. Not many of us will get the chance to celebrate such a milestone.

SHELLHARBOUR RELAY FOR LIFE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (16:16): I acknowledge our friends in the gallery from the Newcastle-Hunter region and our good friends from the union movement, the Australian Rail Tram and Bus Industry Union. I welcome them back to the New South Wales Parliament and I thank the comrades; it is great to have them here. I bring to the attention of the House, the work and spirit of everyone involved in the upcoming 2018 Shellharbour Relay for Life. This year's relay will be happening at Tom "Scout" Willoughby Oval in Shellharbour on the weekend, and will once again be raising funds for the Cancer Council NSW.

One participant in this year's relay will be Mr Tony Purdon of Mount Warrigal. Tony is an ambassador for this year's Relay for Life and a cancer survivor. In 2015, he was diagnosed with stage 3 kidney cancer. Thankfully, following a surgery to remove one of his kidneys, Mr Purdon is today cancer free. I will also be participating in this year's Relay for Life as part of the Shellharbour City Slickers team, alongside Shellharbour City Council's Mayor Marianne Saliba. I take this opportunity to wish Mr Tony Purdon and every other individual who is participating in this weekend's relay all the best. To the rest of my community I say: Get behind those involved, come down to Tom Willoughby Oval this weekend, and support this great event in any way you can.

PORT MACQUARIE ELECTORATE WOMAN OF THE YEAR DIANNE DAVIS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:17): I recognise Dianne Davis, who was recently named Woman of the Year for the Port Macquarie electorate. Dianne has been a member of the Special Olympics Mid North Coast Branch for more than nine years and is currently chairperson of the group. Dianne is also current coach of the local Special Olympics basketball team and has previously coached one of the New South Wales Special Olympics basketball teams at a national level. She fundraises and organises trips away for competitors to participate in competitions against other Special Olympics groups. As a parent of a child with Down syndrome, Dianne is always championing people with disability and is constantly looking for ways to promote the abilities of local athletes. I take this opportunity to congratulate Diane on being named Woman of the Year for the Port Macquarie electorate, and thank her for her dedication and service to the local community.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES GEORGE "JIM" TULIP

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:18): Today I attended the funeral of Jim Tulip at Leura Uniting Church. James George "Jim" Tulip was born on 15 February 1934 and died at home peacefully on 5 April 2018 after a serious illness. Jim was a prolific writer and teacher, and was regarded very well in the academic world. Jim wrote eloquently about poet David Campbell:

There is a surrealistic interplaying of human life: white and Aboriginal, flora, fauna, rock-face and art. The opening poem, "The Lovers" has this freedom. To make love is to know a quality of existence which makes time immaterial. It could be a moment or 10 thousand years.

Jim wrote, lived and loved beautifully. He had one of the sweetest souls this earth has seen. Today, I acknowledge his wife, the darling Peggy Goldsmith, and their extended family.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES ATHLETE CARLY SALMON

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (16:19): Congratulations to Wagga Wagga's Carly Salmon, who shone in the final of her first Commonwealth Games. The 18-year-old made it through to the T35 100-metre final on the Gold Coast on Wednesday, lining up alongside two Australian teammates in the race for the gold medal. Among them was teammate Isis Holt, who set the world record on the Gold Coast in February. After a false start by Salmon, she regrouped to finish fourth. It was an outstanding effort. Holt screamed home to win the gold in 13.58 seconds, with the silver medallist, Maria Lyle from Scotland, clocking 15.14 and fellow Australian Brianna Coop claiming the bronze in 15.63 seconds. Salmon was hot on Coop's heels with a time of 16.39 seconds. Salmon competed in her third World Championship event in London last year, having also competed in 2013, when she picked up a bronze, and in 2015. Carly Salmon said:

... to compete at the same event with able-bodied athletes will be amazing.

Carly has cerebral palsy. She is studying to become a teacher. We wish her well.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES BOWLS GOLD MEDALLIST NATASHA SCOTT

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:20): It's gold for Raymond Terrace! Raymond Terrace Bowling Club will be glowing as local bowls champion Natasha Scott returns from the Commonwealth Games wearing her gold medal. Her victory over the South African team was a triumph for the local legend, who has been playing bowls since she was 15. Now 27, Natasha led the Australian team to an 18 to 16 victory over South Africa with her teammates Kelsey Cottrell, Rebecca van Asch and Carla Krizanic. Having competed in the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games and the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games, Natasha went into this year's competition experienced. Her dedication has clearly paid off. Natasha's achievements are well known locally and this is by no means her first victory. In October last year, she won all four women's State titles in the one season, and in 2016 she won the World Singles Champion of Champions competition. Congratulations to Natasha and her teammates on this fantastic win for Australia and for Raymond Terrace.

ARMIDALE REGIONAL COUNCIL COMPANION ANIMALS SHELTER RANGER PHIL EVANS

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills) (16:21): I recognise and commend Phil Evans, the Armidale Regional Council's Companion Animal Shelter Manager and Ranger, on almost two decades of tireless service to the Armidale and district community. Phil retires this week, and it is timely to congratulate him on his wonderful work and improved outcomes for lost, abandoned and surrendered animals during his time of service with council. Mr Evans has been instrumental in greatly reducing the number of companion animals euthanised at the shelter, in increasing the number of adoptions, and in implementing the incredibly effective shelter volunteer program. He created a very popular social media platform to promote the work of the shelter and find new homes for abandoned animals. I wish Phil, his wife, Sue, and their much-loved old English sheepdogs all the best for this new chapter in their lives and a very well-earned retirement.

HUNTER AND LAKE MACQUARIE COMMUNITY PRESENTATION

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (16:22): I acknowledge the many residents who have come here today from the Hunter and Lake Macquarie to hear the petition discussion. These community members are dedicated to correcting an injustice that has occurred in our communities—the destruction of our public transport network. They are very welcome in this Chamber. The members who represent them—the member for Newcastle, the member for Wallsend, the member for Charlestown and I, along with my other colleagues—are delighted to have them here. We acknowledge how important it is to have community members here to listen to the petition discussions. Their efforts, through the petition, bring us here to debate these issues. I thank and congratulate the communities.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I remind members that standing orders provide that if a matter is listed on the *Notice Paper* it is not usual for members to raise the matter in this place prior to the debate or discussion.

Ms Yasmin Catley: I was just congratulating them.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I am asking members to read the standing orders.

LIONEL WATTS RESERVE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (16:23): I am pleased that the Northern Beaches Council will soon redevelop Lionel Watts Reserve in my electorate, as part of a major infrastructure redevelopment program of Connecting All Through Play. The New South Wales Government is indirectly, partially funding the Lionel Watts Reserve project via some of the \$5 million contributed from the Stronger Communities Fund and the \$4 million dedicated from the Merger Savings Fund. Lionel Watts Reserve will feature an all-abilities playground and new synthetic playing fields. The new playground will promote inclusive and active play for children and youth. Redevelopment plans include a new skate park for local youth. I broadly support the concept of council developing this facility, with appropriate community input. I commend those involved in creating the redevelopment plans and those who have provided feedback. I look forward to when the community can use these inclusive, modern facilities.

NEW SOUTH WALES BAR ASSOCIATION SEMINAR

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:24): I recognise in this House the New South Wales Bar Association seminar held on 26 March this year to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Redfern Park Speech made by former Prime Minister Paul Keating. Chaired by the association's president, Arthur Moses, SC, the seminar featured as speakers Bunja Smith, who is the Chairperson of the Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT), and LaVerne Belleair, who is the chief executive officer [CEO] of the Aboriginal Medical Service Cooperative Redfern. The association hoped that the seminar might remind people of the speech and the aspirations conveyed by it. Importantly, the seminar aimed to provide an opportunity to reflect upon the extent to which progress has been made in the previous quarter century and to contemplate the work still to be done. I note the important discussion on the night for a Walama Court, which is a District Court model incorporating some of the features of a Victorian model and of the Drug Court.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES ATHLETE CELIA SULLOHERN

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:25): Congratulations to Yamba's Celia Sullohern, who finished sixth in the 10,000 metre race at the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast. Celia was beaten by the Ugandan athlete, but fought hard throughout the race and beat her previous personal best time by 40 seconds. She was the fastest of the three Australian women in the race. With two laps to go, Celia was in second position but was pipped during the last lap by the African runners. Celia showed her sportsmanship by joining her Aussie teammates to applaud the last runner from Lesotho, who finished five minutes and 10 seconds behind. Celia is one of the big improvers in Australian athletics. She came to prominence after she won the Melbourne marathon in October last year. At that stage she had no thought of being a Commonwealth Games athlete, but she qualified for the 10,000 metres race at the Australian Athletics Championships earlier this year and became Australian champion. Celia also has qualified for the 5,000 metres race, which will be run on Saturday, and you can bet we will be cheering her on.

TANILBA BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL PARLIAMENT

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:26): Every day in schools in Port Stephens something amazing is happening. Recently, I was honoured to play a role in the opening of the school's parliament at the Tanilba Bay Public School. I congratulate the student leaders of the Tanilba Bay Public School, who showed all the skills of future leaders—particularly, the Prime Minister, Shaniyah Agnew, and the Deputy Prime Minister, Cooper Fagan—who carried out their duties so well.

These able leaders are well supported by their cabinet comprising the Minister for Health and Welfare, Lily Fletcher; the Minister for Transport, Isabella Whitehall; the Minister for the Environment, Ahlyia Richardson; the Minister for Communication, Emmy Lee Miller; the Minister for Education, Atiana Oats; the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Cameron Palmer; the Minister for Positive Behaviour for Learning, Kate Vine; the Minister for Functions, Emily Evans; and the Minister for Technology, Josh Tillman. I was delighted to pin the badges on each of the classes' student representatives in the parliament—a system which ensures students of all ages have a say in the school. I thank the principal, Stuart Wylie, and the assistant principal, Lisa Walker, for their dedication to public education and democracy at the Tanilba Bay Public School.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES DIVER BRITTANY O'BRIEN

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:27): Australia's swimmers have dominated the Commonwealth Games headlines this week, but now it is the turn of the diving team to take over the pool. One of its members is Brittany O'Brien, a 10-metre platform diver, who will be competing in both the individual and synchronised events. Brittany's interest in diving began when she started school at the Pymble Ladies College [PLC] in 2008. She credits living on the North Shore and the program offered by PLC for her current sporting career. Brittany made her Olympic Games debut in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. She had earlier come third at the Australian Diving Championships and therefore failed to qualify, but received a late call-up after one of her teammates was forced to withdraw due to a shoulder injury.

Brittany then qualified for the semifinals of the 10-metre platform and finished a very creditable fifteenth overall. Brittany won the Commonwealth Games selection trials in December last year and, with the exciting opportunity of representing her country on home soil, she is unashamedly aiming for both a personal best score and a medal. When she is not working on her diving, Brittany studies graphic design at the Western Sydney University. I wish Brittany good luck in the finals tonight, for the Tokyo Olympics in 2020, and beyond.

EDGEWORTH EAGLES FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (16:28): I congratulate the Edgeworth Eagles Football Club, which is such a wonderful regional football team that I greatly support. In the theme of supporting women in sport, Edgeworth Eagles is a leader and champion of women's sport and sport for people with disabilities. The club also champions the Arnett's groups, which are about supporting people with autism. The club ensures the participants are mentored and engage in healthy lifestyle activities as well as sport on Sundays and Saturday mornings. I have been there to watch and I am very impressed with what they do, which certainly helps to improve the behaviour of people with autism. There is a lot of parental involvement, which strengthens the family unit, and that is wonderful. I congratulate all the volunteers of Edgeworth Eagles—Paul and Annette, Kira, Michael, Warren and Cassie, and Mark and his wife, Mel. They are a wonderful group. I really enjoy going to watch the Edgeworth Eagles.

