



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 3 May 2018

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Presiding Officers	1
Absence of the Speaker.....	1
Documents	1
Auditor-General	1
Reports	1
Bills	1
Farm Debt Mediation Amendment Bill 2018	1
Second Reading Debate	1
Third Reading	5
Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Incident Response Vehicles) Bill 2018.....	5
First Reading.....	5
Second Reading Speech.....	5
Civil Liability Amendment (Institutional Child Abuse) Bill 2017	8
Second Reading Debate	8
Motions	17
St Florian's Day.....	17
Visitors.....	23
Visitors.....	23
Motions	23
St Florian's Day.....	23
Freshwater Anzac Precinct Remembrance Day Service.....	24
Gong Shuttle Bus Service	28
Visitors.....	29
Visitors	29
Question Time.....	29
Westconnex.....	29
Public Transport Infrastructure	30
Westconnex	31
Cost of Living	32
Westconnex.....	34
State Infrastructure.....	35
Westconnex	37
Western Sydney Health Services	37
Whistleblower Protection.....	39
Police Numbers.....	39
Personal Explanation	40
Police Numbers.....	40
Ministerial Statement	41
Cenotaph Chief Custodian Walter Scott-Smith, OAM.....	41
Announcements.....	42

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Ministerial Staffer Callum Fountain	42
Petitions.....	42
Petitions Received.....	42
Committees	42
Legislation Review Committee.....	42
Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 53/56	42
Matter of Public Importance	43
National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day	43
Community Recognition Statements	46
Tribute to Carole Linde Jobling, OAM.....	46
Australian Budgies Indigenous Netball Team	47
Parramatta Holroyd Family Support Group.....	47
Tribute to Uncle Stephen Williams.....	47
Heathcote Electorate Sports Clubs.....	47
Rwandan Genocide Twenty-Fourth Anniversary	48
4 Villages Walk.....	48
Lakemba Electorate Community Breakfast.....	48
Brazilian JiuJitsu Competitor Riza El Ali	48
Australian Surf Life Saving Championships Award Recipients.....	48
Southern Community Media Aassociations Award Recipient Great Lakes Fm.....	49
Fashion Revolution Week	49
Australian Open Ironman Championship Winner Kendrick Louis	49
ClubsNSW Board Appointee Sallianne Faulkner.....	49
Lavington Lions Club Youth of the Year Quest Finalist Grace Rouvray.....	49
Charlestown Electorate Sports Club Grants	50
Bowral Classic Cycling Event	50
Female Football Week Administrator of the Year Lisa Duhig.....	50
Babes and Picnics Charity Organisation.....	50
Central Coast Music Roundtable	50
North Shore Electorate Share the Dignity Drive	51
Time4kids Fundraising Campaign.....	51
Yamba Commonwealth Games Medal Recipients	51
Davidson Electorate Justices of the Peace	51
Tenpin Bowling Champion Kallan Strong	51
Community Languages Annual Conference.....	52
Petitions.....	52
M5 Toll	52
Discussion	52
Community Recognition Statements	55
Mounties Club Fiftieth Anniversary	55
Author Brian Caldersmith.....	55
St Marys RSL Sub-Branch Anzac Day Commemorations	55

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Australian Scout Medallion Recipient Joshua Audiore	55
Charlestown Electorate Justices of the Peace	55
Picton George IV Inn	56
Winga Myamly Reconciliation Group	56
Ngroo Walking Together Program	56
Private Members' Statements	56
Bishop Peter Ingham, Dd, Retirement	56
Wyong Electorate Road Infrastructure	57
Members of Parliament Corrupt Conduct	58
Coogee Electorate Anzac Day Commemorations	58
Drought Assistance	59
Australian Sikh Association Celebrations	60
United Hospital Auxiliaries Conference	61
Albury Electorate Commonwealth Games Award Recipients	62
Myall Lakes Electorate Roads Funding	63
Charlestown Electorate School Maintenance	63
Maclean District Hospital Helipad	64
North Ryde Electorate Events	65
Kamay Botany Bay National Park	66
Liverpool City Netball Association Fiftieth Anniversary	67
Miranda Electorate Sports Clubs	68
Lismore Electorate Infrastructure Funding	68
Tribute to Peter Baker	69
Hay War Memorial High School Anzac Day Service	70
Bayside Council Anti-Hooning Taskforce	71
Greater Western Sydney Transport Corridors	72
North Shore Electorate Anzac Day Commemorations	72
Fairfield Electorate Anzac Day Commemorations	73
Drummoyne Electorate Anzac Day Commemorations	74
Maitland Electorate Job Cuts	75
Shellharbour Electorate Road Infrastructure	75

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 3 May 2018

Presiding Officers

ABSENCE OF THE SPEAKER

The Clerk announced the absence of the Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (The Hon. Thomas George) took the chair at 10:00.

The Deputy Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[Notices of motions given.]

Documents

AUDITOR-GENERAL

Reports

The CLERK: In accordance with Section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, I announce the receipt of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General, entitled "Grants to non-government schools", dated 3 May 2018, received on 3 May and authorised to be printed.

Bills

FARM DEBT MEDIATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 2 May 2018.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (10:12): I support the Farm Debt Mediation Amendment Bill 2018, which is a key step in improving the operation of the successful Farm Debt Mediation Act. We know that farmers often face extreme pressures due to weather and market fluctuations that are outside their control. The farm debt mediation process acknowledges the difficulty that farmers face when their business operations and home life are intertwined. If a creditor takes possession of a farm due to the farmer's inability to pay a farm debt, the creditor is also often taking possession of the family home. This takes a significant toll on the health of the family and also on the rural communities in which these farmers live. Farm debt mediation enables a farmer and creditor to sit together and work towards a viable solution to the debt problem.

The Farm Debt Mediation Act was introduced in 1994 in response to several years of high interest rates, low commodity prices and drought, and an escalation in the rate of farmer suicide. The amendments aim to encourage banks to mediate with farmers as soon as it becomes evident that financial hardship is occurring rather than at the point of foreclosure. Specifically, the amendments will strengthen the operation of the Act and contribute to the harmonisation of farm debt mediation laws nationally. The amendments will enhance the Act by strengthening its accessibility, flexibility and fairness. They will expand the definition of farming operations to include types of farming operations such as on-farm and offshore aquaculture and farm forestry that the courts have interpreted as currently falling outside the scope of the Act. Further, they will expand the definition of "farm machinery" to include secured farm machinery commonly used on farms, such as vehicles, machines and other implements.

The amendments will also improve the Rural Assistance Authority's access to relevant information and provide farmers, creditors and mediators access to internal review of certain decisions made by the authority. The amendment bill will also encourage farmers to seek mediation early and clarify the role of mediators. There will also be a penalty introduced in the amendment bill that will discourage enforcement action being taken contrary to the Act. It will introduce a maximum penalty for unlawful enforcement actions by creditors of 500 penalty units, currently \$55,000, for individual creditors and 2,500 penalty points, currently \$275,000, for corporations. There will also be an increase in the penalty for unlawfully disclosing information about mediation sessions and enable mediations concluded under corresponding legislation in another jurisdiction to be recognised in New South Wales.

The Act has operated successfully for more than 20 years and has assisted more than 1,600 farmers to complete satisfactory mediations with their creditors. These numbers represent real farmers—farmers who have had the opportunity to sit with their creditor and talk through the debt issue in a confidential, non-threatening atmosphere. In these discussions, both parties are encouraged to focus on the future, rather than on the rights and wrongs of the past. In farm debt mediation, an experienced mediator assists the farmer and the creditor to identify and explore all the issues and work together to find creative and workable solutions. This may enable the business relationship to be maintained and may allow the farmer time to restore the viability of the farm business.

It is worth noting that over the years, the number of new farm debt mediation cases has been decreasing. This downward trend has continued through periods of drought and market downturns and, not surprisingly, through extraordinary bumper recent seasons in New South Wales. The value of the primary industries sector in New South Wales reached a record \$13.9 billion in 2016. Beef and wheat had the highest gross production values, while beef, cotton and wool were the highest value agricultural exports. Average farm cash incomes and farm profits generally increased in 2015-16, and that demonstrates just how quickly circumstances can change. The downward trend in farm debt mediation may also represent a cultural shift in the farm finance sector, where creditors understand the benefits of mediation to all parties. As a result, many creditors are communicating better with their farming clients well before the farmer ends up in a situation where they cannot meet the repayments.

This welcome trend is also likely to be because sound policy initiatives like farm management deposits, various concessional loan schemes for farmers and disaster assistance grants are working as intended. Despite the positive downward trend in farm debt mediation, the Act and these amendments are necessary to ensure that all creditors offer mediation to farm businesses when it is needed. Building on the proactive approach taken by some creditors, the amendments in this bill make it easier for farmers to be proactive when they see potential future financial difficulties arising in their farm business. By encouraging farmers to initiate early mediation before the situation is dire, productive negotiations can occur at a time when the farmer is mentally and emotionally stronger. In addition, the earlier the mediation takes place, the larger the range of viable options available for the farmer and creditor to discuss. This bill ensures that early farmer-initiated mediation does not remove the protection of one mandatory mediation under the Act in the event that the farmer later defaults.

As I have said, farm debt mediation gives farmers and creditors a facilitated process to resolve matters relating to farm debt. The bill clarifies that the Act relates to farm debt matters, whether or not the debt is disputed. The NSW Rural Assistance Authority advises that usually farmers acknowledge when they have not made repayments on their mortgage and that they provide reasons for that. Quite commonly, it is because communications with their creditor have broken down, and the farmer has a real or perceived grievance. Often such grievances can be resolved in mediation.

The amendments in this bill broaden the range of farmers protected by the Act. This is a positive step for the New South Wales primary industries sector. Now farmers engaged in land-based and offshore aquaculture, as well as on-farm forestry, will be entitled to mediate before a creditor may take enforcement action relating to a farm debt. Another amendment clarifies and broadens the definition of farm machinery to include any secured farm machinery commonly used for a farming operation. The amendments in this bill seek to simplify and clarify the operation of the Act. The bill clearly sets out the grounds on which either creditors or farmers may apply to the authority for a certificate either to allow enforcement action to occur or to prohibit enforcement action.

The amendments also improve the authority's access to relevant information and provide farmers, creditors and mediators access to internal review for certain decisions made by the authority. The NSW Rural Assistance Authority has recently made some short videos that are available on its website. These videos clearly explain the benefits of farm debt mediation, how to prepare for mediation and what to expect during the mediation process. The videos assist farmers by giving them easy-to-follow steps to ensure that they have the best chance of a viable solution during farm debt mediation. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (10:21): I speak in support of the Farm Debt Mediation Amendment Bill 2018. The aim of these amendments is to provide a greater level of protection for farmers and their partners than is provided in the current Act. This bill is about fairness and ensuring equity for both farmer and creditor. Before taking any enforcement action, creditors need to take appropriate steps to ensure that farmers are aware of the creditor's intended enforcement action and offer the farmer an opportunity to go to mediation. It is important that a farmer knows that there has been a request from a creditor for mediation. Currently, if a farmer does not respond in time, the farmer is taken to have declined to go to mediation. However, there are many circumstances where it is not fair for the farmer to lose the protection of the Act and lose the opportunity for mediation by failing to respond.

The amendments proposed in this bill give the NSW Rural Assistance Authority more flexibility to take the particular circumstances into consideration when determining whether a farmer has declined to go to mediation. For example, when a flood or severe storm sweeps through a region, it may take the farmer weeks to

recover lost stock, to repair houses, fences, sheds and irrigation equipment, and to salvage remaining crops. During this time, it is possible that mail may not be delivered to the farm or collected from town—or, if it is delivered, it is possible that mail will sit in the letterbox or on a kitchen bench unopened for an extended period.

I have another example to demonstrate my point: Intense financial stress takes its toll on the health of the decision-makers in a farming business. Under challenging conditions of market downturns and ongoing lack of rain, the emotional and mental health of farmers may decline significantly. In these circumstances, mail may remain unopened due to the stress associated with potentially more bad news contained in the letters. Is it fair that these farmers lose the protection of the Act? No. The Act is designed to ensure that farming businesses that are struggling financially have access to farm debt mediation as a way to reduce the stress associated with their inability to repay loans. Therefore, it is essential that the Act has the flexibility to allow these types of circumstances to be taken into account.

The amendments in this bill also introduce a maximum penalty for creditors who pursue enforcement action without offering the farmer an opportunity to go to mediation. The costs of farm debt mediation are significantly lower than the costs of traditional litigation in relation to farm debt matters. Mediation benefits both creditors and farmers. Most creditors have realised the benefits of farm debt mediation and are happy to approach farm debt issues through mediation, as this allows constructive, confidential discussion to occur face to face. However, the NSW Rural Assistance Authority is aware of isolated instances where a creditor has taken possession of a property or other enforcement action without offering mediation.

The proposed new maximum penalty of 500 penalty units for individuals and 2,500 penalty units for corporations will deter creditors from unlawful enforcement action. This will help ensure that farmers have the opportunity to go to mediation. This amendment does not remove a party's right to pursue a civil right or remedy through the legal system. The bill also clarifies creditors' mediation obligations. Where a farmer defaults on their loan, the creditor must offer mediation. In some instances, during the mediation session, the farmer and creditor arrange a restructured loan package. If the farmer later defaults again on the restructured farm mortgage, the creditor is not required to offer further mediations.

The Australian Banking Association and the National Farmers' Federation have advocated for the national harmonisation of farm debt mediation legislation in recent years. Harmonisation is an initiative that the Australian Government is leading through the Agriculture Ministers' Forum. Several parliamentary committee and other national inquiry reports have also supported harmonisation in recent years. The New South Wales Farm Debt Mediation Act 1994 has worked well for more than 23 years—so well that two other jurisdictions, Victoria and Queensland, have already implemented substantially the same legislation. A key aspect of harmonising farm debt mediation legislation nationally is contained in this bill—that is, to allow farm debt mediations conducted under corresponding legislation in one jurisdiction to be recognised in our State, where the farmer has secured farm property in both jurisdictions. New South Wales supports calls for the national harmonisation of farm debt mediation legislation, and the amendments in this bill will further assist the New South Wales Government in promoting our legislation as a model for harmonisation.

I emphasise the importance of farmers in our regional, State and national economies. Farmers not only provide food and fibre for our nation but also contribute significantly to the economy and way of life in our regional communities. Many regional New South Wales towns would cease to exist without the economic and social contribution that farmers and agriculture provide. It is important that we support our farmers with appropriate protections for their farming enterprises and enable them to get on with the business of farming productively and efficiently within the context of uncertain weather and market fluctuations. The Farm Debt Mediation Act ensures that farmers who end up in a difficult financial situation have the opportunity to discuss the problems with their creditor before any enforcement action occurs. The bill also amends some of the definitions within the Act to clarify the meanings so that the benefits of mediation will be available to a broader range of farming enterprises. This includes farm forestry and aquaculture, which are of course legitimate farming industries that require protection under the Act.

This bill increases the penalty for unlawfully disclosing confidential information from the mediation. This will provide a stronger deterrent for any party seeking to use mediation information to the detriment of the other party. The bill is an important step in updating and modernising the Farm Debt Mediation Act following a comprehensive review and stakeholder consultation process. It is intended that, once amended, the New South Wales Act will be used as model legislation for other jurisdictions and will ultimately contribute to harmonisation of farm debt mediation nationally. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (10:28): I speak in support of the Farm Debt Mediation Amendment Bill 2018. Administering the Farm Debt Mediation Act is just one of the important roles of the NSW Rural Assistance Authority. While the authority has been working with farmers and creditors in the debt space since 1932, the scope of its assistance has broadened over time. The authority's focus is to help our primary

producers in New South Wales to maximise long-term profitability and competitiveness through improved productivity and sustainable use of natural resources. It does this by administering proactive programs. The Rural Assistance Authority plays a key role in helping farm businesses and rural communities to plan for the long term, to become more resilient and to be better prepared for dry conditions.

In this financial year, the authority has provided over \$98 million to more than 2,600 farming, fishing and small businesses across New South Wales. Through the NSW Drought Strategy, the authority offers a number of support measures that farmers can access all the time. The Farm Innovation Fund is one measure that has been particularly popular. In this financial year alone the Farm Innovation Fund has provided more than 310 low interest loans valued at more than \$57 million. Many of these loans have been approved for infrastructure necessary to prepare properties for dry times and have been used to purchase sheds, silos and water infrastructure. And our primary producers are right on board. In response to a survey on the fund earlier this year, a farmer said:

We are more resilient and have been able to reduce our risk because of the investment we've been able to make through the fund.

Another has said:

This is a great initiative, which sees funds invested to improve productivity and value rather than provide funds as a band aid solution. Great concept and money well spent.

The authority also manages the Farm Business Skills Professional Development Program. There are 95 registered courses and a 50 per cent subsidy available of up to \$9,000 per farm business. In this financial year the program has helped more than 288 farmers improve their business planning and skills through vocational training and professional development activities. Also through the Drought Strategy, the authority provides an animal welfare subsidy to primary producers for the transport of stock where animals are at significant risk.

In April 2018 a new NSW Drought Transport Fund commenced that will help farmers manage livestock through dry conditions. The NSW Drought Transport Fund will provide up to \$20,000 in low interest loans, with the first two years of the seven-year loan being completely interest free and repayment free. The fund will also help eligible farmers pay freight costs for fodder or water or to move stock to agistment. The authority is currently assessing the first applications made to the fund. In addition, a subsidy to cover the cost of transporting donated fodder by community groups to drought-affected properties within New South Wales has distributed more than \$250,000 to date.

These additional aspects of the work being undertaken by the NSW Rural Assistance Authority contribute to the welfare of farmers in our State. Some of these broader programs assist farmers to manage and get ready for drought and other challenging circumstances. Despite this range of programs, farmers sometimes find themselves in difficult financial situations without the ability to meet their loan repayments. The Farm Debt Mediation Amendment Bill 2018 further strengthens the Act to ensure that our farmers have access to mediation as a way to resolve these debt issues with their creditors. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (10:32): I support the Farm Debt Mediation Amendment Bill 2018. It is incredibly important and has been a very successful farm debt Act until this point, but this bill includes some fine-tuning that will help to improve it and make it even more functional. The ability to have mediation rather than to have to face the full force of a legal challenge or go to court is something that is incredibly valuable. This Act will enable certain processes to happen sooner, before someone gets to a final foreclosure. My experience of this sort of thing harks back to the late 1980s, when my family faced difficulties with the high interest rates at that time. My family faced drought in the early years—a difficulty that a lot of farming families face. Challenges include weather conditions, market conditions and financial conditions.

My family was in the fortunate position of having an asset—my father had a bus run that he could sell to clear a lot of the debt—so we could maintain a financially viable position, but I have seen a lot of farmers go to the wall. Since the Farm Debt Mediation Act 1994 came into effect there have been much better processes and less likelihood of banks coming in and people walking off the land. This is a big issue in my electorate. There is a huge range of farming enterprises across my electorate. There is dry area cropping in the south, with stock pastoral properties across the large areas to the west. There is a huge amount of irrigation for both annual cropping and permanent plantings. All of these farming enterprises need this sort of assistance.