TAREE POWERBOAT EASTER CLASSIC COMPETITOR RYAN MCINTOSH

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:29): I recognise in this House Ryan McIntosh for his successful campaign in the Taree Powerboat Easter Classic. McIntosh is 40 years of age and comes from Wingham. He had his most successful meet in his four-year driving career when he won two six-litre national championships, the Commodore Cup and the Griffith Boat Club Cup in his boat *Lock n Load*. While those wins were both satisfying, McIntosh believes his best performances came against open boats when he was second in the Eastaway Shield and the Liberty Cup. His boat can travel up to 125 miles per hour whereas the open boats can go up to 140 to 145 miles per hour. Both six-litre finals went to plan and McIntosh was a clear winner. McIntosh is a former champion barefoot water skier who has been around boats for most of his life. He turned to driving powerboats when injury forced an end to his skiing days. I commend Ryan McIntosh to the House.

Petitions

NEWCASTLE TRANSPORT

Discussion

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I am aware that there are strongly held opposing views on the matter that will be discussed. Parliamentary debate and discussion allows opposing views to be freely expressed without interference. Therefore I ask people in the gallery to refrain from clapping or distracting members involved in the discussion in any way, including verbally or visually.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (16:31): I thank the people in the gallery who have made the very long trip down to Parliament House today. They will get home very late, but we are very pleased that they are here and we welcome them. It is an enormous privilege to be elected by your community and I was elected because I share the values of the people in my community of justice, fairness and equality. I promised that I would stand up for those values in this place. To me, it is fair and just to have an essential public service that meets the needs of the community, and of course that includes public transport. For those who cannot drive, or who choose not to drive, a good public transport system ensures that they can get to where they need to go. It means they are independent and mobile. It means that no matter who a person is, that person can access essential services, employment opportunities and educational opportunities.

But in January this year, all of that changed for the people who live in the Newcastle region. Their lives were changed dramatically. Last year when I sought a meeting with the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to discuss my concerns before the changes came into effect, the Minister said to me in this Chamber, "Guess what?

Welcome to Opposition." That arrogance has characterised the Minister's approach to this issue. For the past four months, the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure has sat very smugly in this Chamber and ignored the chaos he created. He has belligerently deflected the legitimate concerns and criticisms raised by my colleagues and me by saying that he has seen no evidence that people are worse off. He wheeled out his cronies to peddle the spin that this is a world class transport system.

But Labor Opposition members know, and people in the gallery know, that this is a far cry from the reality of what we live with. What we have is poor connectivity, blowouts in journey times, reduced operating hours, and cuts to very vital services. If the Minister wants evidence, I have it in spades. In February this year, we had a meeting attended by more than a thousand people to protest against the changes and to hear the stories of people who were affected by those changes. In March, we marched. The police advised me that almost a thousand people attended that too. There are the 10,000 people who have signed this petition so that we can force the Government to debate this issue today. Yesterday, we tabled another 10,000 signatures, so we will be back here next month. We will not stop until we have our vital services reinstated.

The petition calls on the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to intervene and force the private provider to restore direct services to key destinations such as Charlestown. Last month the Minister claimed that there would be a review within three months of the new service commencing. Guess what? It is three months tomorrow, but we have seen absolutely nothing. If history has taught us anything, it is that whatever the Minister says should be treated with caution and cynicism. After last year's fake consultation, which led to the disastrous network that we have now, the private provider has said that it would tweak or refine the network and have a second round of consultation. Since then, we have nothing at all from the provider, and we do not expect to, because it is fake consultation all the way.

Our community has no confidence that the Minister can do his job. The Minister tells us that patronage figures have gone up, but his own website tells us something different. It tells us that numbers are down 11,500 on last year's figures. He cannot even get the figures right. People are abandoning public transport. It does not meet their needs, it is unreliable and it takes twice as long. In fact, the only full buses getting around Newcastle today were the ones the visitors in the public gallery were on. People are being left behind by this Government. There is no justice and there is no fairness in it at all. If the stories that we hear daily are not enough, how about this one? Last week, the Premier and Cabinet released its Hunter update. The Government has identified the Hunter as a youth unemployment hotspot. Guess what the greatest barrier is? Transport. [*Time expired.*]

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (16:36): I welcome the people in the public gallery from Newcastle and the Hunter to Parliament House.

Ms Yasmin Catley: And Lake Macquarie.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for Swansea has had her opportunity.

Mr Greg Piper: We are part of the Hunter.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: As the member for Lake Macquarie acknowledged, Lake Macquarie is part of the Hunter. As part of this, 90,000 bus trips have been analysed, and there will be some changes. I said that there would be a review, and the review has been taking place. I acknowledge the member for Lake Macquarie, who has been particularly proactive in his approach to raising concerns about the interchanging that has been happening. I remind everyone that changing timetables is a difficult business.

Ms Prue Car: Why change it?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I can understand that question being asked. But when patronage has dropped by 13 per cent—

[*Interruption*]

Patronage on transport had dropped over a long time.

[*Interruption*]

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Order! The member for Swansea will remove herself from the Chamber.

Ms Yasmin Catley: That is absolutely outrageous.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Under Standing Order 249 the member for Swansea will remove herself from the premises.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Swansea left the Chamber at 16:37 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Patronage had dropped by 13 per cent over a five-year period. One of the great things about introducing 1,200 new services into Newcastle and the Hunter—

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: When you chop up the route and turn it into three—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I sat there and listened quietly. Please give me the same respect of listening quietly. One of the great outcomes is that we have seen an increase in patronage. People might want to make remarks, but I remind the House that patronage reporting is made up of Opal and non-Opal data. Those opposite quoted selectively only some of the data. Non-opal data, which has not been incorporated into the figures that Opposition members are running around with includes fare-free zones, the School Student Transport Scheme, on-demand services, the Park and Ride service originating from the Hunter stadium and other elements of integrated ticketing.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Order! I remind the member for Newcastle that he is on three calls to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I am pleased—and Opposition members and the visitors from Newcastle can take comfort from this—that there will be some changes. The Government has listened.

Ms Prue Car: When?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Excuse me—seriously? There is a new timetable with 1,200 additional services, an uplift in ferry services, and a Newcastle light rail is being built, which those opposite opposed and now want me to extend. For some people who have caught the bus in a certain way for a long time, the new timetable has meant some change, both in the length of travel time and the interchange. We acknowledge that. But we also have more people catching buses, which is a good thing. There are some benefits from the timetable change for places such as Broadmeadow, near the railway station. We have four direct routes that have been implemented from suburbs to the city centre that run every 15 minutes between 7.00 a.m. and 7.00 p.m. Bus connections to key locations have been improved and those opposite know it. The aim of the review is to go back to look at the complaints that have been brought forward and respond accordingly. The member for Lake Macquarie acknowledges that, because there are some areas that he has been able to bring forward.

Mr Greg Piper: Hey.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: You have taken a very different approach.

Mr Greg Piper: That's true.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It is absolutely true; a constructive approach.

Ms Kate Washington: Oh, come on.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Are you going to attack the member for Lake Macquarie for his representation?

Mr Greg Piper: Don't get me shot.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I will not get you shot.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Order! The Minister will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I am happy to confirm that there has been improved access at Broadmeadow and Cardiff railway station. Opal data has revealed a surge in patronage between Cardiff Station and eastern Lake Macquarie since the new route 29 replaced the former route 352 from Belmont to Morisset. On-demand transport is designed to provide our seniors community, particularly, with the opportunity to get door-to-door transport and book that service. That service is growing. Very pleasingly, we are starting to see those types of services supporting our communities growing across the State. I thank the visitors in the public gallery for coming down. There will be some change as a result of their advocacy. Ultimately, we need to listen and work together on it. That is what hope those opposite will do.

Ms Trish Doyle: So the minister for incompetence is humble today? That's nice.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for Blue Mountains will come to order.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:41): I speak on the petition to restore direct bus services to key destinations such as Charlestown. I thank the 100 people who have travelled from Newcastle,

Lake Macquarie and the lower Hunter to sit in the public gallery this afternoon because they are deeply concerned about what has happened to their bus services. We are here today because the people in the public gallery and people like them are persistent and determined. They would not have had to do all of this if the Government had bothered to listen to people, such as those in the gallery, in the first place. Together, the electorates of Swansea and Charlestown have collected 10,000 signatures asking for the restoration of bus services to key destinations, such as the bus service that we had when it was in public hands. Yesterday, another 10,000 signatures were tabled, this time from the electorates of Newcastle and Wallsend.

But these people are not just signing petitions: they are writing letters, attending meeting and participating in rallies. Most of them have never done anything such as this before. These people are doing all they can to get the Government's attention, but the Government continues to ignore them. This Government's ignorance has gone so far that only yesterday the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure claimed to have rescued the Newcastle transport system. If the system has been rescued, why am I still being inundated with complaints from constituents whose buses are not turning up, or whose children are being left waiting for hours to get home schools or from the elderly and disabled who have become prisoners in their own homes. The arrogance and contempt that the Minister displayed yesterday is inexcusable. The Premier must stand up and show some leadership on this issue. She needs to fix our buses and sack the Minister before he ruins the lives of any more of my constituents. The people of the Hunter are sick and tired of being lied to by this Government. We were promised 1,000 additional bus services, but the old routes have been simply sliced up. If we chop one route into three, that does not add services—it cuts costs and it adds hours of inconvenience for commuters.

And this is another lie: The Minister told Parliament that Newcastle services have experienced a 5 per cent increase in patronage, but the Government's own Opal data—the same data used to create this mess—shows a 2 per cent decrease in patronage. On top of all this, on-time running has fallen from 87 per cent to 52 per cent. Only half the buses are running on time. These are not the additional and better services that we were promised. This is not the efficient, integrated transport system that we were promised. I call on the Government to stop fudging the figures, produce some reliable data and immediately review our bus network.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (16:45): I thank those in the gallery who have taken the time to travel a significant distance today to Parliament. This is an important process that opens up Parliament to the public through the mechanism of tabling a petition and receiving a response. This is democracy at work and I thank those in the gallery for taking part in it. Transport for NSW is working with Keolis Downer to transform the existing Newcastle bus and ferry network into a world-class service for Newcastle. The franchising of the Newcastle transport network has been designed to allow a single operator to run multiple transport modes, deliver timetable efficiency, provide easy connections and deliver a locally based approach to ensure that customers receive a world-class public transport experience. If that has not been delivered now, it is the aim.

The private sector has strong incentives to use infrastructure efficiently, deliver better operational performance and improve the customer experience. Private companies often are able to leverage significant global experience by operating multiple public transport networks to deliver better outcomes for customers. The Government has been working closely with the community to design a network that is suitable for local people. The Government will continue to try to reach that outcome if things are not currently satisfactory. The Government is listening. The development of the new network was strongly influenced by ideas from the Voice of Newcastle program.

The new network, which was launched in January this year, provides more than 1,200 extra weekly bus and ferry services and better connections between buses, trains and ferries. Four direct routes have been implemented from the outer suburbs to the city centre. Those services run every 15 minutes between 7.00 a.m. and 7.00 p.m., Monday to Friday. Bus connections have also been improved between key locations such as the John Hunter Hospital, the University of Newcastle, major shopping centres and the beaches.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Order! The member for Blue Mountains will come to order. I remind the member for Port Stephens that she is on three calls to order.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA: Interchanging is more convenient due to timetabled connections, with minimal waiting times between buses, ferries and trains. This is a well-designed, integrated transport network that aims to allow people to move around quickly and easily, provides for future population growth and supports the revitalisation of Newcastle. We are nine months into a 10-year journey to improve services in the region. We know that a number of improvements need to be made and that these cannot necessarily be addressed overnight. However, it is standard practice for operators to make network refinements over time and there is a commitment by the Government to continue to do that in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: I seek leave to contribute to the debate.

Leave not granted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Order! The member for Newcastle will resume his seat. If he continues to interject, he will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr Greg Piper: I seek leave to contribute to the debate.

Leave not granted.

Private Members' Statements

MILLER PUBLIC HOUSING OFFICE

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:49): I advise the House of a serious reduction in Government services within the electorate that I represent. In particular, departmental staff have confirmed to me the proposed closure of the Miller public housing office of the Department of Family and Community Services [FACS]. This is located in a square in Miller off Woodward Crescent. It is been in operation for as long as I have been the State member of Parliament for the area and for a considerable time beyond that—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. Visitors in the public gallery will leave quietly. The member for Liverpool is making a private member's statement on behalf of his constituents.

Mr Jonathan O'Dea: He has talked over much louder than that before.

Mr PAUL LYNCH: That is undoubtedly true. In short, the office has been there for decades. The closure of this office is consistent with other reductions in government services in my area, such as the closure of the Trustee and Guardian office in Liverpool leaving the nearest T and G office in Parramatta. Likewise, the Roads and Traffic Authority [RTA] office on the Hume Highway was closed to be replaced by a Service NSW outlet at Orange Grove at a location on the Cumberland Highway where public transport access is abysmal. In the square at Miller near the housing office the HUB Community Health Centre used to operate with Department of Health employees. That has now been privatised despite significant community opposition. Another adjacent service, the Living Fair cafe, funded by government was also discontinued. It is consistent with the Government's broken promise to move the headquarters of Multicultural NSW to Liverpool.

There is no apparent logic behind the closure of the housing office. It is located near the main shopping centre for the broader Green Valley area, in particular suburbs such as Ashcroft, Sadleir, Busby, Heckenberg, Miller and Cartwright. That means it is central to one of the largest public housing estates in New South Wales. All those suburbs were originally public housing, although over time through term contracts—now abolished—many tenants became owners. But this area still has a large number of public housing tenants—the most of any part of my electorate. That undoubtedly is why the housing office was established there in the first place. That is also the reason it should be kept there now. The office moving away from Miller reminds me of the *Yes Minister* episode where the most efficient hospitals were those without patients. The most efficient public housing offices will be those furthest from the tenants.

The office currently is where it should be—in the middle of the largest area of demand within the electorate of Liverpool. Closing the office and purporting to provide services elsewhere simply moves the service further from the point of need. As I understand it, the service will be relocated to a big new Family and Community Services building in the Liverpool central business district [CBD]. That no doubt realises financial benefit for the department, but it provides no benefit to my constituents in Green Valley. For some tenants, it is simply the inconvenience of having to travel further to attend the housing office. Granted the vagaries of public transport, not to mention the cost, that has obvious disadvantages.

The prospect of tenants driving to the Liverpool CBD to attend a housing office is not simple either. It is difficult enough to find a parking spot anywhere in the CBD now, especially in the vicinity of the new FACS building. If a spot is available, it has to be paid for and that is a significant issue for some of my constituents. Clearly, a decision has been made that the convenience of tenants is of less significance than the convenience of the department. Then there is the issue of tenants who have mobility issues. That is a serious problem for them. Their challenges are clearly of little concern to the current Government. This seems to reflect the Government's unreserved contempt for the tenants of Green Valley. It is consistent with a labyrinthine and inadequate system that the department has for maintenance—or non-maintenance as the case may be.

There is also the serious issue of what happens to the premises in both the long term and the short term. In the long term, will the site simply be flogged off to the private sector's highest bidder? That seems to be the precedent with the old RTA site on the Hume Highway and the Public Trustee site on the corner of Moore and Bathurst streets in the CBD. In my view, A more thoughtful consideration is merited but will undoubtedly not be

provided, granted the lack of interest displayed by this Government to this area. In the short term, leaving the premises vacant for any period can only have potentially adverse consequences. The absence of legitimate uses and those pursuing them raises the potential issue of space being occupied by non-legitimate uses, both in the building itself and in the square in front of it.

This is not just a theoretical concern; it is precisely what happened when the post office in the square closed a number of years ago. The closure of this office reflects significantly this Government's disdain for public housing tenants. There is no longer a Department of Housing or a Minister for Housing in this Government, and now there will be no housing office in Miller.

There has been a lengthy and sustained approach by this Government to treat public housing tenants and the residents of Green Valley with disregard. This is the last melancholy example in a dismal record. I know it is happening because departmental staff have spoken to me about it. The question is why has the Government not announced it? It is bad enough that this decision has been taken; the fact that it has been hidden by the Government makes it even more reprehensible.

COBBITTY RURAL FIRE SERVICE OPERA IN THE BARN

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (16:54): Today I inform the House about a wonderful fundraising event recently held in Camden for the Cobbitty Rural Fire Service to help build a training/meeting room on the rear of the station. I speak, of course, of Opera in the Barn. The concept for this event came from a chance meeting one Saturday morning when Peter Rabbidge, the captain of the Cobbitty Rural Fire Service, was out walking. He stopped to talk to Jodi McGuren who was painting her front fence. Jodi asked Peter how the fundraising was coming along for the much-needed extension to the fire station. Jodi kindly offered Peter her help. She told Peter that if he could find a venue, she would find the singers for a fundraising event.

I too acknowledge Jodi. She is my daughter's singing teacher and an outstanding person. Jodi is helping my daughter with her Higher School Certificate. Thank you, Jodi, for your wonderful efforts. Peter got to work and contacted Ian and Suzzi McIntosh to see if the Rural Fire Service could use their barn. They did not hesitate. Their barn has been used by multiple film crews in television shows and movies. Peter now had a venue and Jodi, as good as her word, found the singers. With that, Opera in the Barn was born. True to the spirit of Cobbitty and the greater Camden area, local businesses, the local school and community groups offered their help.

I acknowledge the following wonderful individuals, businesses and groups: Ian and Suzzi McIntosh, owners of the barn at historic Denbigh, Cobbitty; the Cobbitty Community Choir—director Jodie McGuren, accompanist Belinda Vaccaro, master of ceremonies Simon Duck, soloists Rebecca Currier and Gaetano Bonfante, sopranos Renee Cowper, Carol Bons, Karina Wagner, Joy Pennock and Samantha Hurenkamp, altos Marie Kovac, Alana Dirmendjian, Nerida Klupp, Margaret Tacey, Joan Matthews and Shannon O'Connell, tenors Alicia Hodson, Michelle Irwin and Lisa Eliot, and basses Warren Thurtell and Willem Hurenkamp.

I acknowledge also the following businesses and organisations: Cobbitty Public School, led by principal Dawn Dallas and her staff who do an outstanding job; Icon Visual; Camden Hire; Cobbitty Bakehouse; Camden's Men's Shed and Radio 2GB. The Cobbitty brigade members, who work tirelessly to give so much to our community, include Peter Rabbidge, Annabell Lawler, Shaun Lawler, Andy Fairhead, Giovanni Cortellazzi, Adam Coffin, Rob Wilson, Alex Turner, Andrew Kimball, Mick Gallagher, Nick Wilson, Jim Leeming and Alex Franks. Thank you Peter and all the team for not only volunteering on the day but for also protecting our community. Everyone I have mentioned came together and gave their all.

On Sunday 4 March more than 250 people, some travelling quite a distance to be there, came together and spent a wonderful afternoon enjoying Opera in the Barn. I can hear my colleagues saying, "Name them"; if time permitted, I would. However, I will name Allison from my office. She and her family went to Opera in the Barn and thought it was an outstanding day. Thanks to the volunteers, sponsors and guests \$12,500 was raised. That money will be combined with other fundraising to build the extension at Cobbitty Rural Fire Station. I congratulate Peter Rabbidge and all involved at the Cobbitty Rural Fire Service and Jodi McGuren and all the wonderful singers she organised for Opera in the Barn.

I congratulate Ian and Suzzi McIntosh, the many volunteers, the community and everyone who came together to ensure that this fundraising event would directly benefit the Cobbitty Rural Fire Brigade. The people of Cobbitty, Camden and the wider Macarthur district have come together in a show of spirit to help the fire brigade which has contributed so much to so many over so long in this community. I thank each and every one of them for their efforts and look forward to the next Opera in the Barn.

MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:59): I inform the House of the wonderful work occurring in the Myall Lakes electorate in relation to education infrastructure and maintenance. The Government is providing millions of dollars towards the replacement of demountables at Old Bar Public School. Work will commence soon on seven or eight classrooms, and they are expected to be completed in May 2019. Old Bar Public School, a little school on the beach at Old Bar, has a fantastic school community and great teachers doing great work. I am pleased the Government is providing the facilities and infrastructure at this school that will assist the teachers to get the best outcomes for the students. As part of the process, a design team was appointed and there were project reference group meetings. The concept design is completed and the planning approvals have been lodged. Following finalisation of the construction contract, which is currently being considered, the total amount of funding will be announced.

Another project underway is the new facade and administration area for the Taree High School at a cost of over \$1 million. That is expected to be completed mid-2018. Principal Allison Alliston and her staff are extremely excited about that project. The upgrade is in addition to previous works. Right next door is Taree Public School, which has had a total hall renovation and repair work to areas that had problems with rising damp, water in the buildings and wood rot. At Bobin Public School, a little school with no more than 10 students, more than \$70,000 has been provided for roofs, coating systems and floor coverings. Bulahdelah Central School has approximately \$160,000 worth of maintenance work on coating systems and roofs. Chatham High School is receiving well over \$500,000 for a sound upgrade and the supply and installation of solar photovoltaic cells and for coating systems, floor coverings and roofs and school canteen maintenance.

Coolongolook Public School, which is another small school that would be known to members who travel on the Pacific Highway, is receiving approximately \$10,000 for floor coverings. Cundletown Public School is receiving \$20,000. Elands Public School, a little school on top of the mountain where the mighty Ellenborough Falls are located—one of the places that Destination NSW encourages people to visit—is receiving approximately \$40,000. Access work will be carried out at Forster Public School. That work is still under tender and the contractor will be advised soon. Approximately \$20,000 has been provided for coating systems and floor coverings at that school. Great Lakes College Forster Campus will have \$1.6 million spent on maintenance, floor coverings, painting, the removal of pavers and concrete paths, and coating systems.

Hallidays Point Public School and Kramback Public School will each have \$30,000 spent on maintenance. Manning Gardens Public School in Taree will receive about \$130,000 worth of maintenance work. Mitchells Island Public School, a small school on an island that is part of the delta system of the entrance to the Manning River, will receive \$18,000. That school has no more than 20 students. It is great to see small schools in the coastal areas and villages in the hinterland all being recognised by this Government with assistance for maintenance work. Maintenance of schools is extremely important. We were left a maintenance backlog of about a billion dollars by the previous Labor Government, and we are doing a great job in working through that. There are a number of other schools receiving funding that I do not have time to mention now.

NORTH HAVEN OP SHOP VOLUNTEER ADA LATHAM

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:04): I speak today about North Haven resident Ada Latham, who recently retired from operating her op shop at North Haven at the age of 93. Ada is an outstanding community volunteer who started her op shop almost 30 years ago, running garage sales from her home to raise funds for her local church in Bonny Hills. As Ada's business grew, it became apparent that larger premises were needed. Ada moved into a shopfront in North Haven which allowed her to continue selling preloved clothing to the local community. A number of years later, when further shop space became available, the shop expanded once again to make room for second-hand furniture, as well as a variety of other goods. Anyone who knows Ada knows that her sense of community and willingness to help others knows no bounds. In the almost 30 years that she has been running her op shop, Ada and her team of volunteers have raised \$53,200 for the CareFlight rapid response team and a whopping \$153,437.54 for the Children's Hospital at Westmead.

In 2011, in recognition of the funds raised, the Children's Hospital at Westmead invited her to see for herself the vital services that the money had provided for the facility. This donation from Ada and her op shop to the hospital has gone a long way to assist in its vital work of maintaining the health and wellbeing of children from all over the State of New South Wales. Ada's op shop also contributed more than \$100,000 towards the building of the Bonny Hills Church of Christ, a project that is very close to Ada's heart. The donation in excess of \$55,000 to CareFlight will assist in its vital work in transporting injured and ill patients from rural and remote areas to emergency hospital care. More recently, Ada and her op shop have paid for a training room, staffroom, a portable pump, global positioning system units and citizen band radios for the Camden Haven and Bonny Hills brigades of the NSW Rural Fire Service. In recognition of this outstanding generosity, the Camden Haven Rural

Fire Service awarded Ada an honorary life membership of the brigade. She is the first person to be given this honour in more than 40 years.

I also recognise all of the wonderful individuals who have spent countless hours volunteering their time at Ada's op shop over the past 30 years. I thank every one of these volunteers for their sense of community and their very practical and much-appreciated generosity. Their willingness to be of service to their local community has also benefited the wider community and lies at the very heart of what it means to be a volunteer: to assist others with no thought of personal gain. I extend my sincere and heartfelt congratulations to Ada, whom I had the pleasure of meeting recently at her farewell event. I wish her all the best for a happy, peaceful and well-deserved retirement. Although Ada officially retired on 24 March this year, her fundraising efforts will continue to benefit others, just as her incredible dedication and sense of community will continue to inspire others in our community for many years to come.