It is good to see that this bill includes aquaculture—an area in which a number of enterprises in our region work. Where I grew up near Grong Grong, in the electorate of the member for Cootamundra, there is a fishery that has been going for decades, growing fingerlings and supporting people to restock dams. Recently we have seen fisheries growing fish for consumption, and this is looking like a useful avenue for farmers to go into in our region. The growing of Murray cod for restaurant consumption represents value-adding, a good use of water and a good use of land and material. The extension of this bill to include aquaculture is a very big positive for my area. I commend the bill to the House and support its adoption.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (10:35):

In reply: I thank members who contributed to the debate. In particular, I thank members representing the electorates of Cessnock, Port Macquarie, Upper Hunter, Cootamundra and our final speaker, the member for Murray, who spoke about his personal experience and the impacts that it had on his family. I thank them all for their contributions to this debate on the Farm Debt Mediation Amendment Bill 2018. The Farm Debt Mediation Bill strengthens the operation of the current Act and is an important contribution towards the harmonisation of farm debt mediation laws nationally. It has also received widespread stakeholder support during consultation and passed the upper House on Tuesday with full support.

The key amendments will enhance the Act by strengthening its accessibility, flexibility and fairness. Mediation will be offered to a broader range of primary producers by expanding the scope of farming operations covered by the Act and will provide a greater level of protection for farmers and their families. Farmers will be encouraged to seek voluntary mediation with creditors early before they default. Farmers will have more bargaining power earlier in the process. However, creditors will still be required to offer one mandatory mediation following default on a farm loan.

The amendments will enable farmers, creditors and mediators to seek internal review of certain decisions made by the Rural Assistance Authority. The bill clarifies the role of the mediator and the requirements for notifying, arranging, conducting and concluding mediations. The bill also introduces a penalty to deter unlawful enforcement actions by creditors. Maximum penalties will be 500 penalty units, currently \$55,000, for individual creditors, and 2,500 penalty units, currently \$275,000, for corporations. The amendments will recognise mediations concluded under corresponding legislation in another jurisdiction. The Rural Assistance Authority will undertake extensive communications to inform stakeholders of the changes. In relation to the point raised by the member for Cessnock asking for fairness to exist between farmers and creditors, we strongly support the national harmonisation of farm debt mediation legislation and will continue to encourage all States to commit to implementing harmonised farm debt mediation legislation.

Progress on this was made at the Agricultural Ministers' Forum on Friday 27 April 2018, when the Ministers agreed to continue working towards nationally harmonised farm debt mediation by recommitting to a set of standard principles and exploring how to best implement them. The widespread support for national harmonisation was evident from many stakeholders during the NSW Rural Assistance Authority's review of the Act. In making these amendments this Government has demonstrated its commitment to supporting the rights of farmers. With these amendments, the New South Wales Act will set the benchmark for farm debt mediation legislation nationally. I commend the bill to the House.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

ROAD RULES AMENDMENT (SLOWING DOWN FOR POLICE AND INCIDENT RESPONSE VEHICLES) BILL 2018**First Reading**

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Jodi McKay, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms JODI MCKAY (Strathfield) (10:41): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I present the Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Incident Response Vehicles) Bill 2018 to the House. This week is National Road Safety Week so is timely that we are recognising those who have lost their lives on our roads and are working to make our roads safer. Last Sunday night the Sydney Harbour Bridge was lit up in yellow for the launch of National Road Safety Week; it will stay yellow all week as a reminder to us all to drive safely on our roads. National Road Safety Week is an annual initiative of the Safer Australian Roads and Highways [SARAH] group, road safety organisations and the New South Wales Government. The week highlights the impact of road trauma and ways to reduce it. I congratulate the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight on her support of this initiative. It was heartening to see the number of people who attended the launch of the lighting

of the bridge last Sunday night. At the launch we heard from families who have been enormously impacted as a result of road accidents in New South Wales. We can always do more.

In National Road Safety Week Labor is introducing this bill, which seeks to protect those who assist motorists. We need to ensure that we put in place the best protections we can for our emergency and first incident responders when they are out on our roads in this State. That is what slow down and move over laws will help to do. These measures are long overdue. Emergency and first incident responders have waited a very long time for better protections and they have lobbied endlessly for change. This bill seeks to address the very serious safety issues they face on a daily basis when assisting motorists involved in accidents or car breakdowns on busy roads in New South Wales. Before I speak to the detail of the bill, I would be remiss not to acknowledge the tireless work of Peter Frazer and his family. Peter, who lives in the Blue Mountains, has made it his mission to see this road rule come into force. This morning I contacted Peter to let him know that Labor was introducing this bill to the Parliament today.

The Frazer family tragically lost 23-year-old Sarah in 2012, when she and tow truck driver Geoff Clark were killed after being sideswiped by a heavy vehicle on the Hume Highway. Sarah's car had broken down and although she had responsibly pulled into the breakdown lane it was too narrow. Sarah could not get her vehicle completely out of way of passing traffic. The speed limit in the area was 110 kilometres per hour. Unfortunately, the traffic did not slow down and Sarah and Geoff were struck and killed. Determined to prevent another tragedy, the Frazer family founded the SARAH group, which has fought tirelessly for protections for "first call" and emergency service personnel who provide assistance and protection on our roads and highways. The NSW Rural Fire Service Association, the Fire Brigade Employees Union and the New South Wales Police Association have also been campaigning hard for the safety of their members. They know road users present a safety risk to emergency responders when they fail to slow down and approach an emergency incident with due care and attention. It is well known that happens time and again. I thank them for their efforts to see the road rules changed.

Unfortunately, those organisations have reason to be concerned for the welfare of emergency responders. Earlier this year we saw a tragic incident at Leumeah, where two police officers were seriously injured when they were crushed between two cars by a speeding driver. Senior Constable Jonathon Wright and his colleague Senior Constable Matthew Foley were setting up a random breath testing site when a young driver allegedly ploughed into them at 60 kilometres an hour. It is also alleged that the driver was using his mobile phone and therefore not abiding by the road rules. That incident serves to highlight how vulnerable emergency responders are when performing their duties on roads in this State. It is not only the police who need protection but also our firefighters and paramedics. Tow truck drivers and roadside assistance workers also heed the call when motorists find themselves in trouble on the roads. We need to ensure that their roadside workplace is also safe.

I acknowledge the efforts of the NRMA and its affiliated organisations in support of the slow down and move over laws. Their advocacy has been comprehensive and ongoing. When Sarah's car broke down on the side of the Hume highway she called the NRMA and they sent the tow truck to her aid. Last week I attended a "slow down and move over" forum hosted by NRMA and its interstate colleagues. They all shared information on what is being done in each State and it was incredibly informative. For instance, I heard how the Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia had surveyed its roadside assistance patrols.

It found that 91 per cent of patrols had experienced a near miss in the past 12 months and 20 per cent had experienced a near miss at least once a week. Those numbers highlight both the urgency of this bill and why similar research is needed. These measures also have strong community support. A *change.org* petition initiated by Michael Mills currently has more than 26,000 signatures, and it continues to gather support. I thank Michael for his work in raising awareness of this issue. More than 26,000 people are calling on the Government to act but the Government has been dragged to address this issue rather than doing it willingly.

In February the Leader of the Opposition, Luke Foley, called on the Government to introduce slow down and move over laws. He was accompanied by Mr Frazer, Gerard Hayes from the Health Services Union representing paramedics, Scott Weber from the New South Wales Police Association, Leighton Drury from the Fire Brigade Employees Union, and Ken Middleton from the Rural Fire Service Association. In response to the New South Wales Government's failure to act, Luke Foley undertook to introduce legislation into State Parliament to protect emergency and first incident responders on our roads. This bill gives effect to his commitment. Under intense community pressure to do something, the Government finally announced its policy in April. The Government knew that we would push this issue in the community and in this Parliament. When the announcement was made, I welcomed the New South Wales Government finally recognising that there is an unnecessary risk to emergency workers attending incidents on our busy roads.

But what concerns us on this side of the House and why we bring this bill to the Parliament is that the Government has announced a one-year trial—a trial that is very light on detail and is not slated to start until September this year, although we have not been told why. Most importantly, the trial fails to include first incident

responders such as tow truck drivers or NRMA Roadside Assistance vehicles. Again, I draw to the attention of the House the accident involving Sarah Frazer when a tow truck driver went to her aid. This bill recognises that at times these workers put themselves in precarious situations in order to help others and that this Parliament has a responsibility to keep them safe too.

There is no mention in the bill of moving over to the next lane to put distance between the vehicle and the emergency or first incident responder. The Government has given no explanation as to why it values the efforts of these workers less. I ask the Minister: Is their safety less important? It appears that everyone except the New South Wales Government understands the importance of protecting these workers. On learning of the New South Wales approach, the NRMA sister organisation RACQ, in a media release, urged the Queensland Government not to adopt the proposed New South Wales approach, which the RACQ described in its media release as confusing and failing to offer proper protection to emergency services and roadside workers. As I said, it is not just Labor saying this; organisations right across Australia are saying that New South Wales has it wrong.

Sadly, New South Wales lags behind. South Australia introduced similar laws in 2014, last year Victoria followed suit and Western Australia has enacted the law to come into effect this month. These laws are not unique to Australia; similar laws exist in parts of Canada and the United States of America. It would be nice to see New South Wales as an early adopter in the road safety space, but in this case we are the laggard. I turn now to the details of our bill. It is important to note that the safety measures provided in the bill apply to emergency and first incident responders.

"Slow down, move over"—or SLOMO—generally refers to laws requiring drivers to reduce their speed to a maximum of 40 kilometres an hour when passing stationary emergency or incident response vehicles and to take other actions to prevent injury. The bill defines an incident response vehicle as an emergency vehicle, a motor breakdown service vehicle or a tow truck. It is worth noting that, compared with other types of roadside work, incident responders have almost no physical protection and rely on visual warnings such as flashing lights and cones. Therefore, their inclusion in the safety measures provided in the bill is absolutely critical. The term "emergency vehicle" is already defined in the Road Rules 2014 to mean any vehicle driven by a person who is an emergency worker and driving the vehicle in the course of his or her duties as an emergency worker.

Emergency workers include a member of the Ambulance Service, a member of a fire or rescue service operated by a New South Wales government agency, a member of the State Emergency Service, a member of a fire brigade—however referred to—a rescue service of the Commonwealth or another State or Territory providing transport in the course of an emergency, and a member of Airservices Australia providing transport in the course of a fire or rescue emergency. This bill provides very clear and unambiguous protection to emergency workers, tow truck drivers and roadside breakdown services such as the NRMA.

I turn now to the actions that drivers will be required to take under this proposed legislation. When approaching a stationary or slow-moving police or incident response vehicle that is displaying flashing warning lights, drivers will be required to drive at a speed at which the driver can, if necessary, stop safely before passing the vehicle, and not exceed 40 kilometres an hour when passing the police or incident response vehicles. In other States, trials have been conducted around the colour of those flashing lights. As we know, the blue and red flashing lights in this State are only for emergency vehicles; but in other States blue flashing lights have been trialled on tow truck drivers and NRMA Roadside Assistance vehicles. There is no reason why that cannot happen here.

We know that in incidents involving a car and a person, speed has a massive impact on survival rates. When a person is struck by a car, the probability of serious injury or death depends strongly on the impact of speed. Reducing speed from 60 to 50 kilometres an hour almost halves the likelihood of death in an accident. Reducing speed to 40 kilometres an hour, as applies in school zones, reduces the likelihood of death by a factor of four compared with 60 kilometres an hour, and the likelihood of an impact is also dramatically reduced. It is very, very simple: Reducing the speed limit to 40 kilometres an hour will save lives and it will prevent injuries.

Drivers will also be required to move to another lane if a driver is travelling in the same lane as the police incident response vehicle and it is a multi-lane road. Emergency and incident response vehicles are often called to work in less than ideal locations, and many roads do not have sufficient shoulder space to offer protection—we saw that with Sarah Frazer's accident. This requirement to move to another lane is just as important as the reduction in speed. Finally, drivers must give way to any person who is on foot in the immediate vicinity of the vehicle and must not increase their speed until the driver is at a sufficient distance from the vehicle, so as to avoid causing a danger to any person in the immediate vicinity of the vehicle.

The bill contains a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units per offence, which is currently about \$2,200. This is consistent with similar offences under the Road Rules 2014. New road rules should be complemented with a driver education and awareness campaign and we should explain these laws to the community—why they are needed and what is required to comply. In other States the responsibility for these education and awareness

campaigns has been shared by government and stakeholders, and it has worked. When I speak to another group of vulnerable road users, cyclists, they tell me that the "metre matters" rule introduced by this Government has had little effect because motorists have not been properly educated on the steps they can take to help them comply. It is the same in this case: We must educate people on what is required, and that has been successful in other States.

There is always a place for enforcement, but if we want to keep police and other incident responders safe we must educate drivers and change their behaviour. That is what Labor is on about: We must change driver behaviour. We also need to measure our success. So far, the Government has not revealed what it will do to monitor its new road rule or how it will gauge the success of the new rule it will introduce on 1 September—and I note that the regulations for that came in last week. In Western Australia, the Road Safety Commission is overseeing a comprehensive two-year monitoring and evaluation of its laws. This will capture trends and issues in relation to the safety of incident response personnel, driver behaviour and changes over time, community education effectiveness, and any unintended consequences such as secondary crashes and impacts on traffic congestion. It is a comprehensive review that will look at the success as well as the deficiencies of the law. The New South Wales Opposition supports a similar review of the mechanism for New South Wales laws but, as yet, it is not clear what that review will entail.

The time to act is now for all the emergency and first incident responders who risk their own lives to help others. This bill should be bipartisan and it should be passed by this House as a matter of priority. Road users lose nothing by slowing down to 40 kilometres an hour and moving over, but our emergency and first incident responders and drivers involved in an incident on our roads will benefit greatly. Nothing will be lost by introducing this. I know that the Government will not support this bill, but I urge the Government to consider a bipartisan approach to it. If the Government will not support the bill it must include first incident responders in its trial that will begin on 1 September. There is enormous community support for this and the Government has not given a reason that it will not support it—which is most frustrating and disappointing.

The Government might be dragging its feet, but we on this side will not ignore the emergency and incident responders who have been asking for this legislation, because at the heart of this bill is recognition and respect for the work they do. This is about giving them a safe workplace, something that we believe all workers have a right to enjoy. In this National Road Safety Week—and I wear my yellow ribbon as a sign of respect for those people who have lost their lives, for those families who have lost loved ones, and for those organisations and emergency and first incident responders who work within this space—I commend the bill to the House and I ask the Government to support our efforts to protect emergency and first incident responders.

Debate adjourned.

CIVIL LIABILITY AMENDMENT (INSTITUTIONAL CHILD ABUSE) BILL 2017

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 23 November 2017.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (11:00): The Government does not support the Civil Liability Amendment (Institutional Child Abuse) Bill 2017 introduced by the member of Liverpool, and the shadow Attorney General on 23 November 2017. The bill would amend the Civil Liability Act 2002 to create a new duty and to reverse the onus of proof in child abuse claims for organisations involved in the care of children. This would make a relevant organisation liable for abuse perpetrated by an associated person unless the institution can establish that it took reasonable precautions to prevent the abuse. Reversing the onus of proof is one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Government is committed to responding to all of the civil litigation recommendations of the royal commission.

The Government is working on delivering a comprehensive approach to civil litigation reform that will respond to all of the recommendations in a connected and consolidated way. The Government believes there are strong arguments for reforming the liability of institutions for child abuse to improve the ability of survivors of abuse to bring civil claims against institutions. However, the Government considers that the Opposition has developed this bill without, first, the necessary consideration of how reversing the onus of proof would interact with other potential reforms and existing statutory provisions; and, secondly, without sufficiently consulting survivors' groups, institutions and organisations involved in providing children's services, legal stakeholders and the insurance industry.

The Government is committed to responding to the royal commission's redress and civil litigation recommendations, and has already taken extensive steps to act on the vast majority of the 99 recommendations the royal commission has made in this area. The Government has already implemented two of the 14 recommendations concerning civil litigation by, first, legislating to remove limitation periods to allow

survivors to bring claims regardless of when the abuse occurred; and, secondly, introducing the NSW Guiding Principles for Government Agencies Responding to Civil Claims for Child Abuse to assist New South Wales government agencies to be model litigants in civil claims for child abuse.

I have asked the Department of Justice to provide options addressing all the remaining civil litigation recommendations in a connected and consolidated manner. The remaining recommendations concern expanding the duties and liabilities of institutions to prevent child abuse; ensuring survivors of abuse can identify a proper defendant to sue and to access the assets of institutions in civil claims, and reforming insurance requirements for the children's services sector. The Government intends to announce a consolidated package of reforms that addresses each of these areas by the middle of this year. The Opposition bill addresses only one element of these areas in isolation.

The Government's principal goal in implementing the royal commission's recommendations is to protect our children from future harm and to support the pursuit of justice for those who have been abused. Civil litigation reforms can contribute to this by enhancing accountability and deterrence mechanisms with a focus on the institutions implicated in abuse. In holding those organisations accountable for abuse, we are rightly enforcing the community's view and expectation that the care and protection of our children cannot be compromised. At the same time, we must be cognisant of the essential role that large and small organisations play in our community by providing services to children, particularly those children in need of care that, for whatever reason, cannot be provided by their families. We must balance our approach to reform to ensure that these organisations are not so burdened by liability that they cannot afford to continue offering their services to children in need.

A piecemeal approach to reforming civil litigation for child abuse that does not take account of this complex legal and policy context, such as the Opposition bill, could result in negative consequences for survivors of abuse and the institutions and the organisations that provide children's services in our community. Survivors may be impacted by poorly conceived reforms where these produce inconsistent outcomes and limited improvements to the legal barriers they currently face in bringing civil claims. Service providers could be adversely affected by reforms that result in increasing costs and reduced availability of insurance, increased compliance and regulation costs, and uncertainty over what is required of them in preventing abuse.

Although reversing the onus of proof in negligence claims for child abuse may have considerable merit as an approach, it would be premature to introduce legislation that deals with only this component of the institutional liability recommendations of the royal commission. The bill is intended to respond to recommendations 91 to 93 of the redress and civil litigation report. The report made 14 recommendations relating to civil litigation. These include: recommendations covering the removal of limitation periods in child abuse claims, recommendations 85 to 88; increasing the civil liability of institutions for child abuse, recommendations 89 to 93; ensuring that abuse survivors can identify a proper defendant, recommendation 94; ensuring that institutions have appropriate insurance coverage, recommendation 95; and model litigant approaches to child abuse claims, recommendations 96 to 99. The Government has already acted in relation to the removal of limitation periods and model litigant approaches.