HOLROYD HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL DOROTHY HODDINOTT

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (17:07): I recognise the outstanding contribution to our community made by Mrs Dorothy Hoddinott, who has been the Principal of Holroyd High School in Greystanes for the past 23 years. Dorothy is an inspirational, outspoken and courageous leader, and I consider her to be a role model as well as a friend. Amongst her many honours are that she was an Australian Human Rights Awards medallist in 2014 and the Australian College of Educators' College Medal winner in 2012, the first time a practising school educator had received that award. She was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2008.

Holroyd High School is a small school with a focus on quality learning in a supportive environment. In 2016, 62 per cent of students were in the lowest quintile of socioeconomic status [SES] and 84 per cent were in the two lowest quintiles, 60 per cent were refugees, 88 per cent came from a non-English-speaking background, and 51 per cent had been in Australia for less than three years. Over time, the school's population has changed and reflects the waves of refugee and asylum seeker children who have fled conflicts and humanitarian disasters since 1995—from Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Burma.

Despite these challenges, under Dorothy's leadership the school achieves above State-average results in the National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy [NAPLAN] and in Higher School Certificate examinations. In 2017, 67 per cent of the school's graduates received university offers. This is nothing short of remarkable. Despite the disadvantaged background of the majority of students, they flourished at Holroyd High School. It is a real turnaround for students who come from families who had little or no education before coming to Australia to have the same opportunities as other young people in New South Wales.

Working for the past 53 years as a teacher, Dorothy Hoddinott has worked in numerous schools, starting at Beverly Hills Girls High School, followed by a stint overseas in Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Italy. On returning to Australia she took up roles at Punchbowl Boys High School, Leichhardt High School, a predecessor to the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW, Bankstown Boys High School, Wiley Park Girls High School and then Holroyd High School. Dorothy has told me of the highlights for her in that period: First, demonstrating that you can take a disadvantaged school population and lead them to educational success; secondly, working with disadvantaged groups of children—whether they be refugees, migrants, children with disabilities, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children, or young girls—success is possible across the board; and, thirdly, establishing the Friends of Zainab scholarship trust in 2002 to support the education of young asylum seekers, which has helped hundreds of students, including young people at university, last year.

The concept has been extended by the Public Education Foundation, and hundreds more refugee children across New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory now benefit. Working with a disadvantaged school community has meant Dorothy has had to engage with State and Federal government policies that affect the lives of her students. Dorothy believes strongly that governments should not ignore international conventions on children's rights and, because of her advocacy, there is now an acceptance that refugee children on bridging or temporary protection visas have the right to finish their schooling. For Dorothy, refugee advocacy is not just a noble cause. The way refugees and asylum seekers are treated in Australia affects whether her students flourish or struggle for years with uncertainty. In an opinion article for the *Sydney Morning Herald* in December 2014, Dorothy wrote:

... our continuing denial of basic human rights to asylum seekers diminishes us as Australians and casts doubt on our democratic institutions.

We have children in the school who have seen their parents murdered ... who have been raped ... who have fled for their lives and have come by boat to Australia, seeking safety, and have instead been locked up in detention centres, watching the adult world around them disintegrate into despair and madness.

A July 2015 report in *Women of the World*, entitled "Meet the kindest principal in the world", vividly summarises Dorothy's approach to such a mammoth challenge:

I think the deliberate punishing of people who have sought asylum ... has to be the cruellest thing we could ever do to young people.

It can be the catalyst for the sort of despair that leads to terrorism at its most extreme, and to mental illness at the other end of the spectrum

Here at Holroyd we are doing two things. We are formally educating children, but we are also educating people, not just to be citizens of Australia, but citizens of the world. I think we should be all thinking in that big picture way.

Dorothy has matched those thoughts with tireless action and only today had the great news that the Khalil family, whom she has supported, will be allowed to stay on in Australia. This year is the fiftieth anniversary of Holroyd High School, the fifty-third anniversary of the start of Dorothy's teaching career and the twenty-third anniversary of her appointment at Holroyd High School. Her career has been characterised by fixing what appeared to be insurmountable problems.

While Dorothy is retiring from employment I know she will not retire from public life. I wish her well for her continuing role as pro-chancellor at the University of Sydney and her ongoing commitment to CareerSeekers, a non-profit organisation supporting Australia's humanitarian entrants into professional careers. On behalf of the thousands of students whose lives she has touched for the better, on behalf of the school community of Holroyd High School, and for all of us for whom she spoke when defending human rights, I give heartfelt thanks to Dorothy Hoddinott. Dorothy, I know you are in the gallery this evening and, with my parliamentary colleagues, I say thank you for your work over the past 53 years and best wishes for the future.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (17:13): I have been asked to provide this statement in reply to the House on behalf of the Minister for Education, who is currently on a plane to the Education Council in Adelaide. He asked me to thank the member for Granville for acknowledging Dorothy Hoddinott's extraordinary contribution to public education in New South Wales. The following quote is from the Minister for Education, Rob Stokes:

I know that many members and former members of this place—including former Education Minister Adrian Piccoli and Opposition spokesman Jihad Dib—also hold Dorothy in the highest regard for her proud record of service marked by the utmost professionalism, a desire for excellence, and a deep compassion for all students in her care across her long career. I wish Dorothy well for a rewarding and exciting retirement.

KYOGLE SHIRE REDEVELOPMENT

Mr THOMAS GEORGE (Lismore) (17:14): I am honoured to represent some of the most culturally diverse and naturally beautiful country towns in the State. Today I speak about one of those towns and what the Government is doing to improve its lifestyle, wellbeing and infrastructure. Kyogle shire is surrounded by rich farmlands and heritage-listed national parks and is made up of spectacular small villages. Recently, I had the honour of officiating at the opening of the upgraded Kyogle water treatment plant. The New South Wales Government provided \$6.4 million for the Kyogle water supply augmentation scheme, which in addition to the treatment plant included the construction of a 200-megalitre off-stream storage dam, diversion of waste water from the water treatment plant to the sewerage system, and provision for fish passage over the existing in-stream weir. Kyogle Council has been planning this water augmentation project for more than 10 years and I commend it for its management of this \$8.2 million project.

The New South Wales Government is committed to helping Kyogle thrive. Grants of almost \$1 million to Kyogle Council from our Stronger Country Communities Fund are going towards redeveloping the Kyogle Aquatic Centre. This project includes the design of a new structure to house an indoor gym and amenities, and will also enclose the existing medium-sized pool and provide for a separate filtration and heating system. A further \$220,000 has been allocated to upgrade the Kyogle Memorial Institute Hall to accommodate the council's art gallery and improve the accessibility and functionality of the building for all residents and visitors.

Other projects to receive funding include the installation of a new outdoor covered stage at the Kyogle Amphitheatre Parklands, which will be appreciated by the community and visitors alike; Kyogle All Active expansion, involving the installation of additional outdoor gym equipment at three new sites and improvements to the facilities at the existing Anzac Park site, including pathways, accessible toilet, and fencing for the playground area; installation of street trees and garden beds in the main street of Kyogle; the improvement of Kyogle Recreation Reserve; and a lot of work at the Woodenbong Recreation Reserve.

In addition, I was proud to have Minister Pru Goward in Kyogle recently to announce Kyogle's share in the latest round of the Social Housing Community Improvement Fund. Not-for-profit community organisation Kyogle Together was awarded a grant of nearly \$39,000 to refurbish the youth centre, including renovations to the toilet facilities to improve disability access. I was very pleased to make this announcement with Chris Hutton, the youth service coordinator of Kyogle Together. Unfortunately the manager, Sharyn Marshall, was unable to be there, but she and Chris are doing a fantastic job for Kyogle youth. I know that not only the youth but the whole community appreciate the work being done by Kyogle Together. This Government is committed to delivering the

infrastructure that northern New South Wales needs to prosper. Kyogle is a great place to live, work and raise a family, and I congratulate and thank the Coalition Government on continually delivering for my electorate.

CHERRYBROOK SCOUT GROUP MOVIE UNDER THE STARS

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (17:18): On Saturday 3 March this year, I had the pleasure to once again attend the annual Movie Under the Stars, hosted by the 1st Cherrybrook Scouts at John Purchase Oval in Cherrybrook—one of the biggest and best ever. This fantastic local community event in my electorate brings together more than 2,500 local residents, families and friends in a most relaxed and cordial atmosphere. By way of background, Cherrybrook Movie Under the Stars was first held in 2012 as part of a celebration to open the refurbished John Purchase Oval. Hornsby Shire Council, through then local councillor Bruce Mills, approached Cherrybrook Scouts and John Purchase Public School to run this event as a community celebration of the new facilities. Both the scouts and the school jumped at the chance to be involved in such a celebration and provide a night of fun and entertainment for the Cherrybrook community. A good crowd of just under 1,000 people attended this first event. The night was a huge success, so much so that all three parties conducted an even bigger event for 2013, with the screening of *Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted*.

The event grew even larger in 2015, with the screening of *The Lego Movie* and fireworks finale, with a crowd of over 2,200 people enjoying the night. In 2016 the 1st Cherrybrook Scout Group continued to deliver this great community event with *Minions* and a fireworks finale to a crowd of 2,500. The 2018 event continues that success. I extend congratulations to those responsible for the planning and preparation. Clearly they put into practice the scout motto "Be Prepared", as nothing was left to chance. Every conceivable safety aspect was considered and implemented; there were ample food stalls, with the mandatory Aussie barbeque, refreshments and convenience amenities provided.

I particularly acknowledge the contributions of the volunteer Scout masters, who helped make this event possible—Bruce Mills, Steve Hunt, Mark Hopkins, Dave Noble, Meena Kshideshpande, Arun Garg, Vineet Sanghi, Janice Jian and Champion Fernando. It is amazing how Scouts have embraced the multicultural community that lives in Cherrybrook and the number who regard scouting as an important part of their family activity. These people should all be commended for another successful event this year. We were fortunate also that the weather held out, as last year's event was disrupted by rain.

This event would not be possible without the generous giving of time by numerous volunteers from the Scouts—members of St John Ambulance and the Cherrybrook Rural Fire Brigade, along with teachers and primary students, who entertained the large gathering, together with mums and dads who cooked, distributed and manned the various tables. The movie *Finding Dory* was a huge hit with children and adults alike. Afterwards attendees were entertained by a fireworks display the likes of which has never been seen in Cherrybrook, turning the night sky into daylight thanks to the offer by Howard & Sons, gurus of pyrotechnics. This annual fundraiser assists the local Scout troop to do all the good for which it is renowned. However, it would not have been the success it was had it not been for sponsorship from Hornsby Shire Council, West Pennant Hills Sports Club and support from Martelli's Fruit Market, Cherrybrook, Signarama, Kindalin Early Childhood Learning Centre and other sponsors.

I respect the Scout movement and believe it nurtures a healthy mind and body in young people. There is an old saying, "The devil finds work for lazy hands," as the member for Rockdale knows, but in the Scouts he has met his match. The Scout movement caters for boys and girls from the ages of six and seven called Joey Scouts who, at this tender age, are encouraged to make friends with all newcomers. At age eight to 11 they move to the Cubs, where they learn basic knot skills, how to read maps and a compass, and how to safely rock climb, abseil, camp, bushwalk and sail. Then they move on to Scouts, Guides, Venturers and Rovers, making an important contribution to the community at every level. In an era in which young Australians are increasingly glued to their screens, becoming involved in movements such as the Scouts and Guides provides a much-needed break from those things. I again congratulate the 1st Cherrybrook Scouts on another outstanding event and thank the volunteers who made it happen.