The remaining civil litigation recommendations concern the liability of institutions, identifying a proper defendant and insurance requirements. This bill deals with only a subset of one of these issues and does not consider their interaction or the need for an aligned and consolidated approach. The royal commission's recommendations concerning the liability of institutions, in particular, should be considered together and any reform responding to these should be developed through a comprehensive, not piecemeal, approach. The approach to reform that the Government is taking is holistic and deliberate. It will seek to ensure that survivors of child abuse are better served by our legal system than they have been in the past and that organisations that play a valuable role in our community are not forced out of this role. I am pleased to announce that the New South Wales Government will have more to say on this in the coming months.

The Opposition bill has not been the subject of a public consultation process. I am unaware of any other consultation undertaken by the Opposition in developing this bill. In contrast, the Government has conducted an extensive public and targeted consultation process on options for civil litigation reform. The Department of Justice released a public consultation paper in July 2017 seeking views on the royal commission's civil litigation recommendations. Some 28 written submissions were made in response by groups and individuals representing survivors, the major churches, schools, sporting and recreational associations, legal advocates, insurance companies and even political parties. In fact, The Greens NSW made a submission to the discussion paper conveying their "support for the need for reform in these areas" and committing the party to "working to ensure that this happens." I thank the Hon. David Shoebridge, MLC, for taking the time to make a submission.

Unlike The Greens, Labor did not make a submission, did not convey its support for reform and did not take this opportunity to be involved in the discussion. The department followed the public consultation process, with targeted discussions that focused on the key stakeholder groups of survivors, service providers, faith-based

institutions, legal stakeholders, the insurance industry and government agencies. These discussions examined in depth how the recommendations could best be approached, taking into account the particular interests and requirements of each of these groups. The consultation process highlighted the complexity involved in implementing the recommendations of the royal commission, particularly around extending the liability of institutions for child abuse.

While stakeholders expressed support for reversing the onus of proof for institutions in child abuse claims, they also raised significant concerns about how key concepts such as reasonable steps and associated persons should be formulated, the scope of institutions to be affected by the reform and the definition of child abuse that should be adopted. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse heard from thousands of survivors across Australia. Their stories opened our eyes to the prevalence of institutional child sexual abuse, the failure of institutions to respond and the lifelong impact it brings to bear. The findings and recommendations of the royal commission are powerful and far reaching. The Government will respond formally to all the recommendations in June.

Earlier this year, on 9 March, the Government committed in principle to opting in to the National Redress Scheme. The establishment of such a redress scheme was recommended by the royal commission. The scheme is due to commence on 1 July, subject to the passage of legislation through the Commonwealth and State Parliaments. Earlier this week I was pleased to introduce the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2018 in this House. We are leading the way towards the establishment of the National Redress Scheme but this is just one of a number of significant steps that the New South Wales Government is already taking to protect children from institutional child abuse, to hold perpetrators to account and to provide support to survivors.

The bill introduced earlier this week reflects the commitment made by the Government in March to participate in the National Redress Scheme for survivors, as recommended by the royal commission. The Government is pleased to be taking the lead as the first State to introduce a referral bill. I anticipate that the Commonwealth Parliament will introduce the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Bill 2018 in the coming weeks so that the National Redress Scheme can start on 1 July. The scheme will provide support and recognition to survivors of institutional child abuse and will run for 10 years.

Redress will be available to individuals who have suffered sexual abuse, and any related non-sexual abuse, that occurred in a participating State or Territory when the person was a child, and prior to scheme commencement. Eligible survivors will be offered a payment of up to \$150,000, access to counselling and psychological services and a direct personal response from the responsible institution. As I have already mentioned, the Government, in developing an approach to civil litigation, has ensured that stakeholders have been involved in the discussion and consulted, and that is the approach that has also been adopted with redress.

Since the Commonwealth Government announced that it will establish a National Redress Scheme for survivors of child sexual abuse, the New South Wales Government has consulted with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions as the scheme develops. A Redress Taskforce within the Commonwealth Department of Social Services has led the development of the National Redress Scheme, with the assistance of an advisory council of various experts and survivor group representatives. The task force has consulted extensively with governments and institutions responsible for abuse and survivors in the development of the scheme. New South Wales has engaged with the Redress Taskforce, with support from the NSW Redress Steering Committee and the NSW Interagency Redress and Civil Litigation Working Group.

On 3 April the Premier and I announced that the Government will accept the overwhelming majority of the royal commission's criminal justice recommendations. This is the most comprehensive response from any jurisdiction to the royal commission criminal justice recommendations to date. It will involve introducing one of the State's reform packages to strengthen, to improve and to extend the criminal law in New South Wales so that the law better meets the needs of survivors of child sexual abuse and improves the ways that perpetrators are held to account.

Some of the key changes the New South Wales Government will make include: first, legislating a maximum life sentence for a strengthened defence of persistent child sexual abuse; secondly, requiring courts sentencing historic child sexual assault offences to apply current sentencing standards and the present understanding about the lifelong effects of sexual abuse on children; thirdly, requiring courts not to take into account an offender's good character when sentencing for historic offences where their reputation facilitated the offending; and, fourthly, introducing a new offence of grooming an adult to access a child and strengthening the grooming offence to include providing a child with gifts or money. Legislation implementing these changes will be introduced to the Parliament in the coming months.

The New South Wales Government has already implemented other initiatives aimed at improving survivor experiences of the criminal justice system. The Child Sexual Offence Evidence Pilot has been operating since March 2016 to provide specialist support to child witnesses in child sexual assault proceedings. New South Wales was the first State in Australia to introduce trained witness intermediaries to help child victims and witnesses of sexual abuse understand questions and convey their answers effectively in criminal proceedings. The royal commission recommended that this reform be introduced nation wide. The introduction of witness intermediaries is part of a three-year child sexual offence pilot that has been operating in Sydney and Newcastle since 2016. Under the pilot, child victims of sexual abuse prerecord their evidence so that they do not have to endure the stress and trauma of facing their alleged attacker in court. This action is consistent with the royal commission's criminal justice recommendations 52 to 55 and 59 to 60.

The New South Wales Government has allocated \$93 million over three years to implement reforms to encourage earlier guilty pleas and reduce trial delays. These reforms are consistent with the royal commission's criminal justice recommendation 72. The Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 was amended in August 2017 to ensure that victims in proceedings for prescribed sexual offences can access a support person and other special measures when reading their victim impact statement at sentencing. This is consistent with the royal commission's criminal justice recommendation 78. The importance of the royal commission's work and the courage of survivors who contributed to that work cannot be overstated and the New South Wales Government is committed to delivering, and is already delivering, for survivors.

Survivors of child abuse currently face significant obstacles in seeking to hold institutions liable through civil litigation. We are determined to address this. Reforms to civil litigation to assist survivors in their pursuit of justice are required, but these are complex matters and getting the approach right requires careful consideration. The Opposition bill, whilst selecting from potentially sound proposals, represents a disjointed approach that has not had the benefit of considered consultation with those most affected. It does not reflect the scope and depth of work the royal commission undertook in order to produce its recommendations. It therefore does not serve the best interests of our community. This Government is committed to reforming civil litigation in light of the royal commission's recommendations but in the coming months we will approach the reforms as a package to ensure they interact appropriately with one another and will ensure that stakeholders have been appropriately consulted.

Finally, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the survivors of institutional child abuse, their families and the organisations that work so hard in representing them. Whether an adult or a child, the reality is that for many years survivors were not acknowledged, listened to or believed. To the survivors: I thank you for your resilience and determination. We will continue to work to ensure that we learn from the mistakes of the past. We acknowledge the harm and the suffering experienced by the many thousands of children who have been sexually abused in institutions where they should have been safe. We, the New South Wales Government, will continue to work with them and for them. I commend the intent of the bill but, for the reasons I have given, the Government opposes the bill.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (11:29): I speak in debate on the Civil Liability Amendment (Institutional Child Abuse) Bill 2017 introduced by the shadow Attorney General, the member for Liverpool. I commend the shadow Attorney General for his ongoing commitment to supporting victims of child sexual abuse in this State. Listening to the Attorney General's words of support and comfort for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and institutional child abuse in this State, one could be forgiven for concluding that he would commend the bill to the House. Yet again, this Government is reluctant to act quickly on this issue. We hear phrases such as "acting now would be premature", "We will wait until the middle of the year" and "We do not want organisations to be so overburdened that they cannot help." The Government has introduced legislation to allow for Commonwealth redress. For the benefit of those opposite, I clarify that this bill deals with the common law scheme. It is separate from the Attorney General's bill. The Attorney General said that he supports the royal commission's recommendations, yet we see once again in this place the politicisation of those well-meaning words.

The Government will not accept good legislation introduced by the Opposition that will ensure redress happens urgently for survivors. Victims of abuse are often now elderly, and every legislative delay makes survivors wait longer. I first started examining this issue 20 years ago when I worked for the Department of Immigration. I prepared a submission on behalf of the Commonwealth Government regarding the guardianship of children under the Minister for Immigration during the British Child Migrants Programme. I was horrified by the stories of survivors and the stories I read at that time about the suffering those children endured in government- and charity-run organisations. We need to do something about this issue.

We must follow on from the work of Joanne McCarthy, who shone a light on this issue, and Julia Gillard, whose efforts led to the establishment of the royal commission. Delaying action is disrespectful to all those who have spent time sharing their stories and to the trauma they have lived through. We cannot wait for this

Government to take action. The Attorney General said that a payment of \$150,000 to survivors is all right—but it is not all right. A payment of \$200,000 was recommended. The Government must act on this issue. The report recommended that State and Territory governments introduce legislation that makes institutions explicitly liable for child sexual abuse committed by persons associated with the institution, unless the institution can prove it took reasonable steps to prevent the abuse.

It is inconceivable that this Government has failed to act on a number of the report's recommendations. It did not get the report three minutes ago; the report was released in 2015. It is now 2018. Other jurisdictions, such as Victoria, have acted to make the recommendations law. The Victorian Andrews Government is leading the way in its response to sexual assault and child sexual abuse. This contrasts with the Berejiklian Government's repeated failure to release its sexual assault strategy on schedule. In October 2015 Minister Goward promised that a strategy would be released. That date came and went without a strategy from the Minister. The release date was shifted six months later, to 2016. That date also came and went. The release date was then moved out to November 2016, but to this day a strategy has not been released. It is more than two years since the strategy was due and 2½ years since it was promised to the community.

The royal commission recommendations should form part of that strategy. What message does it send to the survivors of sexual assault in this State that the Liberal-Nationals Government is too busy to put together a sexual assault strategy? The Government now says that we will have to wait another six months for a comprehensive package and it refuses to support Opposition legislation that will enable civil litigation to commence. People are suffering, and they have suffered enough. Sexual assault and child sexual abuse are extremely serious issues. This Parliament's approach to preventing these crimes should be bipartisan, as should its approach to ensuring that victims have the full remit of civil and common law and government redress schemes available to them. It is part of the healing process.

When a government routinely fails to implement policy, fails to prevent further crimes and fails to implement adequate redress schemes, Opposition members will not stay silent. As the shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, I am committed to preventing sexual assault in this State. I am committed to ensuring that past wrongs committed upon so many children, who are now adults, receive proper redress at all levels of the law and under all schemes. The Labor Opposition in this State will not stand by and wait for the Government to act. This bill will clarify the ambiguity in our current laws that the Government has failed to address. Kind words from the Attorney General or from the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will not solve the problem. Legislation is needed. The Government must take responsibility.

Currently, there is a clear civil liability for a perpetrator of child sexual abuse but this law is less clear when it comes to institutions. I note the Attorney General's comments that he is concerned about overburdening institutions. I ask: What about the abuse and crimes that institutions have committed against children, in some cases for generations? That should be our central concern. Several issues arise when a perpetrator is held liable. If a perpetrator passes away or has no assets, the ability of a victim to receive damages is unclear. In contrast, the institutions that fail to prevent abuse are more likely to be able to pay damages. This bill will ensure that a clear civil liability for child sexual abuse exists in New South Wales. This is an important change. It will go some way towards ensuring that the victims of child sexual abuse are able to receive appropriate redress from the institutions that failed them.

We must act to ensure that each and every victim has an equal ability to achieve damages through civil litigation. It is clear that our society has repeatedly failed victims of child abuse. I acknowledge that the Government is supporting the National Redress Scheme to the level of \$150,000, rather than \$200,000. That will mean some victims will not take the civil route for redress. For some, that is clearly not enough. They need to have this avenue open to them. Historically, as a society we have failed to protect children from abuse and failed to hold institutions to account. This bill will go some way towards doing that. Unless an institution can prove that it has taken reasonable steps to prevent abuse from occurring, it will be held liable. The reverse onus of proof reflects what society expects of its institutions. No-one would allow a person they cared about or loved to go to an institution of any kind unless they were sure they would be cared for properly.

When parents place their children in an organisation's care they expect that organisation to take every reasonable step to keep them safe. When there are no parents around to make that choice or have that concern, the State should take responsibility. If a vulnerable child is placed in the care of an institution because the parents are unwilling to do so or are incapable of looking after them, society has an expectation that that child will be safe. If an institution fails to take every reasonable step to prevent child sexual abuse this bill will ensure that that institution is held accountable through litigation. The bill is survivor focused and is about providing justice to survivors. [*Extension of time*]

The bill will force each and every institution and organisation in this State that is responsible for the care or supervision of, or has authority over, children to take steps to prevent child sexual abuse. This is not groundbreaking thinking; it is a basic expectation of everyone in our community. The revelations that arose from Joanne McCarthy's report in the *Newcastle Herald* and from the royal commission's work have caused us all to reflect on the true cost and nature of this insidious crime. But reflection is not enough. We must expect more from all institutions with whom we entrust the sacred duty of caring for our children. The legal duty imposed by the bill will create a financial incentive for every relevant institution to ensure that it is doing everything it reasonably can to prevent child abuse. This will provide an avenue for survivors to seek compensation and it will encourage institutions to act to ensure that they have effective preventive measures in place to stop child sexual abuse. Unfortunately, there are people and institutions in our society that need that incentive in order to take the steps necessary to ensure child safety.

The definition of reasonable steps will vary from institution to institution, the nature of the organisation and the position that the perpetrator held. More will be expected of commercial institutions than community-based ones, but we must ensure that children will be safe in all of them. The bill will implement one of the most important recommendations of the royal commission. The Attorney General and Minister Goward have announced that the Government's official response to each of the commission's recommendations will be released by June. I hope that deadline is met, unlike the deadlines that were missed with the sexual assault strategy. The work completed by the royal commission is a blueprint for this State's response to preventing child sexual abuse in New South Wales. I question why it has taken so long for the Government to act on the recommendations.

The Attorney General has accused Labor of not being serious about this matter because it did not present a submission on the Government's discussion paper. While the Government was doing that, Labor was drafting legislation through the shadow Attorney General, the member for Liverpool. Unlike the Government, which is happy to make hollow promises about its commitment to preventing child sexual abuse in this State, we are putting forward legislation to make a change. While the Government continues to talk, the Opposition will continue to introduce legislation that will genuinely improve our State's response to child sexual abuse.

I am sick of hearing in this Chamber how the Government is the first in the nation to do this and do that. It is time this Government looked south, at what Victoria has put in place following its royal commission into family violence and what has been its approach to implementing the recommendations of the royal commission into institutional abuse of children. This Government must act collaboratively and not always seek the limelight for being number one. This Government is behind the times and it is not dealing with this issue seriously. It is time for the Berejiklian Government to implement the recommendations; make them law. The bill introduced by the shadow Attorney General does exactly that. For that reason, I wholeheartedly commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (11:31): I do not support the Civil Liability Amendment (Institutional Child Abuse) Bill 2017. The Government has put the survivors of sexual abuse front and centre of everything it does. Their welfare is paramount to this Government. The member for Maitland said that this Government is delaying, that the recommendations should be implemented straightaway. The Attorney General said he will introduce a bill in June. It is now May; we are talking about one month to six weeks. This Government has been actively working with stakeholders and will adopt a holistic approach to the issues raised by the royal commission; it will not adopt a piecemeal approach. The bill will not address only one recommendation. Labor is playing politics while the New South Wales Government is acting. It is leading Australia and the States on the redress scheme. It has taken care of the criminal sanctions and it will deal with the civil component by June—next month.

The Government will not cap civil liability. Survivors can either sue through the civil court with no cap or they can opt in to the redress scheme. The member for Maitland said that the redress scheme is failing, but it is supported by Labor in Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland. New South Wales is the leading State adopting the redress scheme. There is no limitation period, so survivors will not miss out. Unlike Labor's bill, this Government is developing a complete approach to the recommendations of the royal commission relating to civil liability. It has already released a discussion paper, and 28 stakeholder submissions have been received in response. There were none from Labor. The Government has undertaken direct consultation with stakeholder groups and has developed an approach that incorporates the recommendations of the royal commission. Labor introduced its bill without undertaking extensive consultation. Consultation is fundamental to ensuring appropriate and balanced law reform in New South Wales.

This Government values the opinion of its stakeholders and its people. We will continue to engage with them and develop appropriate, well thought out and well constructed legislation. The Government firmly believes in addressing recommendations 89 to 95 inclusive of the royal commission and is committed to introducing considered, consulted and holistic reforms. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse provided its final report to the Commonwealth Government on 15 December 2017. The report consists of

17 volumes and 189 recommendations, many of which are aimed at making institutions safer for children. The importance of the royal commission's work and the courage of survivors who contributed cannot be overstated. The Government has established a task force to carefully consider the recommendations. It is developing complete approaches to the recommendations of the royal commission relating to civil liability, redress and child sexual assault offences. In fact, it has already legislated for a number of recommendations.

On 23 July 2017 the Government released a public consultation paper on reforming civil litigation in line with the recommendations made by the royal commission regarding how best to provide justice to victims of future institutional child abuse. The consultation paper that was released last year addresses the recommendations of the royal commission to make institutions more accountable for child abuse and to remove the significant barriers to civil claims that are currently faced by survivors. All submissions previously provided to the royal commission and Victorian Government relating to civil litigation issues were also taken into account as part of the consultation process.

The Government is clearly taking seriously its approach to implementing civil liability reform in the context of institutional child sexual abuse, and it is taking the time to ensure that the policy introduced is the right one for New South Wales. I am pleased to support the Attorney General and his efforts in responding to the recommendations of the royal commission. As I said from the outset, the survivors are front and centre of everything this Government does and their welfare is paramount. The approach adopted by the Attorney General is the correct one. I oppose the bill.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (11:38): It gives me great satisfaction to contribute to the debate on the Civil Liability Amendment (Institutional Child Abuse) Bill 2017, which has been brought to this place by the shadow Attorney General and member for Liverpool. The object of this bill is to impose a duty of care on certain institutions to make them liable for institutional child abuse by persons associated with the institution, unless the institution proves it took reasonable steps to prevent the abuse. This bill is not something that Labor plucked out of the air. The bill implements recommendation 91 of the Redress and Civil Litigation report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Recommendation 91 states:

Irrespective of whether state and territory parliaments legislate to impose a non-delegable duty upon the institutions, state and territory governments should introduce legislation to make institutions liable for institutional child sexual abuse by persons associated with the institution unless the institution proves it took reasonable steps to prevent the abuse. The 'reverse onus' should be imposed on all institutions, including those institutions in respect of which we do not recommend a non-delegable duty be imposed.

As stated in one submission to the royal commission, more than 30 former Hunter catholic high school students died by suicide, drug overdose or possible suicide, because of links to known or alleged child sex offenders operating within that system. Three of them were brothers from the one family who died of suicide or drug-related deaths. All three of them attended St Pius X High School in Adamstown in my electorate. Another young man who attended St Pius X died in 1984 at age 19 in a car crash. Years after his death his parents heard from his old schoolmates that he had been sexually abused by convicted child sex offender priest John Denham. Yet another man took his life at Charlestown only days before he was due to start work as a teacher, following a mature age change of occupation—his teachers also included Denham.

The royal commission heard that a wide range of institutions had turned a blind eye to, mishandled complaints about, or even outright refuted allegations of abuse of children by people associated with them. This bill puts the royal commission's recommendation 91, rightly and timely, into effect. The proposed Act imposes a duty of care on various organisations as a part of the civil law of negligence. Children and young people in New South Wales are our present and our future; and their safety, welfare and development are paramount. That is why I am pleased to be a member of the Committee on Children and Young People. As such, I take great interest in the needs of children and young people from a legislation and government services perspective. Our children must be protected and be raised in an environment that gives them the best possible start in life.

Our role as legislators is to make New South Wales a better place for children and young people. Unfortunately the Government has allowed us to fall behind by not acting on recommendation 91 of the Redress and Civil Litigation report by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. I note that on Tuesday the Attorney General second read the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (Commonwealth Powers) Bill, which he states follows a royal commission recommendation. If that is true the Attorney General should have no issue supporting this bill, which is also based on a royal commission recommendation. In the same speech, the Attorney General also foreshadowed future changes arising from royal commission recommendations, but he did not refer to changes recommended by the royal commission that could be implemented if this private member's bill were supported.

I will provide some background on the bill and the importance of organisational liability for child abuse. The civil liability of institutions for child abuse is incredibly important, but at present the law is unclear.

As highlighted by the member for Liverpool, should this bill pass—and I sincerely hope that, despite the Attorney General and the member for Myall Lakes saying the Government does not support this bill, the Government will change its mind and will support it—institutions will be liable for instances of child sexual abuse unless the institution took reasonable steps to prevent that abuse. This includes institutions that administer foster care and kinship care, and community-based, not-for-profit or volunteer institutions that offer opportunities for children to engage in cultural, social and sporting activities.

The basic principle should be that the same rule should apply to all institutions, with reasonable consideration given to the nature of the institution, noting the obvious differences between a community-based institution and a commercial institution. Implementing recommendation 91 imposes a duty of care that forms part of a cause for action in negligence on a relevant organisation to prevent the abuse of a child by any associated individual while the child is under its care. It provides that the burden of proof will be shifted in legal proceedings so that if abuse is found to have occurred the organisation is presumed to have breached its duty of care unless it can prove, on the balance of probabilities, that it took reasonable precautions to prevent the abuse in that case.

Again, where the abuse is proved, the burden sits with the organisation to demonstrate, on the balance of probabilities, that it took reasonable precautions to prevent that abuse. They are presumed to be negligent, to have breached their duty of care, unless they can prove on the balance of probabilities that they took appropriate action. Certainly, reversing the burden of proof is a significant step, and anything that seeks to attach liability to a party that does not perpetrate an action is also a substantial step. But considering the terrible circumstances of institutional child abuse that have come to light through the royal commission, linking the actions of an associated individual with the institution for the purpose of negligence and an action in negligence is an appropriate step.

The bill also establishes the relationship between the individual who may be the perpetrator and the relevant organisation. If any person is in a relationship of that nature with the organisation—be it an employee, an owner, a volunteer or similar—and child abuse occurs in that setting that will create the nexus between the individual perpetrator and the organisation with which they are associated. In 2016 the Victorian Government moved to implement recommendation 91 with the Wrongs Amendment (Organisational Child Abuse) Bill, which passed both Houses of that Parliament by March 2017.

In New South Wales the Government merely issued a discussion paper in 2015 concerning the limitation periods in civil claims for child sexual abuse. There was, and still is, a distinct lack of legislative action on this recommendation. In addition, later in 2015 the Government chose to vote down a private member's bill to implement recommendations of the royal commission, and here we are again. The Government has allowed our State to fall behind. I firmly believe that New South Wales should follow Victoria's lead in implementing recommendation 91.

In passing this bill, we will not just be punishing the individuals who commit these horrible acts; we will be sending a very clear message to the organisations that they are responsible as well. That should be an incentive for the people who are running organisations to make sure they have systems in place, regular audits, and checks and balances to prevent child abuse perpetrated in their organisations, and that the people working for them are compliant with the law. I think we can all agree it is entirely reasonable that institutions liable for institutional sexual abuse face justice if they fail to exercise appropriate and ethically ruled care. There should be no debate here. Harm caused by failing to act is inexcusable and institutions that allow this to happen should be held accountable. As my colleagues and I continually state: Labor firmly believes that there is no higher duty for this State than to protect and support our vulnerable children and young people, and to ensure that at all times they are kept safe from the risk of harm.

The New South Wales Labor Opposition has shown the initiative by taking the lead and introducing a bill where the Government has not. I thank the member for Liverpool for introducing a bill that addresses organisational liability for child abuse. I recognise that former Prime Minister Julia Gillard established the most comprehensive inquiry into child sexual abuse in Australia's history, which shone the initial light on past abuses and forced our nation to acknowledge the suffering endured by survivors and victims alike. I also acknowledge the work of *Newcastle Herald* journalist Joanne McCarthy and thank her for her tireless investigative efforts in this area, which resulted in Prime Minister Gillard making that decision. We cannot let our State fall behind on the protection of children and young people. I commend the bill to the House. Survivors of institutional child sexual abuse deserve it.

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (11:49): The Civil Liability Amendment (Institutional Child Abuse) Bill 2017 tackles a serious issue. Although I do not support this bill, I support the sentiment of this bill in the same way that I supported the sentiment of the bill introduced last week by the member for Cessnock. The bill of the member for Liverpool would be supportable if it were a proper response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. We should take a global approach to those recommendations, rather than the ad hoc approach to the recommendations taken in this legislation. Having said

that, I accept entirely the comments made by the member for Charlestown in her contribution to this debate; what she said is powerful. The Government has said that it will adopt all of the royal commission's recommendations in globo.

It is worth looking at the recommendations relating to the duties of institutions. In this bill the Opposition has singled out one recommendation, an entirely supportable recommendation, but it is also important to look at the other recommendations. These 189 recommendations are contained in the report delivered in December in 17 volumes of material. The recommendations are comprehensive and cover, among other things, the manner in which the police and the criminal justice system deal with institutional child sexual abuse matters. I note that the Government has moved quite quickly to put together a package of legislation to adopt the recommendations made by the royal commission. I will go through some of the recommendations. Recommendation 89 states:

State and territory governments should introduce legislation to impose a non-delegable duty on certain institutions for institutional child sexual abuse despite it being the deliberate criminal act of a person associated with the institution.

That is an entirely supportable proposal. Recommendation 90 states:

The non-delegable duty should apply to institutions that operate the following facilities or provide the following services and owed to children who are in the care, supervision or control of the institution in relation to the relevant facility or service:

- a. residential facilities for children, including residential out-of-home care facilities and juvenile detention centres but not including foster care or kinship care
- b. day and boarding schools and early childhood education and care services, including long day care, family day care, outside school hours services and preschool programs

I attended boarding school for 13 years, from the age of five, and in many respects I can understand exactly where these recommendations come from. Although I do not invite comment on my time at boarding school, I have a vast appreciation of the culture that exists in boarding schools. I also was the proprietor of childcare centres, and I can understand the obligations that flow to persons who operate childcare centres. In my inaugural speech I stated that one thing I would seek in my time in this place would be to ensure a proper response to the royal commission inquiry. I stand by that position and I am encouraged by the way in which the Government is responding, particularly to the redress scheme, which I will come to shortly. However, I acknowledge that the Government must act on other provisions and recommendations. Recommendation 90 continues on institutions that provide:

- c. disability services for children
- d. health services for children
- e. any other facility operated for profit which provides services for children that involve the facility having the care, supervision or control of children for a period of time but not including foster care or kinship care
- f. any facilities or services operated or provided by religious organisations, including activities or services provided by religious leaders, officers or personnel of religious organisations but not including foster care or kinship care.

Recommendation 91 is the subject of this legislation. This recommendation should be seen in the context of a package of recommendations, not cherry-picked for the purposes of this legislation.

Mr Paul Lynch: It was in Victoria.

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I acknowledge the shadow Attorney's interjection. It was done in Victoria, and I believe that in many respects this is not a proper way for government to approach legislation. It is not a proper response to the totality of the package of legislation that is necessary. One of the things that the bill omits is the position of organisations that entrust the care of children to recreational facilities. If a child goes on a sports trip organised by a football club, for example, why is the organisation that facilitates the trip required to have in place, as part of this legislation, reasonable steps to ensure that the children under the care of the persons who take them away on the trip are covered by the same steps taken by those persons who run the organisation?

There is no coherent argument for excluding the persons who run the organisation, and yet this is clearly one of the things we ought to take into account for many reasons. One reason might be trite—and certainly I would not rely on this reason. Taking those steps may seriously impact the insurance premium an institution would have to pay, which may prevent those institutions from engaging in activities that otherwise might be seen as proper for the institution to engage in. The legislation should not discourage institutions from having kids involved in a wide variety of activities. Another example is a child involved in an overseas Rotary exchange. Where does the responsibility of the institution begin and end—

Mr Paul Lynch: You will know it depends on what is reasonable and what is not—that is what the royal commission says. It is the old common law doctrine.

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Yes, but where does it begin and end? Do I have to check out whether it is reasonable—

Mr Paul Lynch: You have to take reasonable steps. You know what the common law means.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Members will address their comments through the Chair.

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: It is an interesting problem that highlights why the Government engages in a comprehensive process to ensure that we get the legislation right and the manner in which we respond to the recommendations of the royal commission. The bill is supportable in its intent; it is not supportable in its process. If the shadow Attorney had been willing to cooperate in drafting this legislation, he should have engaged in the process adopted by the Government to get an in globo response to the recommendations of the royal commission, including the recommendations relating to policing, reporting and the like. I do not seek to trivialise the intent of this legislation; as the shadow Attorney rightly said, the intent is eminently supportable because the Government must be seen to be adopting the recommendations of the royal commission, as it has stated it will. However, the government wants to get the legislation right. In many respects, the State has embarked on a process to adopt the recommendations to a degree that is laudatory. [*Extension of time*]

The shadow Attorney General would support the position the Government has adopted as to the manner in which child witnesses in sexual assault matters are dealt with in criminal jurisdictions. No-one could argue with the manner in which the Government has adopted legislation in line with its obligation to be a model litigant in the way these processes are dealt with by the courts. Additionally, the Government has foreshadowed the introduction of the redress scheme. If ever there was a piece of legislation that coherently responds to the obligations of government to ensure that the survivors of sexual abuse are properly compensated, it is that applying to the redress scheme. The Government has adopted a proposal where victims of sexual abuse will be provided—

Business interrupted.

Motions

ST FLORIAN'S DAY

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:00): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that Friday 4 May 2018 is International Firefighters' Day, St Florian's Day.
- (2) Acknowledges St Florian's Day provides an opportunity to celebrate the work of firefighters who have gone above and beyond in their duties.
- (3) Commends all firefighters in New South Wales for their courageous efforts to protect people and property.

Yesterday the Labor Opposition did not support my motion that this matter have precedence today and today only one Labor member is in the Chamber. It is important to thank our firefighters who go above and beyond the call of duty. They often run into the face of danger when other people leave. Some volunteer their time. I am disappointed that only one Labor member is present in the Chamber and I am even more disappointed that Labor did not want this motion debated today.

Tomorrow is International Firefighters' Day, also known as St Florian's Day. On this important day on the firefighters' calendar we acknowledge the work of firefighters who have gone above and beyond in their duties. It is also an opportunity to commend all firefighters in New South Wales for their courageous efforts in protecting people and property throughout this State. As we have recently seen, in many parts of New South Wales the threat of fire is frighteningly real. We are all aware of the large bushfire that took hold at Casula, Wattle Grove and Holsworthy, and then extended its reach to Barden Ridge, Menai and Alford's Point on Saturday 14 April and the days that followed. Even as late as yesterday local fire crews were still putting out smouldering fires in my electorate. Those firefighters are still working hard.

The bushfires came close to many houses. In fact, they came up to backyard fences, and it is a miracle that they did not go any further. A few houses were damaged but, amazingly, no homes were lost and everyone was able to return home. Local residents stood in their yards to defend their homes from flames with buckets and hoses, but they knew they had the support of our fire crews. We saw remarkable and coordinated efforts by crews from the NSW Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW to protect people, property and the environment. During this time more than 650 firefighters and more than 120 appliances were deployed to fight the fire. As I said, the dedication of our fire services resulted in no major loss of property or life.

It has been claimed that 888 houses were directly saved, but in reality whole communities were saved from the risk of fire. This was a remarkable outcome, given the scale of the fire which destroyed almost

4,000 hectares. The dedication and bravery demonstrated over and over again by our firefighters is truly inspiring. On 29 April Fire and Rescue NSW recognised a number of outstanding individuals and groups whose actions clearly showed the St Florian spirit is alive and well. Every day our Fire and Rescue NSW crews put their lives on the line to protect people and property from fire; to rescue, men, women and children from dangerous situations; to isolate, treat and remove hazardous materials and chemical spills; and to provide medical first aid as first responders to emergency incidents.

The 2018 Fire and Rescue NSW commendations recognised some of the remarkable efforts and achievements of our NSW Fire and Rescue crews, members of the community and administrative support staff, including awards for the rescue of a man trapped in a burning vehicle near Cootamundra by a Fire and Rescue NSW community member; the heroic actions of a retained firefighter who was out walking and ran to assist a man who had suffered the full force of an explosion; the lifesaving actions of firefighters who went to the assistance of an unconscious elderly man; and the work of the fundraising committee for the Burns Unit at the Children's Hospital, Westmead, which over the past 12 years has raised more than \$650,000. Fire and Rescue NSW Commissioner Paul Baxter said that the people commended at the award ceremony were a credit to both Fire and Rescue NSW and the communities they protect and serve. He also said:

This year's recipients exemplify the proud legacy of courageous service that is the hallmark of New South Wales firefighters. We recognise each individual separately, but also the teamwork that drives and inspires them to higher acts.

The NSW Rural Fire Service will celebrate St Florian's Day tomorrow to recognise the outstanding efforts of a number of individuals and crews at a ceremony at its headquarters at Lidcombe. On St Florian's Day it is important that we pay tribute to all NSW Rural Fire Service members—74,000 men and women who volunteer to serve and protect our communities. The NSW Rural Fire Service responds to a vast range of incidents, including bushfires, grassfires, house fires and vehicle fires, and assists with flood and storm emergencies, as well as search and rescue operations and deployments further afield when required. We will have to wait until tomorrow to find out who the recipients of the awards are but I have no doubt there will be countless examples of outstanding service from our NSW Rural Fire Service volunteers.

I congratulate the volunteers, community members and firefighters who will receive commendations as part of St Florian's Day. I thank my local firefighters at Casula Rural Fire Brigade, Sandy Point Rural Fire Brigade, Menai Rural Fire Brigade, Liverpool Fire and Rescue, and Menai Fire and Rescue. It is timely that Sandy Point Rural Fire Brigade is about to get a brand-new fire station. It has operated incredibly well out of a temporary facility but it was horrifying to watch how close the fire went to the Sandy Point community. It deserves the new fire station. Recently we also had the pleasure of opening the new fire station of the Menai Rural Fire Brigade. It is good to see those facilities being upgraded. On behalf of the New South Wales Government I offer my gratitude for the dedication of all those firefighters who protect New South Wales and keep our communities safe. In particular, I thank the three members of my family who are firefighters for what they do.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (12:07): I make a contribution to debate on the motion of the member for Holsworthy. Tomorrow is International Firefighters' Day, also known as St Florian's Day. This day is important to firefighters not just in New South Wales but also across the globe. St Florian is the patron saint of firefighters. On this day each year, communities across the globe band together to honour the tremendous contributions and sacrifices made by firefighters throughout the world. Each year the NSW Rural Fire Service holds its annual awards, where firefighters across the State are recognised for their efforts, bravery and service to our State, and tomorrow morning the Minister and I will attend that ceremony. This week a memorial wall was unveiled at the National Emergency Services Memorial in Canberra to honour the commitment and the sacrifice of fire and emergency services personnel from Australia and New Zealand who died in the line of duty.

The memorial wall displays the names of more than 500 emergency services personnel who were killed in the line of duty and honours their commitment to keeping our communities safe. Throughout the world, a range of services will be held to honour firefighters for their bravery and to remember those who lost their lives in the line of duty. Importantly, these community services ensure that the service and sacrifice of those who have tragically lost their lives will never be forgotten. We can be thankful that there was no loss of life in fires that recently spread throughout south-west and southern Sydney, from Holsworthy through to Menai, and lasted for several days. Residents were placed on high alert, road closures were in place and homes were evacuated. Flames came within hundreds of metres of residential property in the Holsworthy and Wattle Grove areas, while spot fires later threatened homes in Sutherland and Menai.

This enormous blaze burned across thousands of hectares and would have decimated the region if it were not for the valiant efforts of the firefighters from far and wide who worked tirelessly to keep us safe. At no point did these brave men and women falter—they never do. Knowing the risks and what was at stake, they continued battling the blaze day and night until the fires eventually began to subside. We are all incredibly proud of and thankful for their efforts, and I am sure local residents have a renewed appreciation and respect for our State's

firefighters and the dangerous jobs they perform. It is these sorts of selfless and courageous actions that continue to inspire many little boys and girls who dream of one day becoming a firefighter. I cannot think of a single child who does not want to grow up and become a hero. I recently saw photographs of the member for Rockdale wearing his firefighter's hat, holding a hose and dousing fires. He wanted to be a hero, which I suppose all of us do at some stage of our lives.

Mr Stephen Kamper: It was a dream of mine.

Mr GUY ZANGARI: The member for Rockdale says it was a dream of his, and here he is representing the people of Rockdale. I cannot wait to see those photographs end up on Instagram. This is a time when we say thank you to those firefighters and we acknowledge their efforts. If it were not for those firefighters who go out every day, many lives would be lost and properties destroyed. It has been said before in this House that firefighters are the only people who go in whilst others go out. That can be said about many of the emergency service workers who, when fires are raging, put their lives on the line. St Florian's Day is an important day on which to acknowledge that and to say thank you.