ROCKDALE ELECTORATE PLANNING

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (17:23): I raise with the House a fantastic result that my community has recently achieved in the retention of public land for public purposes. I inform the House that I was shocked last year to discover a plan by the Department of Education to seek a high-rise rezoning for the former Cairnsfoot School site at Loftus Street, Turrella, in preparation for its sale. However, as I know the Minister for Education is a decent and sensible man with a strong background in planning, I immediately wrote to him seeking a sensible intervention in the matter. To give the House some context, the former Cairnsfoot site does not merely hold significance in its lengthy tenure as a school for children with disabilities in the St George region; it is also of great historical significance, having been constructed in 1884 and being one of just 20 State heritage items

across the entire St George region. It would have been an absolute travesty to see it fall out of public hands as just another high-rise unit site and an entirely unfair outcome for local residents. Every school in the area is at or over capacity, and we have another school site, Arncliffe West Infants School, that would love the opportunity to expand.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the work done by the Minister for Education in supporting schools, students and parents in my community through the reclassification of Kyeemagh Infants School from K-2 to K-6. That result was made possible by the Minister's willingness to take sensible advice from stakeholders, and not let himself be blinded by hyper-partisanship or political brinkmanship—otherwise known as game-playing. That is why I knew that when I wrote to Minister Stokes I would get a fair hearing and that my proposal to retain the former Cairnsfoot Special School site would be considered on its merits. Unfortunately, that was not to be.

I understand that parliamentary secretaries play an important role in supporting the work of the Executive as well as giving an opportunity for young talent to develop before the training wheels are taken off in the Ministry. I am sad to inform the House that while I am sure the Minister's Parliamentary Secretary is a bright young talent, unfortunately it appears that he is not quite ready to take off those training wheels, given his mismanagement of this issue. Frankly, I was disappointed to receive the brief and dismissive response of the member for Kiama to what was a reasonable and nonpartisan request. I would like an explanation as to why the Parliamentary Secretary felt the need to write the following:

Unlike the former Labor Government, we have ensured that decisions about property matters are dealt with independently.

If the Parliamentary Secretary thinks that flogging off a public school site during the property boom in a location with a great deal of historical and cultural significance to local residents and to the people of New South Wales should be dealt with independently, I do not think he understands the concept of executive responsibility, representative politics, or common sense. Running our children's schools requires more than a crash course in ideological combat.

Fortunately, what could not be seen by the Parliamentary Secretary was evident to the parents and citizens association of Arncliffe West Infants School. I thank and acknowledge Daygna Saleh, the other local parents, and my good friend the fabulous shadow Minister for Education, Jihad Dib, who fought for this outcome. I thank Minister Stokes, who responded with a commitment to maintaining the site in public hands for educational purposes within hours of being made aware of the situation. I once again thank the Minister for his decency in this matter. The Minister should be able to rely on the support of his Parliamentary Secretary. It is a sad state of affairs when he must clean up after his understudy. The letter from the Parliamentary Secretary starts well with, "Dear Mr S Kamper". The "Mr S Kamper" is crossed out and "Steve" has been written in. The rest of it is a crap sandwich. It states:

Unlike the former Labor Government, ... decisions about property matters are dealt with independently.

I am worried about what the Parliamentary Secretary is implying regarding the Minister's actions. I again thank Minister Stokes for committing to retain the site, and I look forward to discussing the future use of the site for a local community school.

SEVEN HILLS ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:27): I take this opportunity to refer to a recent visit by the Treasurer, the Hon. Dom Perrottet, to Seven Hills and the New South Wales Government's achievements which have provided jobs and growth for my constituents and helped to reduce cost-of-living pressures across my electorate. I was delighted to be joined by the Treasurer in visiting a number of local small- and medium-sized businesses throughout the area. We visited the Pendle Hill Meat Market and spoke with the owner, Charlie, about jobs and his fantastic company, which provides goods for many people. The market employs more than 120 local people, many of whom come from diverse backgrounds. The employees speak a range of languages, including Italian and Maltese.

This great local business has been operating for more than 40 years and is family owned. His son, Jason, also works there. For as long as I can remember, Charlie and his business have been stalwarts of the community. I can remember Charlie's original business specialising in bacon when I was a kid growing up in Toongabbie. The business is staffed with dedicated employees, such as great butchers and kind service people who stock the freshest meats, produce, condiments and frozen goods for more than 6,000 weekly Western Sydney customers. If members are ever in the Pendle Hill area they should support the Western Sydney economy by purchasing quality bargains from the Pendle Hill Meat Market.

This Government's strong economic management and continued jobs growth enables small- and medium-sized businesses to flourish. In particular, businesses such as Charlie's continue to grow and employ more locals. Since April 2011, under the stewardship of this Treasurer and his predecessors, the Liberal-Nationals

Government has created more than 480,000 new jobs. This State has the lowest unemployment rate in the nation. That means more job opportunities for those looking to earn a wage in order to support themselves and their families, which has benefited many Seven Hills locals.

Since 2015 women have taken up 62 per cent of all new jobs created—the beginning of the Coalition's second term in office. Youth unemployment rates in New South Wales are far below the rates of any other State, providing our young people with more opportunities to earn a living and to get a good start. The budget is once more back in surplus after this Government inherited a Labor deficit of \$5.2 billion. The Government has also forecast a surplus, which will enable it to deliver critical infrastructure and services in Western Sydney and the Seven Hills electorate.

Through its Easy to do Business program the Government is helping small business owners focus on their business and employees rather than red tape and bureaucracy. Through the Growing Local Economies fund the Government is investing in projects that will create jobs and engender economic growth in regional New South Wales. Most importantly, since 2011, with the abolition of taxes, the Government has led a pro-reform agenda on duties and levies leaving more than \$2.7 billion in the pockets of taxpayers, which will benefit residents in my electorate. The Government's enhanced financial position enables it to help those in need, and all citizens in New South Wales, with cost-of-living pressures.

An accessible system being trialled by Service NSW in my electorate will remedy cost-of-living pressures for residents of Seven Hills, Kings Langley and Lalor Park. Locals will receive refunds for compulsory third party [CTP] insurance and vehicle registrations, and will receive the Active Kids Rebate. The CTP reform will see motorists save approximately \$120 each year on green slip insurance. Free vehicle registration will soon be available to all motorists who spend more than \$25 a week on tolls. That will save motorists hundreds and hundreds of dollars per annum. The Active Kids Rebate will enable parents to claim \$100 per child, per calendar year for sporting costs.

The Government implemented the nation's most comprehensive energy relief package in conjunction with water rebates, which is reducing expenses for those in need. It is boosting the energy rebate by 20 per cent, which will help around 900,000 New South Wales households. Changes to public hospital parking fees will save patients as much as \$200 a week. Recently, the Premier, the Health Minister, the member for Riverstone and I talked to patients at Blacktown Hospital about that initiative. The Government is dealing with cost-of-living pressures through the abolition of taxes and widespread rebates and refunds. The people of New South Wales, and in particular those in the Seven Hills electorate, have more money in their pockets. These are great initiatives following a great visit to my electorate by the Treasurer of New South Wales.

ALBURY ELECTORATE LUTHERAN COMMUNITY

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (17:33): German immigrants living in and around the Barossa Valley in the mid-nineteenth century had a six-week trek to reach the Albury region. They were in wooden wagons, rumbling over rudimentary roads and pushing through when there was no track at all. Schulz, Klemke, Paech, Lieschke, Lutze, Muller, Zweck, Wundersitz—when we travel throughout Australia and start hearing these names on the street or in the shops, we know that we have hit a pocket of Lutherans and they have quite a story to tell. These names have resonated across the Albury electorate for a century and a half. The internal migration of hardy German settlers along the Murray River and the purchase of cheaper, better quality land than they could obtain in South Australia led to the towns of Jindera, Henty, Walla Walla and Culcairn. As noted in an 1867 edition of Melbourne's *The Argus*: They have turned their attention to the Albury district, because good land can be purchased there at £1 per acre with time allowed to pay the purchase money. One day last week 1775 acres were thus taken up at the Albury land office. The new arrivals bring with them a sufficiency of capital, and also bring teams, wagons, and farming implements in working order.

The immigrants were well known for being steady, respectable, hardworking, industrious people who were fair in their commercial dealings. Wherever they went, the Lutherans established three things: well-run farms, a church and a school. This year I join local Lutherans in celebrating 150 years of Lutheran education on the border, which began with the founding of St John's Jindera. In those early years, the school ran to a particularly apt timetable. The school released the children for farm and house work at 2.00 p.m. every day, and closed throughout the harvest season. The annual school examinations ended with a family picnic, sport and a holiday. It does not sound like NAPLAN! These are priorities that we have, perhaps, lost. It is estimated that 20,000 German Lutherans made the voyage from Prussia to South Australia between 1838 and 1860. The majority of their descendants are found in Queensland and South Australia, but a goodly number put down roots along the New South Wales-Victoria border.

German remained the dominant language at home, in school and at church for three or four generations, with moves to introduce the English language picking up speed during the First World War, but taking until the

Second World War to complete the transition. St John's Jindera is the second oldest continuous Lutheran school in Australia. Its principal for the past 19 years has been Sharon Kotzur, who will retire at the conclusion of term 1. Part of her legacy is the growth in enrolments—from fewer than 100 when she started working as a teacher at St John's in 1992, to 250 students now. The primary school had a single stream up to the early 1980s, when it started a double stream, offering a wider choice to students. St John's describes itself as "a loving school, dedicated to providing a safe learning environment, inspiring all to achieve their full potential". The school says:

We recognise the diversity of learners, encourage and develop respect for others, and a love for learning.

Now in its third location within Jindera, having moved to the present site in 1924, St John's has a strong focus on pastoral care and Christian support. A fine example is the school's Samaritan Care program, which "provides practical care for those who are sick, or celebrating the birth of a baby or are otherwise in need of assistance or simply a blessing, within the school, congregation and community". Regular cook-offs are held, preparing meals to be taken to "families in need of a blessing at a time when most needed".

A second Lutheran school in my electorate, St Paul's College Walla Walla, held its own celebrations in March, having reached its 70-year anniversary. St Paul's is well known for its excellent equine and agricultural studies, as well as for its boarding facilities. Today, I send out my appreciation for the works and presence of the Lutheran Church and its schools across the electorate of Albury. For their dedication to education I thank the Principal of St Paul's College Walla Walla Donald Walkley; St John's Primary School Jindera Principal Sharon Kotzur; and Principal of St Paul's Lutheran Primary School Kaylene McClure. In preparing these words I acknowledge the work of F. J. H. Blaess and the one hundredth year committee of St Paul's Lutheran congregation Henty, who have faithfully recorded Lutheran history. Lutherans pray for many things, but one constant is their prayer for "good and merciful government". We honour their trust and prayers when we enact good and merciful government in this place.

PRINCES HIGHWAY FIX IT NOW CAMPAIGN

Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (17:38): On many occasions I have spoken in this Chamber about the Princes Highway. This will not be the last time. Today I inform the House of a new campaign, spearheaded by Fairfax Media entitled FIX IT NOW. The campaign, led by *South Coast Register* and *Milton Ulladulla Times* Editor John Hanscombe—who is joined by editors of Fairfax Media's South Coast newspapers, politicians, emergency service personnel and members of the community—aims to secure an 80:20 funding formula between the Commonwealth and State governments to enable major upgrades to the Princes Highway south of Nowra—and, of specific relevance to me—to Milton.

I congratulate John Hanscombe on his ongoing efforts to highlight the importance of upgrading the Princes Highway. On far too many occasions the front pages of Fairfax papers have contained images of those who have lost their lives on precarious sections of the Princes Highway. As part of the FIX IT NOW campaign, those photos are once again covering the pages of local publications—I am sure many members have seen them—in an effort to put a human face on the tragic loss of life we on the South Coast have experienced recently, and over an extended period of time.

In the past 18 months, 10 people have lost their lives on the South Coast. That is totally unacceptable— one life is too many. I am proud to join and support the FIX IT NOW campaign and use this opportunity to again call on the Commonwealth Government to provide an 80:20 funding split to ensure we can get on with improving safety on the Princes Highway and delivering what South Coast residents expect and are now calling for. Since our election to office in 2011 this Government has spent or committed more than \$2 billion to the Princes Highway on the South Coast. This includes upgrades at Gerringong, South Nowra and Termeil, the Berry bypass—work is progressing on the Berry to Bomaderry upgrade.