On behalf of the New South Wales Labor Opposition, I extend our sincerest admiration and gratitude for the outstanding service, dedication and sacrifices of our past and current serving firefighters, whose courage and resolve continues to protect our communities from harm. We say a big thankyou to Fire and Rescue NSW, the Rural Fire Service, the Volunteer Fire Fighters Association and all those great men and women who go out and give it their all. That typifies the unique Aussie spirit that is deeply embedded in all of us. Once again, on behalf of the New South Wales Labor Opposition, we extend our admiration to them, and I thank the member for Holsworthy for bringing this motion before the House today. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (12:14): St Florian was a Christian holy man and the patron saint of Linz, Austria; chimney sweeps; soap makers and firefighters. On the eve of St Florian's Day on 4 May, I thank those selfless firefighters who saved my community from certain peril. I thank all those who answered the call to leave their families and their homes to fight fires in my community, including the NSW Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW, and especially the community fire units. I also thank the members of this House who support their local fire services. We all know in this place that the thousands of volunteers in New South Wales are always ready, willing and able to help other communities, not just their own.

As I said in my private member's statement in the House last night, our communities—those of the member for Holsworthy, the member for Miranda, the member for East Hills—and the Attorney General, who was standing in for the Minister for Emergency Services, were under the pump over a couple of days in mid-April. I noted the camaraderie of not only the NSW Rural Fire Service but also NSW Fire and Rescue, whose members came from everywhere to assist, including the Central Coast and the Blue Mountains. I spoke to members of the Springwood Fire Brigade who were standing by. The selfless giving up of their own time and the willingness of employers to give them time off to fight fires in other communities is fantastic not only for the people of New South Wales but also for Australia. I now recite the prayer for firefighters:

Oh, Almighty God, whose great power and eternal wisdom embraces the universe, watch over all firefighters. Protect them from harm in the performance of their duty to fight fire, save lives, and preserve property.

We pray, help them to keep our homes and all buildings safe day and night. We recommend them to Your loving care because their duty is dangerous. Grant them Your unending strength and courage in their daily assignments.

Dear God, protect these brave persons. Grant them Your Almighty protection and unite them safely with their families after duty has ended. Amen.

I believe that encapsulates what St Florian's Day is all about for our volunteers across New South Wales. On the eve of St Florian's Day, when some of those volunteers will receive awards, that is just a recognition of what has happened in the past. One of my constituents has been a volunteer firefighter for more than 60 years. People like that inspire our communities to be strong in tough times. I thank the member for Holsworthy for moving this motion at this poignant time in our local history. We were facing the prospect of hundreds of houses being lost and people losing their lives but fortunately—and I think the St Florian's firefighters prayer may have had something to do with it—we did not lose one house and not one person lost his or her life.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (12:18): I am pleased to contribute to debate on this important motion. I thank the member for Holsworthy for moving this motion and I thank the member for Fairfield and the member for Heathcote for their contributions. International Firefighters' Day, as we have heard, is observed each year on 4 May when we are invited to remember past firefighters, especially those firefighters who have died while serving our community and those who have dedicated their lives to protecting all of us. I quote Lieutenant J. J. Edmondson who in 1999, as part of the Australian arm of the International Firefighters Day Association and a volunteer lieutenant and firefighter in the Country Fire Authority in Victoria, said:

The role of a firefighter in today's society—be it urban, rural, natural environment, volunteer, career, industrial, defence force, aviation, motor sport, or other is one of dedication, commitment and sacrifice—no matter what country we reside and work in. In the fire service we fight together against one common enemy—fire—no matter what country we come from, what uniform we wear or what language we speak.

I thank him for organising, on behalf of the States and the Territories, our contributions to acknowledging St Florian's Day. Members have heard that St Florian is the patron saint of firefighters. St Florian, the first-known commander of one of the firefighting squads in the Roman Empire, lost his life protecting communities. Each year emergency services in different communities in New South Wales and across Australia hold events such as fetes, open days and fundraisers for campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of communities pulling together. It is a time to show support for and acknowledgement of the commitment and dedication of firefighters locally and internationally. We remember as a mark of respect those who have been injured or who have lost their lives in the line of duty. It is a time to say thank you and to raise awareness of local issues.

I express gratitude to firefighters everywhere, including my young son who is a member of my local brigade. I acknowledge the firefighters in my electorate of Blue Mountains and those constituents who are still rebuilding after the 2013 fires, in which many hundreds of people lost their homes. In those fires many pets and wildlife were lost in the beautiful Blue Mountains, but fortunately no human lives were lost and I thank the firefighters and other emergency services personnel for that. I thank our fantastic Fire and Rescue NSW crews, retained and permanent, in the Blue Mountains. I thank our Rural Fire Service volunteers, group officers and all those who work every day in the fire control centre in collaboration with the community.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:22): I speak in support of the motion. As the member for Terrigal, I am privileged to have eight Rural Fire Service and three Fire and Rescue NSW units based in my electorate. They have a fantastic mutual aid agreement where they work collectively and collaboratively to ensure that people in the electorate remain safe. I note that two Rural Fire Service units from Avoca Beach and McMasters Beach, accompanied by Terrigal Fire and Rescue, attended the recent fires in the electorates of Holsworthy and Heathcote. I was so proud that teams from the Central Coast, without fear or favour, willingly travelled down south to help their brothers and sisters achieve that fantastic outcome of no loss of life or property.

The camaraderie amongst them is amazing. I spoke to the captain of Avoca Beach unit, who caught up with the guys from Terrigal Fire and Rescue at the service station on the way down to the fire. They chatted about how happy they were to be working together, fighting the fires, side by side. As the member for Terrigal, I am proud to promote the fantastic work of the men and women of both the Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW, not just in my electorate but across New South Wales. Indeed, all members would appreciate the incredible work, sacrifice and dedication that volunteer and professional firefighters provide to our communities every day of the week.

On the eve of St Florian's Day it is important to take a moment to reflect on the effort of all our full-time and volunteer firefighters. I draw to the attention of the House the work of the NSW Rural Fire Service over the 2017-18 bushfire season. Members of that service were kept incredibly busy during that long and lengthy fire season. From 1 July 2017 to 30 April 2018 there were approximately 14,467 bushfires and grassfires across New South Wales that burned through approximately 265,848 hectares of land. That demonstrates the scale of the exercise and the incredible effort of our volunteer and retained firefighters. Obviously the weather conditions were difficult, with 23 total fire ban days declared across New South Wales during the season.

It should be noted that the bushfire season has been particularly long, with major fires occurring on the mid North Coast in September 2017 and ongoing dry conditions meaning that some areas ended their bushfire danger periods only on 30 April 2018. It was a long high fire risk hazard. There were many examples of bushfires during the season, with both NSW Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW working together to provide protection to all our communities. I could stand in this Chamber all day and talk about the fantastic work that those two agencies do. With the upcoming open day in May for Fire and Rescue, I encourage all my constituents to visit the Terrigal, Kincumber, Davistown or Saratoga fire stations to witness firsthand what our fireys do. There are many volunteers in the Rural Fire Service, including Terrigal Woman of the Year, Tanya Deger, who is the deputy captain at Wamberal. On behalf of my constituents, I express my gratitude to all firefighters. St Florian's Day highlights the incredible effort they put in for all of us.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (12:26): It is with great pride that I support the motion on St Florian's Day. I sincerely thank the member for Holsworthy for raising this important matter in the House. People in the Sutherland shire and in southern Sydney have had far too many close encounters with fires recently. On behalf of my constituents, I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all our firefighters from the NSW Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW for all their work and effort, both in training and on the ground, in protecting our local community.

Recently I attended a community meeting of the Illawong and Alford's Point Progress Association at which Captain Mark Pryor from the Illawong Rural Fire Brigade was present. He recounted his experience during the recent fires. He said he was protecting other people's homes but it felt surreal when he had to call his wife and tell her that she had to leave their home. It is rarely acknowledged that volunteers and emergency services personnel go out and courageously fight fires to protect all of us but in doing so they are leaving their own wives and children to fend for themselves. Luckily this time it was a fantastic outcome, with no loss of life or property, which is testament to the teamwork of the Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW and our other emergency services. I take this opportunity to place on the record my thanks to the Illawong Rural Fire Brigade, the Miranda Brigade and everyone who was involved in Sutherland shire headquarters.

I thank everyone in the Heathcote headquarters from the Rural Fire Service who helped support that effort. There was such a phenomenal effort on the ground. Unfortunately it came too close to the recent fires we experienced in the Royal National Park only in January. Between those two incidents alone, our local firefighters have had to put out more than 9,000 hectares of burning bushland. One of the joys of living in the Sutherland shire is that it is one of the most beautiful areas to live in. We are surrounded by bushland which we all value and appreciate. The downside of this beautiful countryside is that fire incidents can happen in nature and, unfortunately, there are also suspicions that at times people deliberately light fires.

The efforts of our firefighters are even more special because they not only respond to the natural incidents of Mother Nature rejuvenating the bushland but also quite often respond to fires that have been carelessly and recklessly lit by people who have no regard for the community. To me, these people are local heroes. For anyone from my community who wants to thank the firefighters, Illawong Rural Fire Brigade has an open day this Saturday between 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. There is another opportunity on Sunday for the community to thank our firefighters at an event hosted by Sutherland Shire Council at Parc Menai between 11.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. I thank them again.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services) (12:31): By leave: I speak on a couple of fronts today. I acknowledge the member for Holsworthy for bringing this motion to the House to acknowledge St Florian's Day, the International Firefighters' Day, tomorrow. I also acknowledge the efforts of firefighters most recently in the horrific bushfire that took place in the Holsworthy Army Barracks. Melanie Gibbons, the member for Holsworthy, knows only too well the effect and the devastation that fire can have and the importance of having well-equipped fire brigades and a well-equipped Rural Fire Service to protect life and property. Thankfully we can say today that not a life or a house was lost in that fire, which burnt out almost 4,000 hectares.

To people around the world who no doubt will be hanging on every word that is spoken in this Chamber today, it will come as something of a shock that almost in the heart of metropolitan Sydney is an expanse of 4,000 hectares of land that could be burnt out, but such is the nature of our urban environment. Our urban environment intersects directly with vegetation and bushland. As the Minister with responsibility for volunteering, on behalf of the 70,000 volunteer firefighters across New South Wales, I place on record our expression of heartfelt appreciation for tomorrow. It is an opportunity to recognise in Parliament their efforts, which are called on repeatedly. Several brigades in my electorate of Castle Hill such as Kenthurst, Rouse Hill and, I believe, even Box Hill-Nelson received the call to assist or stand by in order to protect and ensure that life and property were not lost in that fire.

As someone who has lived on the land in The Hills and Hawkesbury areas all my life, as has my family for the past two centuries, I know only too well the devastation that bushfires can wreak. My father used to remind me about Black Friday in 1939, as it was known, when a bushfire burnt out areas from the Blue Mountains to Parramatta. He said it was black as far as the eye could see. Three generations of my family lived in what is now Castle Hill Heritage Park. My grandmother took my father and his brothers and sisters from the property to remove them from harm and left my grandfather and great-grandfather behind to fight the fire. They saved the property and the two homes, and the animals were allowed out onto the streets.

Many volunteer fire brigades were borne out of that time. I acknowledge the seventy-fifth year of the Kenthurst, Rouse Hill and Box Hill-Nelson brigades. Box Hill-Nelson was my brigade in 1973 when I joined at the tender age of 13 to do what so many others, including many ancestors of people in my area, have done: defend property and defend life in times of bushfire. I speak proudly in this place as the member for an electorate with many hard-working and dedicated firefighting volunteers but also as the Minister for volunteering, acknowledging all 2.1 million volunteers across New South Wales and, most importantly, the firefighters who will be recognised on St Florian's Day tomorrow.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (12:35): By leave: It gives me great pleasure to make a contribution about St Florian's Day, which takes place tomorrow. The services in the Myall Lakes electorate include Fire & Rescue at Taree, Forster and Wingham. The people at those services are retained firefighters, which

means they all have a job. They receive an allowance to be on call and then they turn up when they are called out. They have to leave their families and occupations, and they are supported by their employers in doing that. They do that to look after and protect our communities and they play an extremely important role.

They are well-trained, highly skilled and exceptional individuals, and they work as a team. When we think about Fire & Rescue, we think about structural fires such as house fires and factory fires, but they also attend motor vehicle accidents and incidents involving hazardous materials. They also play an important role in rescues whether or not a fire is involved. They play an extremely important role in our communities so that people can go to sleep at night knowing they are being protected by Fire & Rescue. And of course they work with our Rural Fire Service when necessary.

The Rural Fire Service is made up of volunteers. It is the largest volunteer organisation in New South Wales, with more than 70,000 volunteers. I pay tribute to those volunteers. On Monday night I will be going to Krambach Rural Bushfire Brigade to talk to them about the Community Building Partnership grant of \$20,000 they have received to extend the station. Like Fire & Rescue, the Rural Fire Service attend not only bushfires but also structure fires, motor vehicle accidents and hazmat incidents and assist police and other organisations when need be.

St Florian's Day is International Firefighters' Day and celebrates a worldwide brotherhood. I pay tribute to the fire controller for the Mid Coast and Hastings area, Kam Baker, who recently went to the United States to help them with the horrific wildfires in California and other places over there. On Monday night I will see Neville Moore, the Krambach brigade captain. As an example of what a brigade does, I will list some of the work Tuncurry brigade did in April—not in summer; just last month. They were called out on 1 April with Green Point brigade to a fire call, on 2 April with Nabiac to a fire call, on 3 April to a motor vehicle accident with Nabiac, on 8 April to a motor vehicle accident, on 10 April to a fire call, on 11 April with Nabiac to a fire call, on 16 April with Tuncurry and Diamond Beach brigades to a fire call, and on 18 April to a fire call and a call for the boats. There are numerous islands that they look after. On 30 April Tuncurry and Nabiac brigades attended a motor vehicle accident. That is a short snapshot of the calls just one brigade received. All of the brigades in the Myall Lakes electorate would receive similar calls. I congratulate all of them and thank them for their service.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (12:39): By leave: I will make a brief contribution to acknowledge St Florian's Day tomorrow and the wonderful firefighters across New South Wales. This is not electorate based, it is State and Federal based. All our fireys give selflessly day in and day out to ensure that our homes, property and lives are protected. I acknowledge the selfless work of our fireys and those members of the Rural Fire Service [RFS] who give of their time, never knowing what they will be confronted with when they go to work on a day-to-day basis, but willingly putting themselves, on occasion, in harm's way to ensure the community's safety. There have been countless acts of bravery in which firefighters and RFS members have placed the community's interests above their own. We thank them sincerely for what they have done, what they do, and what we know they will continue to do.

Our fireys and RFS combine not only to make the community safer but also to ensure our communities are wonderful communities. Our fireys are called out in times of dire need and that is the nature of their work. The saving of property, livestock, homes and lives is something for which we are very grateful. I thank them for their efforts. Tomorrow is a day where we remember our firefighters and take the time to thank them for their efforts. It is also about doing it week in, week out and day in, day out. I stand with other members of the House to acknowledge the selfless work of fireys and thank them for it. Quite often it may seem that the community does not understand or appreciate what they do. However, we do appreciate it and thank them for it. We are better as a community for all that they do. On behalf of the House I thank them.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (12:43): By leave: It gives me great pleasure to support Friday 4 May 2018 as International Firefighters' Day, which is St Florian's Day. We acknowledge that St Florian's Day provides an opportunity to celebrate the work of firefighters who have gone above and beyond in their duties. We commend all firefighters in New South Wales for their courageous efforts to protect people and their property. It is an important day in any firefighter's calendar when the work of firefighters who have gone above and beyond their duties is acknowledged. It is an opportunity to commend all firefighters in New South Wales for their courageous efforts to protect people and property throughout the State.

It gives me great pleasure to update the House on the enhancements of the fire fighting workforce in Tamworth. Recently Tamworth went 24/7 in its firefighting coverage. We were once operating a 12-hour day where retained and permanent firefighters would mix and provide cover for the rest of that time. We now have 24-hour firefighters on deck to respond quickly to an emergency in our area. As part of that, 11 new firefighter jobs were created in Tamworth. That enables us to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We are also building a brand new state-of-the-art purpose-built fire station to house those firefighters. They will be able to rest in comfort at the fire station site in order to perform those duties. We are looking at sites across Tamworth. It is

a \$5 million project. We are looking forward to progressing that. It is further investment in our firefighters and it is our way to say thanks as we work towards and acknowledge St Florian's Day tomorrow.

On Saturday, Gunnedah in the Tamworth electorate will be hosting the regional firefighting championships which lead up to the State championships in Dubbo later this year. It will give me great pleasure to attend on Saturday morning when I will open the regional firefighting championships. There will be 20 teams from across New South Wales including Bega, Bathurst, Dubbo and Port Macquarie. Each of those teams will be vying for points which will enable them, if they accumulate enough points, to compete at the Australasian firefighting championships in 2019 to be held in Tamworth. A few months ago at the bid in New Zealand, Tamworth won the right to host those championships. We are excited about that. We are looking forward to the Australasian championships in 2019 between New Zealand and Australia.

There will be 100 firefighters in Gunnedah on Saturday morning. They will run through real-life scenarios. Fire and rescue teams and the Rural Fire Service will also be competing. Tamworth and Kootingal will be present. Kootingal pushes everyone to the limit and has taken out the regional championships in previous years. I wish all teams all the best on Saturday at the regional firefighting championships. I pay my respects to the firefighters who do a magnificent job and wish them the best on St Florian's Day.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): I acknowledge and welcome Denise and Lloyd Keen, who are present in the public gallery today, who are active community members with the Greater Manly Residents Forum. The member for Manly is a good member. I have just one word of advice: Make sure you keep him honest. Keep that forum going and keep his office peppered with emails.

Motions

ST FLORIAN'S DAY

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (12:48): By leave: On the eve of St Florian's Day, Friday 4 May, I acknowledge the wonderful work of firefighters, both the retained firefighters and those firefighters that make up the Rural Fire Service in the Cootamundra electorate. The very large electorate of Cootamundra has a number of Rural Fire Service units. They do absolutely wonderful work day in and day out to protect the people of Cootamundra, to protect stock and property, and, most importantly, to protect our lives. In doing so they put their own lives at risk every time they turn up for duty and we acknowledge their wonderful work. It is important to acknowledge the families of the firefighters. Quite often volunteers of the Rural Fire Service protect other people's lives, stock and property, and in doing so they leave behind their own families. In my electorate our Rural Fire Service is made up of men and women who have young families. I acknowledge that when they volunteer they leave their families behind and we always wish that they return safely.