Last month the Premier of New South Wales, Gladys Berejiklian, visited the South Coast to officially open the \$58 million Burrill Lake Bridge project and inspect progress on the \$45 million Dignams Creek upgrade further south. She also headed north to turn the first sod on the Albion Park Rail bypass. This Government is also undertaking safety improvements along the length and breadth of the Princes Highway, including the most recent installation of wire-rope barriers and road widening on the highway at Bendalong. This was the site of a horrific accident on Boxing Day last year in which five people lost their lives.

Throughout the same period the Commonwealth spend on major infrastructure work on the Princes Highway has been disappointing, to say the least. Our community was concerned to hear the Commonwealth's recent announcements to commit significant funding to road projects in Queensland. Recently \$1 billion was committed for the construction of two projects on the M1 with the Commonwealth entering into a 50:50 funding agreement with the Queensland Government to deliver those upgrades. This is on top of the Commonwealth Government committing \$225 million in funding for Pacific Motorway projects in the same region. Two weeks ago the Commonwealth Government entered into a 80:20 funding agreement with the Queensland Government

to deliver upgrades to the Bruce Highway, committing \$150 million, which comes on top of \$530 million in funding already allocated by the Commonwealth Government to the Bruce Highway between Bribie Island Road and Steve Irwin Way.

I welcome expenditure by the Commonwealth Government to deliver vital infrastructure upgrades to roads across the nation. However, the excuse given—"It is a State road and it is their responsibility"—for why no investment has been made into the Princes Highway does not wash any longer when we consider the commitments made on State highways elsewhere. The Pacific Motorway and the Bruce Highway are State highways that have received 80:20 funding agreements. This Government has done a great deal of work and it will continue delivering upgrades to the Princes Highway irrespective of any funding agreement.

Over the past months I have been working closely with Roads and Maritime Services [RMS], as well as the member for Kiama; Minister for Roads, Freight and Maritime, Melinda Pavey; the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, and Member for Bega, Andrew Constance; and the Premier, who are also committed to improving safety on the Princes Highway. Together we are identifying the most dangerous sections on the Princes Highway that require immediate improvement. My priority is to address those precarious and dangerous intersections along that highway, particularly Island Point Road. At this intersection we have already seen loss of life and urgent safety works must be undertaken. I will continue to work with the Ministers and RMS to identify further safety works that are required on the highway to ensure we are able to increase safety for motorists in the near future. I again congratulate all involved with the FIX IT NOW campaign. They have an advocate in me and I will not stop until the South Coast region sees a commitment by the Federal Government for 80:20 funding. This must be a partnership and our investment should be met by the Commonwealth Government.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM "BILL" JOHN DISNEY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (17:43): On 1 March I attended the funeral of William "Bill" John Disney, OAM, a stalwart of the Dudley community for more than 80 years. I pay tribute to Bill, who had a huge impact on Dudley becoming the community it is today. Bill was a remarkable man who was proudly Australian and who dedicated his life to his family and to his beloved Dudley. In fact, his obituary read, "Always of Dudley". I thank Bill's family, in particular his daughter, Penny, who gave the eulogy at his funeral and who provided an insight into who Bill Disney was. The funeral began with a national anthem, which we all sang, which typified Bill's patriotic dedication to Australia.

William John Disney was born on 10 December 1934 and attended Dudley Primary School, where he met and fell in love with the girl he would marry and love all his life, Beverly Wiseman. Bill's work life started at age 10 as a paper boy. Bill was a character, and he started showing this at a young age. Bill always wanted leftover papers so that after a paper run he could go to the local hotels and sell them to the workers or drunks who would pay more than the paper was worth—he never waited for their change. As a 12-year-old, Bill sold chocolates and ice creams at the local Dudley movie theatre, running between the store next door and the theatre, delivering the ice creams before they melted. Bill was not fond of high school because it was not in his beloved Dudley. At age 16, he told his mother he was leaving school. His mum did not like the idea unless he had a job, and she told him so. Bill, a young man of action, headed straight to the local butcher, returning home to proudly tell his mum that he had an apprenticeship.

Bill and Bev married on 24 March 1956 and had five children: Robert, Kerry, Steven, who is deceased, Penny and Bevan. One story that Penny told at Bill's funeral aptly demonstrates Bill's involvement in the community. Joe from Cooks Hill owed money to the milkman, so he headed off to pay the Cooks Hill milko, who was, in fact, Bill Disney. Not long after paying his milk bill, Joe went to David Jones for his groceries. David Jones was in the Newcastle central business district at the time—it is not there any more—and sold groceries, fruit, vegetables, and meat. Joe went to the David Jones butcher shop and was served by Bill Disney. After finishing his grocery shopping, Joe decided he would have a punt at the races. He walked into the betting ring to place a bet and who was the bookie he placed his bet with? Bill Disney.

Joe went to the trots, and when he entered the track he heard "Bet with the bookies" being called by Bill Disney. The next day Joe was off to the soccer to watch his son play his grand final. As Joe was watching the game about to start, both teams lined up and out came the linesmen and the referee, who was of course Bill Disney. It seems everyone knew Bill Disney, so much so that the family could not even go on their annual family holiday to Surfers Paradise without someone yelling out, "Billy Disney." A family stroll that should have taken 20 minutes ended up taking three hours. In semi-retirement, Bill was President of Burwood Colliery Bowling Club and the past 23 years of Bill's life saw him involved with the Dudley Pensioners' Association as president, vice president and committee member, which is when I met him.

Although Bill had only been formally involved with the Dudley Pensioners' Association for 23 years, he had looked after the hall for almost 60 years. There was much talk over the years about pulling the hall down,

but Bill would not have a bar of it. According to Bev, it was his second home. Nobody was as proud of Dudley as Bill, and in 2015 he was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to the community of Dudley. He was a butcher, bookmaker, referee, husband, father, pop and dedicated community member. Vale, William John Disney—"Always of Dudley".

EASTS RUGBY CLUB SEASON LAUNCH

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (17:47): On 6 April it was great to be invited by Easts Rugby President John Murray to attend the Easts Rugby Club season launch at Woollahra Oval. The occasion was even more special because I was called on to present the first grade women's team with their jerseys. This is the first time that Easts—affectionately known as the "Beasts"—have fronted a women's team and I congratulate them on that achievement. On the night, I was joined by Woollahra Mayor Peter Cavanagh; Woollahra Councillor Anthony Marano; Double Bay Chamber of Commerce Chair Katherine O'Regan; and Easts Rugby President John Murray, Director David Leckie and Vice President of Rugby Campbell Aitken. The Master of Ceremonies, Tony Lewis, was very entertaining. Many players and club supporters were there also, including former Mayor Andrew Petrie. I thank Sam Fay for the invite. Many people from my local community who support their local team enjoyed the wonderful warm evening and the food and entertainment.

The opening of the season also happily coincided with the official opening of the new synthetic grass surface at Woollahra Oval 1. The new surfacing is a wonderful investment. It is constructed to last for a long time and to make sure that the oval has many more uses. It was constructed so that it is raised from the ground in order to withstand a once-in-20-year flood event, which is very important. The oval that was once covered with grass and dirt that would start to wear thin after just 20 hours of use each week will now be open to my local schools and community clubs for more than 60 hours, with minimal maintenance requirements. It is a great outcome.

I was very pleased to see the ground for myself. It has taken a little while to get the ground up and running, and it has now been in operation for a few months. It looks fantastic, and has had rave reviews to match. The new ground is also certified by World Rugby and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, which will bring a new level of prestige to the clubs and the community that use the space. It is a big win for my local community, where space is a premium for local schools and local amateur clubs, and now the ground can be enjoyed for many more hours a week by so many more people in my community.

This improvement is only one of many changes that have taken place over the years at Woollahra Oval, including an upgrade in 2016 of the women's facilities that was funded by the New South Wales Government Local Sport Grant Program, and funding that I was able to secure through the Community Building Partnership program in 2012 to install equipment allowing the television broadcast of games played at the oval. I am very proud to note a further commitment by the New South Wales Government, through the Women in Sport Strategy, to address issues including increasing participation, along with developing sporting partnerships and leadership opportunities for women at all levels.

The Beasties, have had their pre-season training at this wonderful facility—they are now in full season mode, with kick-off last weekend. It was great to present the first grade women's team with their jerseys. I want to list a number of the women—and I apologise in advance if I miss anyone because I want to commend all of them. There is Emily Aberline, Adelaide Anderson, Jessica Bestrashniy, Toni Blackwell, Amy Blades, Elli Brislane, Nichola Buchanan, Maddy Caldwell, Karin Christie, Kylee Colman, Susannah Cooke, Lyndsey Douglas, Lara Early, Holly Gavin, Ella Goldsmith, Rochelle Harvey, Charlotte Johnstone, Alia Karmali, Phoebe Loughhead, Courtney Mahoney, Missy Martin, Michelle Monteleone, Hannah Seymour, Kathryn Stewart, Kelley Sullivan, Melanie Tiemes, Bastian Wallace, Julia Wilson and Tika Yeend. I congratulate them all.

It is women like those who play for the Beasties who will continue to challenge the perception of women in sport and what we all think we are capable of achieving. I know that the driving force behind this change is the great Australian sporting culture—how we love our champions and celebrate our great athletes, be they young or old, men or women. It was also great that five of that fantastic group of women were from a school in my electorate, Ascham School. I thank Easts Rugby Club for inviting me last Friday night. I thank the members of my community who support our local sporting groups, whether they are professional or amateur. With their help, we are able to maintain and back in an important part of our culture: the rite of passage that is participation in community sport, whether as an athlete or even as a spectator. I thank them all for their continued efforts to improve our facilities, raise the profiles of outstanding clubs and individuals, and to stress the importance of friendship and lifelong connections forged through a common goal. I commend my private member's statement to the House.

TRAC INTERNATIONAL LIFELINE SYSTEM

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (17:53): Earlier this year I was very pleased to visit Trac International, a Richmond Valley business that has secured New South Wales Government funding under its Jobs for NSW initiative that will enable part of a \$938,000 business expansion project that is set to create up to 18 new jobs in the region. The funding will enable Trac International, a Bungawalbyn-based business, to expand and give the local economy a welcome boost. Trac International has patented a product, the Roper System, that will potentially save Australia millions of dollars each year and, more importantly, save lives in the emergency services and defence industries as well as the life of anybody else working at heights.

The Roper System is a simple, multipurpose shock-absorbing lifeline system controlled from either end to raise or lower at any time with an integrated 30-second rescue plan, greatly reducing associated risks. In effect, it is a safety rope and harness system that is cheap, effective and will save lives. It is an innovative roping and harnessing system that provides absolute safety for people working at heights, be it in the construction industry, emergency services or defence tactical operations. Like most great inventions, the Roper System is simple. It is a multipurpose shock-absorbing lifeline system that can be controlled from either end. It can be raised or lowered at any time with an integrated 30-second rescue plan, greatly reducing associated risks. I tried the Roper System on site at the business and scaled a tower with a rope and harness affixed to my body. Even though I am not good with heights, I found the system easy to use and felt safe at all times. Knowing that I could be lowered to the ground if I froze or was injured was certainly a comfort.

TRAC International has been in business for more than 25 years. Its experience in the design, testing and use of equipment for rope access, height safety and vertical rescue has led to the invention of a system that fulfils the need for a simple kit to cover all roping scenarios—from roofing work, to tower antenna access and rescues. A financial boost to its operations will help in the manufacture and commercialisation of the Roper System and increase employment in the Richmond Valley region. TRAC International is an Aboriginal business. Therefore, the project can also build social capital and integrity in the Aboriginal community by creating pride and hope.

Co-director of TRAC International Deborah Johnston says Dirawong is a creator being of the Bundjalung nation and represents everything the Roper System stands for: control, knowledge and protection. Jobs for NSW is helping to drive efforts to significantly grow regional centres on the North Coast and elsewhere to become accelerators for employment growth, just like it is doing for TRAC International. Deborah and co-director Andrew Rogelja are excited to be manufacturing the Roper System in the Richmond Valley. They believe they have patented an advanced product that will potentially save Australia millions of dollars each year and—more importantly—save lives in the emergency services and defence industries.

The Roper System has features that no other engineered system in the world currently provides. It is fully engineered so all components are compatible; it has shock absorbing built in, ensuring that the shock load is limited to 600 kilograms; and it is an already-on rescue system. Should it be needed, anyone can be easily rescued by being raised or lowered from either end of the system at any time. No additional equipment is required. The system can take a two-person rescue load. By using one system for every scenario, users can feel safer and be more familiar with its operation.

The system can help to maintain a higher level of competency, which will reduce the risk of accidents due to misuse. Designed by necessity due to industry accidents, the system reduces the cost and the amount of equipment and training required, and has an integrated 30-second rescue plan built in. The system provides a higher level of competency and reduces associated risks. It has a rapid response time and is a quality, engineered system by an Australian Indigenous business. I congratulate Deborah and Andrew on their ingenuity and tenacity. I know that the Roper System will help to save lives and be a huge success.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:57): As Beyoncé says, "Who run the world? Girls." When we wrote to the amazing women of the Newtown electorate to ask about their priorities on International Women's Day the communication we received made it pretty clear that they are setting the agenda not just for our local community but also for the State. When I sit in this Chamber with 92 other elected representatives it is not hard to notice that only 27 of us are women. We might be in the majority in the near empty Chamber right now, but that is not usually the case. We said to the women of Newtown that just because there is not equality and equal representation here it does not mean we want the men to determine the priorities of this Parliament.

I asked my women constituents to tell us what they cared about and were passionate about. It is perhaps not a surprise that the number one issue on the agenda of the most progressive women in the country who are living in the electorate of Newtown is climate change. Whether at one of our local ethical fashion shops in Newtown, at a community meeting in Petersham or Camperdown, a parents and citizens meeting in Surry Hills

or Erskineville, an independent art or creative event in Chippendale or Stanmore, or at a local support service in Redfern or Enmore, active women are participating in events that contribute to climate change action and the protection of our environment.

When I go to an action of a local residents group to protect a local park or to stand up against local development, women are often standing at the front line. When I go to the Stop Adani protests or community meetings about the need to transition away from coal and move to renewable energy, I see women being part of those key campaigns. When I hear the concerns of women about the need to reduce waste, to reduce single-use plastic bags and to address the environmental issues that are impacting on our local community, I hear those voices loud and strong.

Another issue that is clearly on the agenda of women in the electorate of Newtown and something I am personally passionate about is the issue of housing affordability. Time and again, we have seen successive governments in New South Wales fail to address the issue of the housing crisis because they refuse to recognise that housing is a human right, that it should come first and that the idea of housing as something that is designed to put profits into the pockets of big businesses is not okay. Housing needs to be recognised for what it is, and that is a universal human right that needs to be put first and foremost on the agenda.

Another issue that women spoke to us about was the issue of public transport. I have spoken to elderly women who rely on buses in the electorate of Newtown. They now have to traipse with their shopping bags—usually not plastic, because they are in the electorate of Newtown—to the next bus stop because the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure has closed the bus stop that was most convenient for them. I have seen people struggling on train station stairs with prams or other things because many train stations in the electorate of Newtown are not accessible.

These are big concerns. We need this Government to listen to the priorities of women in the electorate of Newtown when they say that they want public transport that is safe, accessible and affordable. It is clear that people who live in the electorate of Newtown do not just focus on issues that are local to them. Big issues like stopping the Adani coalmine, taking action on climate change, standing up for refugees, defending workers' rights and the right to strike are all things that we heard when we asked women what they were concerned about and what they wanted us to set as their priorities.

I will take a moment to shout out to a few special women in the electorate of Newtown. Some of those are women who go unnoticed on many occasions because they are the people in my electorate who engage with the Inner West Mums Facebook group. As a relatively new mum, I have relied on that group for late-night tips and advice when I was not sure what to do. As I left my house this morning with one hand around my daughter, the other hand holding my bag, the other hand that I wish I had trying to lock the door, and yet another hand I wish I had trying to pick up the outfit I am now wearing—because I did not have time to get dressed properly before heading to day care—while I was trying to do all those things, I felt for the mums of the inner west. I know that I am not alone in my logistical struggle to do what I need to do before I get to work in the morning. I pay credit to the inner west mums for all the things that they do. I promise to put women's rights and women's priorities on the agenda in this House.

ILLAWARRA INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (18:03): One of the reasons I stood for Parliament was to fix the Princes Highway. Since having the honour and enormous privilege of becoming the local member of Parliament for my beautiful electorate of Kiama, I have worked hard to deliver infrastructure that saves lives and makes a real difference for every resident that I represent. For years, locals have continued to face frustration and delays through Albion Park Rail. It is known as a bottleneck and has been put in the too-hard basket for simply too many years. When I became the local member of Parliament I decided that I would take up the fight. Other than a line on the map in the 1990s, not even basic planning work had commenced on this project since the premiership of Nick Greiner and John Fahey.

After several meetings with former roads Minister Duncan Gay, I was able to secure funding to commence studies that were required to commence this vital project. I knocked on Ministers' doors and I spoke up in Parliament and I have not relented or stopped pushing for our community. As members would know, hard work, determination and persistence will always pay off. In the lead-up to the last election, former Premier Mike Baird made a commitment that a re-elected Liberal Government would commence the major planning work, property acquisition and environmental studies and would start the Albion Park Rail bypass in this term of office. Together with the Premier, I committed the Government to starting this vital work in the 2018-19 financial year. Much has happened since this announcement. Over the last few years there have been some very tough conversations with property owners, and I thank them for their graciousness in seeking to make this project a reality for all of our community.

On 28 March I was absolutely delighted to join my good friends the Premier of New South Wales, Gladys Berejiklian, and the member for South Coast, Shelley Hancock, to turn the first sod on the Albion Park Rail bypass. So many people said, "I'll never be alive to see it", whilst others quipped, "I'll never drive on it." As with all the promises I make to my community, I work hard every day to make sure I keep every single one of them. The Albion Park Rail bypass is the icing on the Illawarra infrastructure cake. It will remove the only sets of traffic lights between Bomaderry and Heathcote and provide a bypass of Albion Park Rail. The Albion Park Rail bypass is the largest single election commitment in the history of the Illawarra. I thank my very good friend, the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, for also being a champion for this project. As members well know, I am passionate about local jobs and local business.

Not only have all of our highway projects on the South Coast generated more than 2,000 jobs since 2011, but I am pleased to advise that local company Clearly Bros has secured the contract for the first stage of the Albion Park Rail bypass project. On all my highway projects, I have done my utmost to ensure we employ local people and create local jobs. My view of this next project will be no different. The first stage will involve moving sporting clubs such as netball, Australian Football League [AFL] and cricket, as well as reconfiguring the grounds dedicated for rugby league. I take this opportunity to most sincerely thank all the sports clubs for their patience and incredible goodwill. Whilst I know they would all have fond memories of their current grounds, I trust their new home turf will be a major improvement. I am delighted that Adrian Rouse from the Roads and Maritime Services will be leading this project. We have worked on many local roads projects together. I look forward to working with Adrian, regional director Mitch Judd and all the wonderful and hardworking team at the Roads and Maritime Services to deliver a great project.

The next step in the process will be to award the tender for the design and construct, which is the next major component of this project. No doubt there will be many issues that we will need to confront, but I look forward to working with my local community to deliver this long-awaited project. I also look forward to seeing the tender awarded for the Berry to Bomaderry project. I conclude where I started: One of the reasons I stood for this Parliament was to fix the Princes Highway. Since entering this place I am proud to have had the opportunity to be a voice and a fighter for my community, and to fight hard for projects like the Foxground and Berry bypass, and the Gerringong and South Nowra upgrade. They have all now been opened.

With the completion of the Berry to Bomaderry upgrade and Albion Park Rail bypass, I will have seen the duplication of the Princes Highway throughout my entire electorate. For a boy from Bomaderry High School who came into this Parliament with an ambition to do things that both change and save lives, I could not be prouder. I look forward to standing with my colleagues in this place as we continue the campaign to see more upgrades further south. We will continue the fight to make sure that the Commonwealth Government gives us the same 80:20 funding split it gave for the Pacific Highway. That will be a fair deal for the residents of the South Coast and the Illawarra.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:08): No-one could doubt that the member for Kiama is a passionate advocate who pursues infrastructure in the Illawarra with fervour. I recently travelled through the member's electorate to Culburra Beach, which is a beautiful place, and I witnessed the upgrades to the Princes Highway that the member for Kiama and member for South Coast have fought so hard for. I particularly acknowledge the member for Kiama's contribution to the Albion Park Rail bypass. It is a shining example of the sort of infrastructure that might not have been built but for his advocacy. The member for Kiama has a strong voice for the local community he represents, and I would vote for him if I lived in his electorate.

EDGEWORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL BUS STOP

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (18:09): I pay tribute to the ability of three government departments in my electorate, producing absolutely nothing, for stalling over the past nine years on what seems to be a basic thing. I emphasise the nine years, because the Government has been in office for seven years, and this process started two years before that. Yet these three government departments have efficiently and effectively gone about doing absolutely nothing on a crucial piece of infrastructure that is required at the front of a school. If we do not get this right, it is possible that a student may die. I speak about the bus stop at the front of Edgeworth Public School. Edgeworth Public School is on Minmi Road. At the bottom of Minmi Road is a State road called Main Road, Edgeworth. Approximately two kilometres up the hill at the other end of Minmi Road is the Newcastle link road. Minmi Road connects Main Road and the Newcastle link road.

Minmi Road used to have a volume of approximately 6,000 to 7,000 vehicles per day. In 2009, due to the busyness of that road, calls were made to move to move the bus stop from the front of Edgeworth Public School on Minmi Road, where it was causing traffic congestion, to the back of the school. Interestingly, at the back of the school is the Hunter Life Education facility, which is located on Crown land. However, that very same piece of land used to be Department of Education land and used to belong to Edgeworth Public School. To establish Hunter Life Education the land needed to be transferred from the Department of Education to Crown

Lands so that Crown Lands could enter into a lease with the tenant, because the Department of Education simply did not have that facility available to it. The land was transferred to Crown Lands. Crown Lands took Hunter Life Education on as a tenant—and it has been a wonderful tenant doing wonderful work.

The solution was to move the bus stop from the busy main road to the back of the school, which would put it on the land which is now Crown land—pretty straightforward. Education is on board, and in 2012-13 Roads and Maritime Services—the then Department of Main Roads—even had money in its budget to facilitate the moving of the bus stop. I spoke to the local Crown Lands representative in 2012-13. I will call him Dave for the sake of argument. I said, "Dave, we've got a problem, mate. Out the front of the school there is a real risk to student safety. Not only that, on Main Road we've got traffic congestion because the traffic needs to come around in two lanes, but it can only come around in one lane during times of school drop-offs and pick-ups. There used to be 6,000 or 7,000 vehicles using that road but there are now 12,000 to 15,000. We need to get the bus stop around the back." Dave said, "Clayton, the problem will be that, if the bus stops at the back and they have to move from Education land onto Crown land, which isn't fenced, we will then carry the risk for injury to people who are on our land."

I said, "Just to make this clear, Dave, a child might die out the front, or trip and twist an ankle out the back, and you're saying you don't want liability for the ankle, so you'd rather see them out the front on that busy street in that bus stop, causing traffic mayhem to the south. Is that your solution?" His response was: "Clayton, we don't want to carry the risk." Fantastic. I thought it was a Monty Python sketch! I have continued to liaise and pursue the information, and last week I received a letter of confirmation signed by the Minister. I note there have been many Ministers for Crown land, and I am not particularly interested in criticising this Minister.

The letter signed by the Minister confirmed that we will not get that bus stop moved. It is absurd. One of the reasons that people in the community lose confidence in governments of all political persuasions is that we cannot get the bureaucrats in the departments to do the most obvious, basic things. I put this on the record: The bus stop needs to move, and I will be pursuing the Minister of today, the Minister of tomorrow and the Minister of future governments to achieve that end.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:14): Sunday 8 April marked one year since our successful campaign for my election as the member for North Shore in the by-election to succeed the former member Jillian Skinner. This evening I reflect on a year that has been filled with fantastic achievements for the North Shore community. It has been an honour for me to work with and alongside my community to achieve these and I look forward to continuing to represent the North Shore community in the future. Together we have achieved investment in local schools, hospitals, disability services and accessibility, roads, public transport, local character and the environment, local sport, parks and public spaces, and the arts—just to name a few—all while maintaining a budget surplus and overseeing the nation's best-performing economy with continued record jobs growth.