I am proud to be part of a government that continues to invest in the assets of the Rural Fire Service. Those men and women who put their lives at risk day in and day out to protect our electorates have the best available equipment to help them to do the best job they possibly can. As the new member for Cootamundra, I have had the opportunity in the past six months to unveil a number of new trucks that have all the bells and whistles. These vehicles are necessary to enable firefighters to protect people in our community when there is a fire. As we head towards St Florian's Day it is important to stop to celebrate the work of these wonderful people. I look forward to continuing to work with them in my community and to present them with the medals that they deserve. I acknowledge the ongoing hard work of the Rural Fire Service and our retained firefighters.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:52): In reply: I thank the members who spoke in debate on this important motion today—the members representing the electorates of Fairfield, Heathcote, Blue Mountains, Terrigal, Miranda, and Castle Hill, who is also the Minister responsible for volunteering, as well as the members representing the electorates of Myall Lakes, Camden, Tamworth and Cootamundra. I also thank them for acknowledging the outstanding work of the St Florian's Day award recipients and for commending all the firefighters for their courageous efforts to protect people and property throughout our State. It was pleasing to hear the member for Fairfield mention the commitment of firefighters through the day and night to fight the Holsworthy fires. The effort and energy they put into fighting those fires was something to behold. The member for Heathcote gave the firefighters' prayer in the House, which definitely worked. Two short weeks ago we witnessed a miracle. No lives were lost in the Holsworthy fires, which reached the back fences of homes but went no further.

I have seen a lot of fires in my community and the community spirit that emerges is amazing. The member for Blue Mountains has also experienced fires in her community. It was good that she acknowledged the

community spirit and how St Florian's Day first came about. The member for Terrigal is incredibly proud of the firefighters from his electorate who helped my local community. It was lovely to watch him proudly following his local fireys on Facebook. The member for Miranda mentioned that together the Royal National Park fire and the Holsworthy fire meant that our local community has seen our firefighters fight more than 9,000 hectares in a short time. The member for Cronulla also knows about fires. He is in the Chamber at the moment and I thank him for his efforts as the Acting Minister for Emergency Services throughout those fires. He gave countless updates from early in the morning until very late at night to the local members whose electorates were affected. I am grateful that he well and truly kept us in the loop.

The member for Castle Hill mentioned the seventy-fifth anniversary of his local fire brigades and how proud he is of them. He has spent time in evacuation centres and he recounted his family experiences. The majority of us have experienced fires in some way in our communities. Members of this Chamber should come together to show our appreciation. As the Minister responsible for volunteering, the member for Castle Hill acknowledged the millions of people who volunteer. As part of the celebrations of St Florian's Day, we acknowledge the people who have exceeded the highest expectations we have of our fireys.

Every one of them should be acknowledged. The awards not only acknowledge their bravery but also acknowledge the outstanding service and dedication of individuals and crews across the State. We know that the work is diverse and that it should be recognised in these awards. I cannot disclose the Rural Fire Service award recipients, but I am advised that the recipients are drawn from all areas—from frontline operations, support roles and administration. I wish them all the best for tomorrow. Once again, I extend my appreciation to family members who are fireys and thank them for giving up their time with their families.

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

Motion agreed to.

FRESHWATER ANZAC PRECINCT REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (12:56): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises the contribution of Sean Rout and the Harbord Returned and Services League Sub-Branch in organising the Freshwater Anzac Precinct Remembrance Day Service.
- (2) Congratulates the Soldiers Avenue of Honour Stakeholders Group on its commitment to the local community and its tremendous work on the Freshwater Anzac Precinct.
- (3) Wishes the stakeholders group all the best for its preparation of the Centenary of Anzac in 2018.

In the years immediately following World War I, avenues of honour began popping up in Australian towns, villages and suburbs. The name "avenue of honour" may suggest a grand monument or structure, but in reality it may be as solitary and simple as a tree. In Freshwater, Soldiers Avenue has grown to include a collection of streets that over time have come to be known as the Freshwater Anzac Precinct. Each of the trees that lines those streets carries a plaque with a name and, in some circumstances, a story about a fallen soldier from Freshwater or the Manly electorate.

For many decades the trees have provided a place for families and communities to gather and mourn, and to pay their respects to members of the community who died in the war. In a lot of cases their remains never made their way home and still lie in European battlefields far away. The trees that line those avenues of honour have become living memorials. The Manly electorate had trees planted in at least three avenues of honour between 1922 and 1923. The tree that was planted in Soldiers Avenue, Freshwater, still stands today. Another one was planted in Condamine Street, Balgowlah, in 1925. The third one was planted in 1933 at the School of Artillery, North Head. It is particularly special and compelling that the trees are a living and growing monument that have existed for many decades so that people can pay their respects. The trees change shape and evolve, much like our understanding of the physical and mental impact that the war had on those who made it home.

What we have in Freshwater today is a wonderful streetscape with beautiful proud trees standing tall. Their symbolism in the context of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day is obvious to us all. It is only through the hard work and commitment of volunteers and people like Sean Rout, via the Friends of Freshwater and the Soldiers Avenue of Honour Stakeholder Group, that these wonderful, living monuments survive and thrive. A significant amount of energy, effort and care goes into maintaining and managing these trees and, therefore, the Freshwater Anzac Precinct, which is why I moved this motion. The Friends of Freshwater, which was established in 2010, saw the need to revive the importance of Freshwater's avenue of honour as a part of the Centenary of Anzac.

The Soldiers Avenue of Honour Stakeholder Group, along with residents of Soldiers Avenue, reinstated the streetscape as one of the last remaining avenues of honour in greater Sydney, which is a sight to behold.

The Soldiers Avenue of Honour Stakeholder Group has worked tirelessly over the years to restore the avenue and provide our community with a place to remember and commemorate our past veterans. With local, State and Federal government support, the group has refurbished and installed the plinths and plaques of a number of the heritage listed trees and developed a unique catalogue of family histories of those who served in the Great War of 1914 to 1918. The Soldiers Avenue trees stand proud and tall and the stories that go with them serve as a growing and living commemoration of our service men and women and the sacrifices that they made.

Recognising the support of community members like Sean Rout and the effort that goes into these monuments, or acknowledging veterans in this place outside the usual milestones of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, is not done to glorify war at all—it is entirely the opposite. It is to remind us of the pointlessness and the futility of war. I strongly believe that in this final year of the Centenary of Anzac—all members have commemorated Anzac Day in their communities—we can start a new chapter and change the types of discussions we have about veterans and contemporary veterans who may have served in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The avenue of honour in Freshwater that has evolved into a precinct that celebrates the Anzac spirit has become what it is as a result of the significant work of the Friends of Freshwater and people like Sean Rout. I commend my motion to the House.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (13:02): I commend the member for Manly for moving this motion. About a decade ago our communities did not commemorate Anzac Day but I am happy to say that the tide has now turned and we commemorate the Centenary of the First World War. Communities all over Australia commemorate and honour all those who have fallen not only in Australia but also across the world. Earlier the member for Manly referred to the Anzac Day services that are held throughout his electorate. A few RSLs in my electorate held fantastic Anzac Day services. Woronora River RSL Club brought back a pine tree seed from Lone Pine which was planted by the club. The club could have given some thought to positioning the tree a bit better but it is growing strongly. The club holds pre-Anzac Day services so that veterans are able to attend the dawn service in Martin Place. It was fantastic day. There was everything from pipe bands to local silver bands and children from the local Woronora school sang the national anthem.

On Sunday morning I attended the 9.45 a.m. service at the former Bundeena RSL Memorial Club which has been going through hard times as the clubhouse burnt down a couple of years ago. It has now been rebuilt and renamed Bundeena Community and Services Club. The weather and the view from Port Hacking were spectacular. When the national anthem was being sung kookaburras laughed in background which was fantastic. I congratulate Bundeena Community and Services Club. I also attended the Engadine pre-Anzac Day services. With ex-military personnel from the Vietnam War it runs a very tight ship. It said that the service would conclude at 11.30 a.m. and that is exactly what happened. The ceremony and commemoration were fantastic, backed up by Sing Australia from Kiama. On Anzac Day I attended the Engadine RSL commemoration. At 4:30 a.m., 1,500 people were lining up to commemorate Anzac Day and at 5.00 a.m. when the ceremony commenced there were 3,500 people.

It is often said that support for the Anzacs and what they did for us has lessened but I believe it is getting stronger. More and more children are attending commemorations with their parents. In my community and in communities across New South Wales the Anzac spirit is stronger. Anzac Day commemorations are major events in communities across New South Wales. However, my electorate has special significance because of the Waratah March which commences in the Illawarra and goes all the way up the escarpment. I have said on other occasions that some villages had family groups of about 22 to 24 people. Half of the young men went to war and did not return, which impacted heavily on those communities. The new Anzac Memorial will be opened in the not too distant future. Community members and schoolchildren from the local school at Scarborough collected soil samples for the commemoration plaque at the new memorial. I will be proud when that memorial is opened later this year. I thank the member for Manly for moving this motion which is a reminder to everyone that the Anzac spirit is not dead.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (13:08): I support the motion moved by the member for Manly which recognises the contribution of community members and groups in organising the Freshwater Anzac Precinct Remembrance Day service. I have visited many Commonwealth war graves and paid tribute to fallen diggers from Israel and Greece as part of the Clubs NSW Anzac Ambassadors Tour which was arranged last year by the Premier for six students in New South Wales. Anzac Day is the day that we commemorate our fallen service men and women and acknowledge the efforts of many serving men and women in conflict zones and other areas around the world which ensures the freedom that we value and appreciate today.

We wake up early on Anzac Day and start the day with the dawn service. The earliest service in Sutherland shire starts at 4.20 a.m. at Caringbah. I attended the Miranda service this year, which started at 5.30 a.m. with a march from the RSL club to the Miranda War Memorial at Seymour Shaw Park. It was a beautiful and deeply moving service. The lovely thing about the dawn service at Miranda is that it incorporates so many elements of our local community. Cadets from Squadron 318 stood guard at the cenotaph during the service.

Thousands of people from the local community attended, including thousands of students wearing their school uniforms because even though it was school holidays, our local schools encouraged students to come and pay tribute to our fallen diggers. The students gave books as tributes which were then donated back to our local schools. I thank Miranda RSL sub-branch president Mike Molloy, secretary Brian Senior, committee members Alan Lark, Arie Havenaar and Ian Sonneman for their contribution and for making that service possible. It is one of the highlights of my calendar and I always feel privileged to be part of it.

At Sylvania Bowling club, the Salvation Army held a brief, nondenominational dawn service. I thank club president Alan Wick, secretary Peter Sprotte and director John Maxwell for organising that service for our community. Several other services were held in the Miranda electorate and Sutherland shire on that day, but I wanted to highlight those two in particular as we acknowledge the importance of Anzac Day and remind ourselves that without the ongoing effort of community members who want to highlight this important day on the calendar, it would not be there for future generations. I thank those members of our community for encouraging people to attend, particularly the Miranda RSL sub-branch for encouraging the next generation of students to participate in the dawn service and to realise the importance of Anzac Day. The Anzac spirit is an important part of the Australian way of life. I congratulate the member for Manly on moving this important motion and on giving members an opportunity to discuss the importance of our fallen diggers and the freedom that we have today.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:12): I commend the member for Manly for moving this motion which relates to the Freshwater Anzac Precinct Remembrance Day service. I will discuss what we do in Myall Lakes on Anzac Day. I commend the Wingham, Forster, Tuncurry, Taree and Bulahdelah RSL sub-branches for what they do on behalf of their returned servicemen and their communities, and what they do on Remembrance Day, Anzac Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, and other days. I will also highlight the unprecedented funding that our Government has been providing to the various RSL sub-branches and communities to restore and install commemoration items.

In Wingham there has been significant funding to restore the tower of the Wingham Memorial Hall. The museum has recently received a small grant to update and improve its display relating to Anzacs and Anzac Day, which examines wars from the Sudan War to the Afghanistan conflict. There is also funding for Memorial Drive, the road from Wingham to Elands and down to Wauchope. A number of memorial halls and other items along that road have been restored and it is now a tourist drive. In Taree on Victoria Street at Fotheringham Park the historic memorial clock has been totally restored, with new statues at the base of the clock, new paving and all sorts of other improvements. I commend the Taree RSL sub-branch for the work that it does.

At Bulahdelah, another great town with another great RSL sub-branch, the memorial hall has been upgraded, a memorial garden has been created and a rotunda has been installed next to the hall so that the Bulahdelah community can commemorate what our returned servicemen have done. As an earlier speaker said, in my area and in many areas across Australia, Anzac Day is getting bigger and bigger every year. The crowds are also getting younger and younger every year, which is important as the memories of what those who went before in the First World War, the Second World War and other conflicts and the sacrifices they made will not be forgotten. We commemorate Anzac Day not to glorify war but to try to ensure that we do not make the same mistakes again.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services) (13:15): I commend the member for Manly for moving this profound motion, which not only acknowledges Anzac Day commemorations but also acknowledges the fallen—those who paid the ultimate sacrifice—and all those who served in all theatres of war and performed peacekeeping duties since our initial confrontation in Gallipoli in 1915. It was a pleasure to attend the dawn service, as I always do, at Memorial Park in Wrights Road with 12,000 members of my community. It was the largest communal Anzac Day commemoration service outside of Martin Place. Once again, the park was overflowing with patriotic Australians acknowledging their ancestry and those of their ancestry who made the ultimate sacrifice in serving in all theatres of war.

I acknowledge the president of the Castle Hill RSL sub-branch, the well-decorated Philip Bridie, who performed that service. The member for Myall Lakes noted, as I do, the presence of many young people at that service. Every primary school and high school in my electorate of Castle Hill was represented by young people. The residents of Castle Hill take it upon themselves to ensure that the leaders of our high schools play a significant role in that service.

Following that service, I travelled to Kenthurst, where the Rotary of Kenthurst once again held a wonderful commemoration service. I acknowledge the great efforts of Rotary and of Paul Rapp in organising a flyover by the Royal Australian Air Force for the third year in a row. That is nothing short of astonishing, given that it is a service on behalf of 1,000 members of the Kenthurst community. Later that day I travelled to Annangrove Park in Annangrove to participate in an Anzac Day service with another 500 people. It was

a wonderful day. We acknowledge the sacrifice of our service men and women. I commend the member for moving the motion and commend the motion to the House.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (13:18): I speak briefly in debate on this motion to acknowledge Anzac Day and to thank the member for Manly for moving it. As the Holsworthy army barracks is within my electorate, it contains many defence families—with members both currently serving and veterans—who have given up so much so that we may live free and peaceful lives. I give them my deepest thanks and gratitude for their service. In my area, many different dawn services are held to commemorate Anzac Day. This year, I attended one in Liverpool. Last year, the Liverpool dawn service was at Macquarie Mall as the Bigge Park Memorial was undergoing a major renovation. I am glad that the memorial is complete and was ready for this year's Anzac Day commemorations.

The dawn service is a moving and reverent ceremony in which I am always proud to take part. All dawn services commemorating those who fought for our nation with pride and courage are always moving. In September last year I was honoured to take part in a remembrance ceremony for veterans from the Casula region. Minister Elliott and I took a soil sample from the grounds of Casula Library to be included in the Anzac Memorial Centenary Project Soil Collection Program. Samples of soil from more than 1,600 sites across New South Wales where young soldiers enlisted to fight are being collected as part of a moving artwork at the Anzac Memorial in Sydney's Hyde Park. The memorial will ensure that future generations appreciate and remember our Anzacs from different communities.

I pay tribute to Major Peter John Badcoe, VC, who was born on 11 January 1934. He enlisted in Hammondville in my electorate on 10 June 1950. Peter Badcoe was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Australian Staff Corps in December 1952. He was allotted to the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery where he served in a number of regimental and staff postings until August 1965. Peter Badcoe was then transferred to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and joined the Australian Army training team in Vietnam in August 1966. He was posted as Sector Operations Officer in South Vietnam.

On 23 February 1967 in Vietnam, under heavy fire, Major Badcoe rescued a United States medical adviser. On 7 March he led his company in an attack and turned what seemed to be certain defeat into victory. Again on 7 April he attempted to lead his company against more powerful opposition. This final act of bravery resulted in his death. For his gallantry and leadership Major Badcoe was awarded the Victoria Cross. I thank him and all the soldiers across my local area that serve or have served in the defence forces. I thank them for their continued goal of keeping Australia safe and secure. I again thank the member for Manly for moving this motion. Lest we forget.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:21): In reply: I thank all members for their contributions to debate on this motion, in particular, the member for Heathcote who made reference to the mighty lone pine above his local RSL. I thank the member for Miranda, the member for Myall Lakes, and the Minister and member for Castle Hill. I also thank the member for Holsworthy—my mother was posted for many years at the Holsworthy Barracks. I recognise members in my community such as Sean Rout and others who put a large amount of work and effort into the Freshwater Anzac Precinct. In this final year of the Centenary of Anzac we have turned a new chapter. We are now having the types of discussions that we should be having about our veterans.

This Government is committed to supporting our veterans and it does so under the leadership of the capable Minister for Veteran Affairs, Mr David Elliott. Whether it is the Veterans' Employment Program, the Invictus Games, or locally in Manly with the Soldier On facility, the Minister is delivering real change and improvements to the way in which we care for our veterans. I am beginning to sound like a broken record on some of these issues, but the statistics show that we have lost more veterans to suicide than we have in both the Iraq and Afghanistan wars combined. A report from the Department of Veterans' Affairs reveals that on any given night more than 3,000 veterans across Australia will be homeless. We should take those statistics to heart and remember why it is important to think of these issues on milestone dates such as Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, and others.

Recently I hosted a community panel for the Invictus Games. A number of veterans on the panel had served in Iraq and Afghanistan. Those veterans were asked by the community, "What is so difficult about the transition from military to civilian life? What makes it so difficult? The answers, which were complex, involved identity, or the loss of it, and changing from a regimented life into something that had great flexibility. But the major issue was social connectedness. Community groups such as Friends of Freshwater provide connectedness—a group in which returned veterans can become involved and something of which we can be proud. I commend the motion to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

GONG SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (13:24): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that the free Gong Shuttle bus service was introduced by the former government in 2009 to assist and, in part, to relieve parking pressures in the streets of Gwynneville and Keiraville.
- (2) Considers that the free Gong Shuttle has been extremely effective in reducing parking problems in the suburbs around the University of Wollongong and TAFE campus.
- (3) Notes the anger of the residents of Gwynneville and Keiraville at the impact that introducing full Opal fares from 29 January 2018 on the Gong Shuttle will have on passenger numbers and resulting increase in vehicle movements in their suburbs.
- (4) Calls on the Government to immediately overturn its decision to charge full Opal fares on the free Gong Shuttle.

Today I join my friend and colleague the member for Wollongong in stating that my community has simply had enough. The Gong Shuttle was introduced by the Labor Government to relieve congestion and parking problems in some of our key growth precincts—in particular, the hospital in the electorate of the member for Wollongong, the university campus in my electorate and other important areas such as our central business district, our innovation campus and inner city suburbs that were impacted by the growth of the university campus.