Being part of the community and joining in local events is a favourite part of my role. I particularly enjoy being able to secure funds to ensure our community organisations which do so much to support our vibrant community can continue to thrive. Since taking office I have been able to announce funding for many organisations including Mosman Swans Junior Australian Football Club for a scoreboard, Mosman Netball Club for lighting at the Drill Hall courts, Balmoral Sailing Club to repair the clubhouse roof and Mosman Croquet Club for fence repairs. Funding was also secured for playground upgrades by North Sydney Council and for St Augustine's Anglican Church, Neutral Bay, to renovate the community-use kitchen so that the church can start running some after-school care.

Funding was secured for the Cancer Council NSW, the North Sydney Community Centre, Lavender Bay Anglican Church, Taldumande Youth Services—an amazing organisation that delivers youth crisis refuge—and for a number of schools in my electorate including Middle Harbour Public School for a performance platform and outdoor learning area, North Sydney Boys High School Parents and Citizens Association for outdoor learning spaces, Mosman Public School for a playground upgrade and Neutral Bay Public School for air conditioning. Some funding was also provided to Mosman Cricket Club to replace its junior cricket nets, and to Cremorne Synagogue for the construction of a multipurpose community space.

We have achieved many more outcomes. We have secured funding for the Sydney Institute of Marine Science for a centre for urban marine innovation. Waverton and Wollstonecraft train stations are going to be revitalised. We have invested in coaching and volunteer development for Northern Suburbs Rugby Football Club, which has been instrumental in them bringing about their first women's team in the Women's Sevens. In the lead-up to Anzac Day it is important to note that the North Sydney Cenotaph has been upgraded thanks to funding secured for the North Sydney RSL Sub-Branch. We have also invested funds in Mosman fire station for a brand-new Class 3 pumper fire truck.

Some of the local achievements that the community and I have collaboratively achieved in the past year and I am particularly proud of include securing funding for a new hall to be constructed at Cammeraygal High School as part of the Berejiklian Government's record investment in our public schools, and welcoming some of the 106 new graduate nurses and midwives and 48 new trainee doctors to Royal North Shore Hospital—they are part of the largest intake in the State's history. I joined Minister Pavey and Minister Williams to announce fast-tracked funding for lifts on the Sydney Harbour Bridge, which will improve accessibility. I worked with the Government to undertake extensive consultation and to produce detailed engineering and geotechnical works to determine the route for the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link.

I was pleased to see the Ensemble Theatre awarded \$60,000 to improve accessibility. The Ensemble puts on such wonderful productions and provides cultural vibrancy. Just last week we announced another increase in bus services for Spit Junction to improve local public transport. I joined Wendy Whiteley and Minister Gabrielle Upton to announce the State heritage listing of Brett Whiteley's house in Lavender Bay, the surrounding parklands and Wendy Whiteley's beautiful Secret Garden. Truck movements through McMahons Point will be reduced following a commitment by the Minister for Transport that all metro construction spoil will be removed from Blues Point by barge. Investment has been secured in grassroots local sporting groups, particularly for women's sports, with an investment in Mosman Netball Club.

Saving Cremorne town centre bus stop was a true collaborative effort between me, the community, the Premier and the Minister for Transport. In relation to the Lavender Bay high line, Premier Gladys Berejiklian and I gave an ironclad guarantee to never sell the land and ensure it remains a community asset. I have also secured an agreement from Sydney Trains that it will investigate a segregated walking track along the current active line. Looking ahead, I will be continuing to work towards the delivery of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link, as well as the metro project, and ensuring that our local character, such as that of Berrys Bay and Middle Harbour National Park, is preserved. I give my sincere thanks to everyone in the North Shore electorate. I love working with the community—and for the community—in the Parliament of New South Wales

CITY COUNTRY ALLIANCE INITIATIVE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (18:19): I thank the member for Heffron for stepping aside and allowing me the opportunity to deliver a private member's statement about the City Country Alliance and a trip that I took recently. The member for Davidson, who is in the Chamber, and I both attended an event at Masada College, at which students from our electorates got together. It was an event that reflected the importance of bringing people together. Similarly, the City Country Alliance is an opportunity for city kids and remote and rural kids to get to know each other, which is a really great thing. Last week I went on a big road trip with my colleague David Harris, the member for Wyong and shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and for Regional Development. He is a former school principal, so he must be a decent person. People say some good things about school principals.

Mr Jonathan O'Dea: He used to be.

Mr JIHAD DIB: He used to be—it all goes downhill afterwards. But we decided to drive through the region and visit some Aboriginal schools involved in the Connected Communities program. We started in Moree and ended up in Broken Hill; it was a long drive over a number of days, but it was an amazing experience. I thank David Harris and the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group [AECG] for helping us take this trip. I recommend that at some stage every member in this place from both sides of the House should take a road trip into the rural, regional and remote parts of New South Wales so they understand the distances, the isolation and the difficulties that exist.

We started off at Moree Secondary College and visited Moree Public School, Collarenebri Central School, Walgett Community School and Brewarrina Central School. We popped into Bourke; we went to Wilcannia and Menindee. It was a great trip and as two former principals we were excited to be able to visit these schools. I also thank the Minister and member for Northern Tablelands, Adam Marshall. Not only was he welcoming when we went to Moree; he also provided us with some advice about things that we might do and put us in touch with some people, in a great show of bipartisanship. Of course, the intention is not to go there to be political; it is to go there to listen and learn, because we hope that one day we will be on the other side of this Chamber and we will need to make decisions. In order to make decisions about people, it is necessary to get to know them and the different experiences that they have.

The Connected Communities program started five years ago and was designed to assist some of the most complex and remote schools. I have just listed a number of the schools that we visited, and these schools are in complex communities. By complex I mean that they have to deal with things that some of us could never imagine. For some of these boys and girls, simply getting to school is a mission in itself. At Wilcannia Central School I was most impressed by a lady called Brenda, who drives a school bus wherever she can, not only to pick up kids but also to drop them off so they can get to school and back. We need to find a way to remove all of the obstacles

standing in the way of education. I have spoken a number of times in this place about the value of education. Everywhere I went I was inspired by teachers and principals who face a really difficult task.

It is important to acknowledge the isolation of these communities. We spent a night playing trivia with the teachers at Wilcannia and joining them for dinner. At the end of the night, I thought, "What do you do here other than that?" It is such an isolated place. I take my hat off to the teachers and executive principals who go there. The Connected Communities program is a good idea. It needs some tweaking, and we will be able to talk about that later, but it is a good idea because it tries to create a better community. I acknowledge the community employees and the community involvement. When we arrived at Menindee Central School, it was a balmy 37 degrees and they were celebrating Harmony Day. I have met the principal, Fiona Kelly, on a previous visit and she is an unbelievable principal who does incredible things.

The school has only about 80 kids yet more than 100 community members—parents, grandparents and others—were present to enjoy Harmony Day. What was evident from this trip—and I always acknowledge this—is that the value of leadership, especially in difficult and complex places, can never be undervalued. I give credit to all the teachers, particularly those who do the really hard work. I extend my thanks to the member for Wyong, David Harris, for organising the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, and Minister Adam Marshall, who assisted us when we visited Moree.

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:24): I commend the member for Lakemba and, in his absence, the member for Wyong, for their support and participation in the City Country Alliance initiative. It was interesting to hear of their experience, particularly on the road trip. I, too, have undertaken a trip with the City Country Alliance in Menindee, Wilcannia and Broken Hill. I endorse the comments and recommendation of the member for Lakemba for other members to undertake a similar experience. It is a great opportunity to listen and learn so that we can deal effectively with issues that need to be addressed, particularly as we have a responsibility to do so in this place. I note the cooperative approach of the member for Lakemba to the issue. Indeed, he acknowledged the cooperative approach of the member for Northern Tablelands and hopefully all members take on important issues such as making sure that the Connected Communities Program works to address complex school environments and improve local communities. I support the leadership shown on this program by many, including the member for Lakemba.

BRISBANE WATER CHANNEL DREDGING

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:25): I apologise to the people of Gosford. I was thrown out of Parliament yesterday for asking the Minister for Lands and Forestry to invest in dredging our Brisbane Water channel. The Minister responsible for Crown land says that his office helped council to apply for State dredging funding three times, but still we have no dredging. How has it helped? On behalf of the people of Gosford I have begged the Minister's office to take leadership on a solution for our community and in response I am told that applications for the next round of dredging close on 3 June. The people of Gosford cannot wait until 3 June. People cannot get to work and kids cannot get to school. Our public transport becomes chaotic when the tide is low and the waves are high.

As I explained to the Minister's office yesterday in exasperation: The situation is dire. The Government spent \$150,000 on emergency dredging in June last year. I explained to the Minister's office that the ferry hit the bottom two days after the first lot of emergency dredging occurred. That is because the emergency dredging was not sufficient. The Government invested another \$160,000 in another session of emergency dredging in September. The channel is now so bad that one of our ferry companies has stopped operating, calling on Roads and Maritime Services to put keel depth restrictions on the waterways as a safety measure.

Fantasea Ferries is doing all it can to operate our public transport, but more and more ferries have to relocate to Patonga when the seas are rough or the tide is low. Our community is suffering economic loss. Today I tabled another bundle of petitions signed by the people of our community—not just my electorate—who use the waterways and ferries. The people of Pittwater are signing a petition at the Pittwater RSL. Loads of people from the Terrigal electorate are signing a petition as they have to trek all the way to Patonga to get the ferry to work if they have private transport. Those using public transport cannot get to work or school, or are taking the six-hour round trip to get to work on the northern beaches.

The people of Patonga are signing my petition as the wharf is not designed for the regular use of transport passenger ferries, which are now ripping up the bottom under the wharf and silting up the areas where the fishing boats—their livelihood—are moored. The whole community of Ettalong is suffering due to lack of income lost to tourism. Over the Easter weekend—a sunny weekend—12 ferries were cancelled. One can imagine what impact that would have had on local businesses over their supposedly busiest weekend of the year.

The local chamber of commerce held a protest and threatened to dump a truckload of sand on the beach because it knows our economy is suffering. Our community is receiving bad media around Sydney because of the need to dredge. Our potential tourists are also choosing other locations because of the uncertainty. Why would they not? Why would the ferry operators not relocate or cancel like our tourists do when the tide is up or the waves are high? The sailing and boating communities of Brisbane Water are up the creek without a paddle. People who once used Brisbane Water are no longer using their boats, and boaters from Pittwater and the Hawkesbury are no longer coming to visit.

The Gosford Sailing Club is only one of a number of businesses across Brisbane Water losing income. Roads and Maritime Service has told me that it is in charge of shifting markers in the channel to make it safe. I am still awaiting the report on the accident that occurred two days after the first dredging. I commend Roads and Maritime Services for its work, but there must be a better solution. The Government held a roundtable in March to discuss solutions. It said that it invited key stakeholders to the table to sort this out, but as the elected member for Gosford I was not invited. Still we have no solution.

The Government now tells me that we must wait until 3 June 2018. I am exasperated, and I am expressing the frustration of thousands of my constituents when I visit the Minister's office and beg for intervention. How embarrassing. How many people must visit my office to tell me they could not get to work or to school? How many businesses must put off staff because of dwindling tourism numbers? I am a sailor and I have visited the channel three times since I was elected one year ago—twice to examine the emergency dredging work and again over the Easter break. The situation is dire and it is having a huge economic impact on our community.

Ours is not the only community being impacted by this problem. Over the Easter weekend, 20 boats were rescued in the mouth of Lake Macquarie. As I said, this is not an isolated problem; it is happening up and down the New South Wales coast. It is also not something that should be cost-shifted to councils and ratepayers. This is a statewide issue. Must we wait until a major injury occurs before something is done? On behalf of the people of Gosford, Pittwater, Terrigal and the Central Coast, I beg the Minister to demonstrate some leadership on this issue.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:31
until Tuesday 1 May 2018 at 12:00.**