I would have thought this Government would have continued the work of the Labor Government, but that is not happening. This Government is going out of its way to dispose of something which is working, which is ridiculous and the community has reacted accordingly. Within a matter of days the member for Wollongong and I were inundated with emails and calls, and we were approached by students and people in the small business community—people who had visited our area and a number of local residents—who all said the same thing, "Why would anyone dispose of a service that was delivering for the community, increasing public transport uptake, reducing parking congestion and removing vehicles from our road?" This service is doing everything that it is meant to do but the Government has decided to remove it.

The member for Wollongong and I fought hard to retain this service. This Government has no idea how to resolve the transport problems that the Gong Shuttle was addressing. This decision was made before the end of last year and we are still waiting to establish whether the Gong Shuttle will remain free. This Government has its priorities wrong. It cannot accept money from Wollongong City Council or the University of Wollongong to contribute to the service. It cannot do a deal when someone else is doing the heavy lifting. It is phenomenal in this day and age that the Government is scrapping a public transport initiative and service that exceeds all key performance indicators expected by the community and small business operators. Students, people visiting the fantastic region that the member for Wollongong and I represent, and local residents rely on this important public transport service. Despite that, the Government wants to get rid of it.

The member for Wollongong and I will not cop that. But, more importantly, our community will not cop it. We have said clearly that while ever we are the local members of Parliament we will ensure that this service remains free. I acknowledge the work and contribution of the University of Wollongong and the Wollongong City Council in trying to get the Government out of a difficult situation that is the result of a stupid decision. Despite that, and months later, we still see no action from the Government to bring this matter to a head. I stand with the member for Wollongong, who has worked tirelessly alongside me and members of the community to make sure the Government understands the importance of this service. As I said, we will continue to fight to ensure that this service remains free.

The Government is happy to impose timetables on the Opposition, so I will give it a timetable: It must get this mess sorted, once and for all, by the end of this week. It has had months to do it; it has had plenty of time to get it sorted. The people of Wollongong and the broader Illawarra region have had enough of waiting. Small business operators rely on this service, local university students rely on it, thousands of residents rely on it, and health workers rely on it. Given that the University of Wollongong and the Wollongong City Council are now prepared to offer money that the Government should have allocated to this project and initiative, the member for Wollongong and I have a simple request: Sort out this mess and ensure that the Gong Shuttle bus service remains free—and, for heaven's sake, hurry up and make the decision.

Debate interrupted.

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

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery Mr Lachlan Hicks from the Sydney School of Entrepreneurship, guests of the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, Minister for Small Business, and member for Monaro.

I also welcome school captains from Galston College, Northern Beaches Christian School, Mater Maria Catholic College, Barrenjoey High School, the German International School Sydney, Narrabeen Sports High School and Pittwater High School, guests of the Minister for Education, and member for Pittwater.

I welcome Mr Walter Scott-Smith and his family, guests of the Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs, and member for Baulkham Hills.

I also welcome to the public gallery the Indian Seniors Group Hornsby, guests of the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, and member for Hornsby.

I welcome a group of international students from the University of Sydney, guests of the Executive Manager of the Department of Parliamentary Services, Mark Webb. I also welcome students from the Australian Catholic University.

*Question Time***WESTCONNEX**

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:21): I direct my question to the Premier. Will the Premier confirm that WestConnex stage two is facing a cost blowout of more than \$500 million and that the Government is in dispute with contractors? Will the Premier explain why she has kept that a secret?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will come to order. The Premier will be heard in silence.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:21): We will add that to the triple-L. Some may ask: What is the triple-L? It is the "log of Labor lies".

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Only this morning, I said to all my ministerial colleagues, "I've noticed that of late they've been pushing what they say publicly verging on lies." We will not stand for that.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129. Is that the sort of lie where you say the light rail budget was \$2.1 billion? Is it that the sort of lie or is it a different kind of lie?

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: What have those opposite got against reducing congestion for the people of Western Sydney who are stuck in traffic rather than being home with their families? What have they got against the thousands of jobs we are creating in building that project? They do not like jobs. We are for the workers and we are for jobs; we are for infrastructure and we are for investment. What have they got against our State moving ahead for the future? I ask the Leader of the Opposition: What has changed from last year when he gave an exclusive interview to the *Daily Telegraph* saying he supported stage three of WestConnex?

Now we hear that he does not support it. He said that he supported all the projects in Western Sydney, which he has now slashed. I say to those opposite: Stop lying to the community, stop misleading the public. We are extremely proud of our record on infrastructure. I say to the Leader of the Opposition: Every time he says a mistruth, we will call him out on it. He should not worry to tell us, because his colleagues are calling him out on every mistruth; his colleagues tell us all his mistruths.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, relevance. My question was about WestConnex stage two and why the Government has not admitted to a \$500 million dispute with the contractor, who has told us the project will be delivered a year late. The Government has kept this secret from the public.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is really interesting that the Leader of the Opposition asked me a question about a cost blowout, and now he has realised the error of his ways. His point of order is about a claim from a contractor. He has just watered down his question. He claimed there was a cost blowout, but when I called out his lie he watered down his question. He cannot tell the truth.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The Premier has concluded her answer.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (14:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government getting on with the job of delivering a world-class transport network for New South Wales?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the second time. I call the member for Keira to order for the third time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:27): We know those opposite cannot handle the truth. I thank the member for Epping for his question, because I know that he and other colleagues in the north-west, along with the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, were proud when we laid down the final tracks on the Sydney Metro Northwest rail line. This project was promised for decades by the Labor Government, but it failed to deliver—in fact, Labor kept promising and axing the project. We have got on with the job of delivering the project, and I pay tribute to the Minister for progressing it. I take a great deal of pride in this project because it was the first major project that our Government signed up to from scratch.

This project is pleasing because it highlights the complexity of major projects. For the first time in our nation's history, this city will have a metro rail system starting from the north-west. Our residents will have turn-up-and-go services that will carry more people per hour than ever before. I recall the all too frequent times that those opposite said this project was running over budget and running late. Guess what? Not only is it running on time but also it is at least half a billion dollars under budget. That is how to deliver major projects. However, I do say that parts of the project that were very difficult, as the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure would know. There were parts of the project that slipped—

Ms Kate Washington: They were working with no design.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Those opposite really cannot handle the truth. They do not support public transport, they do not support roads, they do not support anything. I remember all the doom and gloom about how much the project would cost, the budget blowouts and time blowouts. Yes, parts of the project were challenging and ran over time, but we have brought it back to time. I am proud to say that early next year residents will be able to use a metro system in Australia for the first time. It will start in the north-west—a rail line that was promised and cancelled by those opposite many times. I am also pleased that taxpayers will save at least half a billion dollars on that project. Those opposite do not like good news; they cannot handle it. I issue a word of warning to those who have listened to what the Leader of the Opposition has said about the Sydney Metro Northwest. Those opposite did not support us on the Sydney Metro Northwest, even though when in government they had promised to build it and then cancelled it.

We know that recently the Labor Party said it was not going to support the metro going to Bankstown; it is good enough for the north-west and it is good enough for Parramatta, but it is not good enough for Bankstown. We support the Sydney Metro West. Let us not forget that when those opposite were last in government they promised to build the Sydney Metro West and they lobbied the Federal Labor Party to give them some money for the project. The Federal Labor Government at the time gave them about \$80 million for planning for the Sydney Metro West. Guess what? In 2010 the Labor Party had to give back the sum of \$80 million because it did not do its homework. Those opposite lobbied their Federal colleagues and said, "Give us money for the metro; we're going to build it." They got the money, they did not do the project and they had to hand back the money. Meanwhile, we have got on with the job of building this project. I cannot wait for it to get to Bankstown, Parramatta and all over greater Sydney.

Mr Clayton Barr: When was the last time you were in Bankstown?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Quite recently, when I went to a dinner with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Everyone there wants the rail line. [*Extension of time*]

I know that the member for Oatley is very excited because he would know, from looking at our transport master plan, that in the future the metro will go to places like Hurstville. For commuters, turn-up-and-go services will be critical in changing the way that we move around the city. We appreciate that public transport is cheaper than other forms of transport. We are excited by the fact that thousands of people in the north-west to start with, and eventually those through greater Western Sydney, will soon be able to utilise this world-class transport service. We are extremely proud of our record on infrastructure spending and project delivery.

I thank everybody involved in this project, especially the workers. We must not take for granted the number of hours experts have spent underground when digging the tunnels and making sure that local residents were not impacted by the relocation of schools and other services. I thank the thousands of workers who have worked on the project to date—the local experts as well as those employed by some of the best companies in the world that will deliver this project. I cannot wait for the project to open, and I know members in the north-west are aware that their constituents have been waiting for this service for decades. The light is at the end of the tunnel, and I look forward to future progress.

WESTCONNEX

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:34): My question is directed to the Premier. I refer the Premier to her answer to the Leader of the Opposition. If, as the Premier has said, the WestConnex stage two is still on time and still on budget, for how much did the Government settle the \$500 million claim with the contractor? What was the new timetable that was agreed to? Will the Premier table those settlement documents in the House or provide them to the media?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: A number of questions were contained in the member's question.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:34): I note that the shadow Minister for Transport, and shadow Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, has been benched from asking me questions today.

Ms Jodi McKay: Don't worry. There's one coming up.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Great. I return to the question asked by the member for Maroubra. It is interesting that the Labor Party has changed its strategy in question time, given the first question the Leader of the Opposition asked me. I put on the record that the Labor leader asked me a question that was full of mistruths. He claimed an issue of blowouts and all these things that were not true. In my answer I said that as I understood it, what he was referring to was an outstanding claim—

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am answering the question. The member just does not like the truth.

Mr Michael Daley: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The words "blowout" and "claim" are interchangeable unless the Premier tables something in this House or gives it to the media that says the claim has been settled.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the second time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Did members notice how the Deputy Leader amended his question from a blowout to a claim because those opposite accept that what they asked was an overreach in the first question. It was an overreach, but we are used to that. As I said, the WestConnex project is on time and on budget. I make the important point that I do not know of any major project—those opposite would not know because they never completed any major project when they were in office. They cancelled a whole lot of them, but they never completed any.

Mr Michael Daley: The fairies built the M7.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It was not you; it was the Federal Government.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It was the greatest living Prime Minister: Mr Howard. I digress. As I said, it is important for us to acknowledge in this place that every major project always has challenges. According to those opposite we should not do anything because things are too hard; things are too challenging. According to those opposite, just rip up contracts—do nothing. I also remind the House of another example, and I gave the example because of the great question asked of me by the member for Epping on the Sydney Metro Northwest.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order: A couple of minutes ago the Premier said she was about to answer the question. I am listening and waiting for the answer.

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

Mr Jihad Dib: Standing Order 129. The question has not been answered.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Lakemba will resume his seat.

Mr Jihad Dib: But the Premier told us she would answer the question.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As I said, the interjection of the Leader of the Opposition to my previous response and the ad hoc way in which the Deputy Leader asked the question is an acceptance on their part that they overreached and they are toning down their language because the question was full of factual errors. The next point I make which is completely relevant to this question, and as I said in answer to the question of the member for Epping, is that every major project—those opposite do not want to admit this—has challenges. I also refer to a project that we have completed that now has passengers travelling on it every day: the Sydney Metro Southwest.

I remember when we were building the Sydney Metro Southwest, laying the track and finishing the Glenfield interchange, those opposite put out stories about the project running over budget and being late. At one stage we were concerned because we had to deal with active land owned by the Department of Defence, which could have contained live munitions, and we also had to deal with a number of endangered species. That was challenging and there were threats. But guess what? We brought it in \$300 million under budget and six months ahead of schedule. That is how we do infrastructure in New South Wales: We take on the challenges and we deliver projects. I say to those opposite that they never have and never will be able to understand what it takes to build major projects.

COST OF LIVING

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (14:39): My question is addressed to the Minister for Finance, Services and Property. How is the Government using customer feedback to monitor the success of its cost-of-living initiatives, and are there any alternative policies?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (14:40): I thank the member for Davidson for his question and his absolute passion for saving money for the people of New South Wales. I have mentioned to this House before that the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government is working hard to drive down the cost of living for families and, in particular, motorists in New South Wales. We have introduced FuelCheck—and it is good to see that our Queensland cousins have now reluctantly embraced the same program. We have lowered the costs of green slips, we have assisted parents to meet the cost of living through the great sports initiative Active Kids, and we are working to provide motorists with free registration through our Toll Relief program. Since January this year more than \$100 million has gone into the pockets of the people of New South Wales through those initiatives. That is serious money.

Last weekend we hit a new milestone: More than one million motorists have now claimed their green slip refunds through Service NSW—one million motorists in the past month or so. We are monitoring customer feedback across these programs: FuelCheck, 7,000 responses, a positive response rate of 95 per cent; Active Kids, 23,000 responses, a positive response rate of 99.8 per cent; and green slip refunds, 130,000 responses, a positive response rate of 98.9 per cent—let us call it 99 per cent between friends. The people of New South Wales know the truth. Using the 130,000 sample size, almost 1.1 million motorists have given the Government the thumbs up for the compulsory third party green slip refunds.

The people of New South Wales know good policies matched by good implementation delivered by a good government when they see it, and they are telling us that in droves. Now every electorate has a great story to tell but today I will focus on Cessnock—everybody gets their love and today it will be Cessnock. When it comes to green slip refunds, Cessnock has one of the highest response rates across the State. So far almost 17,000 people in Cessnock have claimed their refunds, pocketing almost \$750,000 thanks to the important reforms we have delivered.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister is talking about an Opposition electorate and providing statistics that the Opposition should be interested in. The Opposition is not listening to his answer.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: On average about 33 per cent of people in New South Wales have claimed their refunds; in Cessnock the average is 42 per cent. The member is obviously going out there saying, "Get your refunds. Get your refunds." That is great news. In Richmond Vale, a suburb in the electorate of Cessnock, 54 per cent of people have claimed their refunds. In Cessnock they are getting an average reduction of \$112 in their green slip premiums. I like the member for Cessnock. I was in the Chamber during his inaugural speech—a great inaugural speech—and he was there when I introduced the NSW Data Analytics Centre [DAC] bill. It was a lonely Chamber that day but, to his credit, he was there. But the member for Cessnock has been drinking from the Labor Kool-Aid of late. Last week in the Cessnock *Advertiser* the member for Cessnock said—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am sure all members will want to hear this.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: He said:

The green slip reforms are very bad news for people that actually get injured because you won't be able to access the treatment and money that you need to recover while injured and unable to work.

That is a lie, a big lie, a big Labor dirty lie—lie, lie, lie!

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I want to hear what the member for Cessnock has to say, given he said there are only five people in a certain part of his electorate.

Mr Clayton Barr: My point of order relates to Standing Order 72 and whether the word "lie" is parliamentary or unparliamentary. I ask the member to withdraw the allegation, and I ask you to declare the word "lie" as unparliamentary. Otherwise we have set a new precedent—which I am happy to agree with—but we need to understand that it is a precedent.

[Extension of time]

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: When the member for Cessnock said that injured people will not be able to access treatment and money, he was being very mendacious.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I call the member for Kogarah to order for the first time.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order—

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

Mr Jihad Dib: The member for Cessnock asked the Minister to withdraw the comment. We have not heard whether or not he is going to withdraw it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot instruct the Minister to withdraw the comment.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: As I said, I like the member for Cessnock, but what he said was false, absolutely false. It was mendacious, it was wrong and I am calling it out. Members should start speaking the truth in this Chamber.

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

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order: I do not think the Minister wants this to become a standard procedure. It is unparliamentary to say "lie". He can say "false" or "untrue".

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kogarah—

Mr Chris Minns: He should withdraw it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kogarah—

Mr Chris Minns: Otherwise you are establishing a precedent—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kogarah—

Mr Chris Minns: —and we will be in here everyday calling you all liars.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kogarah—

Mr Chris Minns: You should withdraw it.

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

Mr Chris Minns: You should do the decent thing and withdraw it. You should withdraw it. Don't make it the standard.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kogarah will leave the Chamber for the rest of the day.

[The member for Kogarah left the Chamber at 14:48 accompanied by the Deputy-Serjeant-at-Arms.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! For two days running Opposition members have not sought to take a point of order. They have stood at the lectern and have just let fly. I said yesterday that it will not be tolerated, but they have done exactly the same thing today.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: You have asked the member for Kogarah to leave the Chamber, but he does make a very good point on behalf of all members. There is a litany of rulings from your predecessors over many, many years in which the words "lie" and "liar" have been determined to be unparliamentary.

Mr John Barilaro: You said "liar" earlier. You called me a liar.

Mr Michael Daley: No, I didn't.

Mr John Barilaro: You started it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier and the Minister for Health will come to order.

Mr Michael Daley: You can ask him to leave, but he raises a good point.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Can I make it clear—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will resume his seat. I have been in this chair for a while and it is not the first time—especially this week—that I have heard the word "lie" used in this House, and it has not always come from a Minister; it has sometimes come from Opposition members. If we start to pick out one time when the word "lie" is used we will pick it out every time. The member for Kogarah did not handle his point of order in a professional way and that is exactly why he has been removed from the Chamber. He deserved to be removed for the rest of the day.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I want to tell people the truth. What was said was absolutely wrong. The truth is that under Labor's old, broken scheme, only 7 per cent of benefits were paid in the first 12 months. Under our new scheme, 55 per cent of benefits are paid to injured motorists in the first 12 months. That means that if you get injured, rather than waiting for the case to go to court after three years and then getting a lump sum, you will be paid when you need it the most; that is, if you are injured on the road, you put in your claim, you get paid for your loss of income and then you get paid for your treatment expenses, because that is when you need it the most, that is when you have to pay your mortgage. Otherwise you are carrying the costs of those really big expenses until you get your big day in court.

Under our new scheme you get paid straight up and much more quickly. What was said by those opposite was absolutely wrong and it was deceptive. What we have said and what we have delivered is the truth—that is, more money to motorists, more money in their pockets and far better benefits because they are getting paid more quickly. The scheme provides far better protections and, more importantly, it is a healthy scheme. We are proud of the reforms that we on this side of the House have delivered for motorists.

WESTCONNEX

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:52): My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Premier confirm that the contractors building WestConnex stage two have advised the Government in writing that the opening may be delayed by almost a year, and will the Premier tell the House why this delay has not been disclosed?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:52): This question is the third in a succession of similar questions. I notice that each one has been slightly toned down. I refer the shadow Minister to my first two responses. A claim is very different from a fact.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am 15 seconds into my answer.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: My point of order relates to Standing Order 128. The Premier should not be debating the question; she just needs to answer it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I call the member for Maitland to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Those opposite have asked the same question three times. They have toned down the question successively. I refer them to my first two responses in which I said that a claim is very different from what is happening. I say to those opposite and to everybody in the gallery and the public that they should be wary about what comes out of their mouths because I was just given a press release that the shadow Treasurer had put out and of all days it was appropriate to mention this today.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member knows what happened to the last person who stood up without a point of order.

Ms Jodi McKay: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am really happy for the Premier to talk about the shadow Treasurer, but I want her to answer my question first, under Standing Order 129.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. There is no point of order.

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. There is no point of order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: If they give you a question they have already been asked twice it is your fault for accepting it.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposition members clearly do not want to listen to the answer.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Clearly the Premier has forgotten that she should address her comments through the Chair.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Maitland to order for the second time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: This is what happens when they ask a line of questioning and then they regret it. I go to the heart of their lack of being able to tell the truth. The shadow Treasurer had put out a press release—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is enough discussion going on without the member for Drummoyne contributing to it.

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question specifically referred to whether the Government has been advised that the opening may be delayed by almost a year. That was the question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Premier has one minute and 20 seconds in which to answer the question.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I have already said that they do not know the difference between a claim and actual project delivery. They do not know the difference. To demonstrate this point—and it is highly relevant—the shadow Treasurer put out a list of so-called infrastructure blowouts. He said the north-west rail line was a \$50 million cost blowout. The media reported it. It is half a billion dollars under budget, so every time—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call the member for Cessnock to order for the first time. If this is the same point of order, I will not accept it.

Ms Jodi McKay: With the greatest respect to you always, I am entitled to take a point of order.

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

Ms Jodi McKay: It is relevance under Standing Order 129 and I come back to the question I asked, which is about a delay of a year. The Premier still has not answered the question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Premier's time has expired.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: You should all be embarrassed for yourselves, frankly.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (14:58): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. How has the New South Wales Government delivered its infrastructure priorities, and are there any alternative approaches?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:58): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga, the greatest member for Wagga Wagga in the history of the State. My sister lives in Wagga Wagga and she absolutely loves him; she is never going to return to Sydney as long as he is member for Wagga Wagga, so long may he reign in Wagga Wagga—not that I do not want her to come back.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister will answer the question.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: What was the question? It was about infrastructure. We are delivering—just like the member for Wagga Wagga—infrastructure everywhere. Our goal in New South Wales has been to make our State strong, free and fair. That is why the great Ministers here are building schools and hospitals like never before. I make special mention of Minister Hazzard. That is why we are constructing the best roads, rail and public transport. We are investing in more frontline services than ever before, such as Service NSW. We heard the great finance Minister earlier. Service NSW is revolutionising service delivery. We all remember what the Roads and Traffic Authority [RTA] was like under those opposites. We do this because we want communities and families across New South Wales to get ahead. That is why we are building the transformational projects that will change our State forever—projects that the Opposition raised today such as WestConnex, NorthConnex, light rail and the Sydney Metro.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian is the modern-day John Bradfield of this State. She is building everything and setting up our State for the future. Importantly, we can only do this and invest in infrastructure because, unlike Labor, we manage our money well and recycle assets. That is why the net worth of this State increased under us, not under Labor, but they do not get this. Labor members talk about fairness and opportunity, but they do not understand that stronger financial management and social outcomes are two sides of the same coin. We cannot have one without the other. There are other approaches to infrastructure, such as the Victorian Labor approach. For those who follow State politics in other jurisdictions, the Victorian budget was handed down on Tuesday and it was quite a good budget. I like Tim Pallas. He is a good guy. I sometimes think: Imagine if Tim Pallas were over there. It would be embarrassing. We have Tim Pallas and then we have little Ryan.

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order: I ask the Minister to withdraw the comment "little Ryan".

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Treasurer has heard the request.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Anyway, the Victorian Treasurer, Tim Pallas, gave a great speech. When he quoted his infrastructure agenda he said, "\$40 billion over four years" and he called it the biggest infrastructure investment ever. I would just like to say to Tim, "You're doing well, mate, but in New South Wales we are investing \$80 billion over four years." As usual New South Wales is twice as good as Victoria.

Ms Prue Car: Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance under Standing Order 129. The question was about infrastructure in New South Wales. The people of Hawkesbury would really like to hear about what the member for Hawkesbury thinks about the Bells Line of Road to Castlereagh Freeway. What about that infrastructure?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Londonderry will resume her seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: What I can say about the Victorian Government is that at least it is trying. It has a plan to build things, not to cancel things. We know this is an Opposition with the wrong priorities. Instead of supporting projects for the public good, it opposes them. Instead of making the decisions to take our State forward, it puts politics before people, doing the wrong thing over what we know is in the best interests of the State. *[Extension of time]*

The New South Wales Labor Party has become the ambulance chasers of Australian politics, looking for victims to exploit and projects to shut down. If we were building Sydney Airport today, Labor would oppose it. If we were building the Sydney Harbour Bridge today, Labor would oppose it. If we were building the Sydney Opera House today, Labor would oppose it. All the projects, all the infrastructure that we see across Sydney and New South Wales today that we take for granted would have been opposed by those opposites.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 59. It is tedious repetition. We hear it over and over again. Come up with something new.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. There is no point of order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The truth hurts. Every single infrastructure project that the Government has announced the Opposition has opposed and opposed the means of funding every single one of them. In terms of integrity, earlier this week the Special Minister of State spoke about the \$250,000 blood money. That sums everything up about Labor.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order: Are you going to build the Castlereagh corridor through your voters' homes, Minister? You were booed off stage at the Hawkesbury show, that is a considerable achievement.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member will resume his seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: There is always a Labor protest movement around. The Opposition talks about the "follow the money" legislation. Well, I will bring "follow the blood money" legislation into this place. Then we will see where every single dollar of that \$250,000 went.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 73.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Every marginal electorate—Prospect, Granville, Strathfield and Londonderry—we will follow the money. We will follow every last dollar of blood money. [*Time expired.*]

WESTCONNEX

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (15:05): I direct a question to the little Premier—I mean, the Premier. Will the Premier explain to the House why the WestConnex stage two contract with the CPB Dragados Samsung joint venture was signed months before all planning approvals were received and the scope of works was finally settled?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:06): Unfortunately, the shadow Treasurer has demonstrated why he should never be the Treasurer of this State. He does not understand what it takes to build major projects. I am waiting for his apology for distributing false information about Government projects. He should apologise. I have answered this question on four separate occasions today. I say: Do not listen to the Government or what others say, listen to your own. This is what Carl Scully had to say—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 129. The Premier may not know the answer, but it is definitely not in that book.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not read the book, so I cannot comment on that.

Ms Jodi McKay: The question has nothing to do with that book. If the Premier proceeds to read it she is out of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not heard what the Premier proposes to read. There is no point of order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Mr Carl Scully served in the Labor Government for many years. He said, "I still find it hard to believe that a Labor Government literally threw away \$2 billion in infrastructure funds."

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 129. The question related specifically to the WestConnex contract and why it was signed before planning approval was given. That is the question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not heard what is to be read. There is no point of order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I will save quoting from this book for another day. We have time in the months ahead of us if they keep asking questions like this. This is the irony, the Government is getting on with the job of building large-scale infrastructure projects that the Opposition could not handle. I will finish on this point: the biggest irony is that we are delivering for their constituents when those opposite could not do it. We are delivering for the people of New South Wales. We are getting on with the job and what is their response? Cancel, cancel, cancel; axe, axe, axe. The Opposition has no ideas and no policy. They are lazy, lazy, lazy.

WESTERN SYDNEY HEALTH SERVICES

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (15:09): I address a question to the Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport. Will the Minister inform the House how the New South Wales Government is delivering world-class health services for the growing community in Western Sydney, and are there any risks to this record investment?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for WestConnex, and Minister for Sport) (15:09): I thank the member for Riverstone, who is a fine advocate for his community and someone who understands the growing needs of Western Sydney. I inform the House that no Government in the history of our State has invested in health services across Western Sydney as this Government has. What we are seeing is more than \$5 billion worth of investment into new health infrastructure and services across Western Sydney. Let us roll through some of the things the Government is doing: Westmead Hospital and the Children's Hospital will receive over \$900 million. The Blacktown and Mount Druitt hospitals will receive more than \$700 million. The Campbelltown Hospital will receive more than \$775 million. The Liverpool Hospital will receive a \$475 million investment, Rouse Hill Hospital will receive an allocation of \$300 million and the Westmead Ronald McDonald House will receive an allocation of \$10 million.

This does not happen unless you have strong leadership from a Minister such as Mr Brad Hazzard, who understands what is required across growing populations in Western Sydney. He is backed up by the leadership of this Government, Premier Berejiklian and the Treasurer. They understand how important it is to have a budget allocation that will allow for the growth in health services across a growing population. The hospital I am most proud of is Nepean, where delivery of \$1 billion will fund the two-stage redevelopment of that hospital. There is no area in Western Sydney that needs a future and long-term investment in health services more than the growing outer Western Sydney region.

We know that growth will occur in areas such as Liverpool, Blacktown and Nepean, and this Government is investing not just for today but for the future. That is the significant difference between what we have on this side of the Chamber and what we inherited from those opposite. There is no greater example of investing for the future than Nepean Hospital. I will refer to a press release about the 2009-10 budget, which was just before I was elected to this place. Labor was talking about how it was investing in the future of Nepean Hospital. The then Minister for Health John Della Bosca said:

... the Government will commence works on an expansion of Nepean Hospital which will provide an additional wing to accommodate six new operating theatres, additional beds, intensive care and renal dialysis services ... and oral health services.

It sounds pretty good. The next line states:

This will support hospital operations for the coming decades.

Here we are, just a few years later, recognising as we said at the time when we were in Opposition, that it is not an investment for the future. This Government is delivering for the people across outer Western Sydney with \$1 billion for Nepean Hospital. That is on top of the \$900 million allocation to that critical growth area and the world-class health district at Westmead.

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

Mr STUART AYRES: The areas of the south-west such as Liverpool and Campbelltown are not just receiving services to win an election—which is what happened with the other side of the Chamber—they are getting the investment they need now and into the future. This Government, represented by strong local members and a well-led bureaucracy, does its work. It talks to the clinicians, it listens to the community and it develops clinical services plans across all of Western Sydney to make sure we are growing for the future. I recognise that 2010 was the previous Labor Government and it did not quite get it. It did not invest for the future. Let us go to an occasion closer in time: 19 June 2016 is an important date in the history of the Labor Party, particularly in Penrith. There we were, all of the Labor Party had gathered in Penrith to launch the Federal campaign.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the member for Keira that he is on three calls to order.

Mr STUART AYRES: Everyone is there. Bill Shorten is there. Despite knowing in 2010 it was not investing for the future the Labor Party announced \$88 million for Nepean Hospital. Twelve months later, our Government made its second commitment to ensure that we invested \$576 million, and we followed that up. *[Extension of time]*

There are two clear examples that when those opposite were in office they failed to understand how quickly Western Sydney was growing. They did not allocate money to invest in services and they did not listen to the clinicians. Even after having the opportunity to join their Federal colleagues, they still underinvested in Western Sydney. It takes people such as the member for Riverstone, the member for Parramatta, the member for Seven Hills, the member for Mulgoa, the member for Holsworthy and the member for Camden to invest in these hospitals. It is about working with local clinicians in local communities. In my community, people such as Nhi Nguyen and Peter Flynn, who lead the Medical Staff Executive Council, have been with us every step of the way. We got health investments out of the terrible cycle of going from one election to the next. This Government is ensuring that health services across Western Sydney are receiving the investments they need.

Last week the member for Seven Hills and the member for Riverstone joined the Minister for Health and the Premier at Blacktown and Mt Druitt Hospital for the topping out ceremony. That is another world-class hospital. This Government knows that it is unlikely to win Blacktown or Mount Druitt. That is fair enough, but this Government does not work only for the people who vote for it: It works for everyone in New South Wales, whether they are in regional New South Wales or in Western Sydney. The contrast has never been clearer in any policy area than health and investment in Western Sydney. Those opposite never invested for the future. Even with an opportunity to invest, they missed it—and we are investing still more.

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:16): My question is directed to the Premier. Considering that the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] unanimously made a range of proposals to provide more comprehensive protection for whistleblowers in November 2017, when will the Government act to introduce legislation to strengthen these important laws?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:17): I thank the member for Balmain for asking this question. I acknowledge his contribution to this debate. For a long time he has been vocal on the issue of whistleblowers. I am pleased to say that the Government is definitely in the process of drafting a bill to present to Parliament. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the great work of the ICAC committee, chaired by Damien Tudehope, the member for Epping. It is appropriate, given the question has been asked, to discuss some of the legal issues that were raised by the committee, which we are currently processing in bringing the bill together. We are committed to ensuring that whistleblowers receive appropriate protection. We are in the process of going through the issues raised by the bipartisan committee, which made a number of recommendations. The committee raised the need to deal with the legal issues that concern the overlap of the public interest disclosures regime applying to public officials under the Public Interest Disclosures Act. We are working through those legal issues.

We are working through how to protect people who have vexatious claims brought against them. Unfortunately, that is an issue. As members would know, we are currently reviewing the Public Interest Disclosures Act following recommendations of the parliamentary Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission. We are going through those issues as we speak. I would like to see it happen sooner rather than later, but we need to get through these issues. I want to ensure we get it right rather than rushing legislation through. I assure the member for Balmain that we care about this issue. It is not surprising that he has raised it, because we know members opposite do not have a good record on this issue. We have to consult the ICAC as well. We are going through those processes.

I know members opposite might scream and shout, but we were the ones who protected a Labor staffer when she raised concerns which ended up with a paedophile being convicted and sent to jail. I will not mention her name because she has been through enough, but I will say this: We protected her. I have made my point. Suffice to say, the issue raised by the member for Balmain is an important one. I thank him for his vigilance on this matter and the appropriate recommendations put forward by the parliamentary ICAC committee. I thank the chair and all members of that committee, who are from both sides. We are working our way through those legal issues.

POLICE NUMBERS

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (15:20): My question is addressed to the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services. What is the Government doing to ensure that the NSW Police Force has the support it needs to protect our State's communities?

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services) (15:20): I thank the member for Coogee for his question. He knows that this Liberal-Nationals Government places the support and resourcing of the NSW Police Force at the top of the priority pile of the many challenges and issues that it faces every day. Since he has been a member of this Government over the past seven years we have had the opportunity to support the NSW Police Force in a number of ways. The most important way we do that is by recruiting more police, which is called authorised strength. Since being in office, the number of extra police is in excess of 1,000, taking the total number of police serving across this State to more than 16,800. It is the largest police force ever to work in the communities of New South Wales.

The other way we support police, and in turn support our communities, is by providing them with the necessary legislation they require to do their job. Police do important work and, as crimes change, new challenges emerge. This Parliament, led by this Government, is charged with the responsibility of introducing legislation that allows the police to protect innocent people by having the powers to hold offenders to account for their criminal behaviour. We also support police by supplying them with resources, whether it is new equipment or building police stations. The member for Lake Macquarie and I have opened three police stations in his electorate.

Mr Greg Piper: Only two, but we'll take you up on that.

Mr TROY GRANT: I am pretty confident it is three. The resources could be new equipment or new vehicles. Our Policing For Tomorrow Fund has given police new-age technology that helps them do their job. Earlier in the week the Premier said she had the pleasure of attending the latest attestation parade at the academy. I thank her for attending. Approximately 2,500 people gathered at Goulburn with the local member and Minister to share a special day with 234 new probationary constables who will bolster the police ranks and serve our community. I talk a lot about the regions but it is also important to talk about the investment made in the city.

Across the new police area commands in Western Sydney, 19 new probationary constables have been allocated to the Cumberland Police Area Command, 15 to Liverpool City Police Area Command, 14 to Mount Druitt Police Area Command, 12 to Blacktown Police Area Command and 10 to Bankstown Police Area Command.

The east, where the member for Coogee resides, has not missed out. The eastern beaches and eastern suburbs local area commands will have 18 new officers added to their ranks. I encourage all members, and members of their communities, to have a cup of coffee with their local police next Tuesday on their annual day and to say hello, thank them, engage with them and make sure they are aware of any issues you have. As I alluded to, it is critical and incumbent upon the Opposition to support legislation that enables the police to protect the community. When the police approached a former police Minister and said, "We have a major issue in relation to organised crime", the Minister for Health may help me, but I think it was Premier Rees who introduced legislation to target organised criminal gangs. Under Attorney General Smith this Government also tried to target gangs, and that was ruled out by the High Court.

There was a need to bring in strong legislation to control crooks who were decimating communities and putting innocent bystanders at risk—legislation that would be accepted by the courts so that police had the necessary powers to protect communities. I was very proud to introduce legislation into this Parliament, on behalf of the Government, that established Serious Crime Prevention Orders. Thankfully that legislation was passed by this Parliament. Opposition members talk about their support of the police, but did they support that vital legislation? The answer is no. Once that legislation was passed, I was proud when the Supreme Court agreed recently that there was a need for a circuit-breaker to the escalating violence— [*Extension of time*]

Last Friday the Supreme Court issued the first ever Serious Crime Prevention Orders against 10 members of the Finks and Nomads outlaw motorcycle gangs located in the Hunter, mostly in Newcastle and Maitland. Those two gangs have been going hammer and tongs with drive-by shootings and untold violence, with no regard for public safety, with innocent bystanders at risk due to their uncalculated and indiscriminate crime rampage through the Hunter. Yet did the member for Maitland or the member for Newcastle vote for legislation to support their police in their communities? No, they did not. The member for Maitland is a motormouth in this Parliament. She has no courage to protect her community to support strong legislation.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: I ask the Minister to withdraw that comment. It is not what is expected of him as Minister for Police. I ask him to withdraw the comment he made to a woman in this Parliament.

Mr TROY GRANT: I withdraw the comment and apologise profusely, but the apology should come from the member for Maitland to her community for not being prepared to protect them and support this legislation. The same applies to the member for Newcastle, you gutless wonder. Why wouldn't you?

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Point of order: Under Standing Order 73—

Mr TROY GRANT: I will withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has withdrawn his comment.

Mr TROY GRANT: I apologise profusely because those with guts who will protect the cops are on this side of the House today and tomorrow.

Personal Explanation

POLICE NUMBERS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (15:29): By leave: I have on many occasions written to that Minister—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Which Minister?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: The Minister for Police—requesting more police for my electorate. I was promised 10 would come with the re-engineering. Seven have been given to me. He has attacked me in this place—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have granted the member for Maitland leave to make a personal explanation, not to debate the Minister's comments.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I object to the Minister's comment attacking me for not being supportive of police. My police know how supportive I have been of them, and they know how unsupportive he has been.

*Ministerial Statement***CENOTAPH CHIEF CUSTODIAN WALTER SCOTT-SMITH, OAM**

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (15:31): On behalf of the people of this State I want to express my deep gratitude for the service of Chief Custodian of the Cenotaph Mr Walter Scott-Smith, OAM, who joins us in the public gallery today, along with his proud daughters, Cathy and Karen, and his grandson, Mark. Last week, Mr Scott-Smith—affectionately known as "Wally"—completed his final Anzac Day as the Cenotaph's Chief Custodian, shining its immortal words "To Our Glorious Dead" for the last time after 78 years of service.

As the son of a military family, Wally began cleaning the cenotaph in Martin Place in 1940, after his dream of military service came to an end as the result of a medical condition. He had enlisted in the army in 1937 and was accepted into the Armoured Corps at age 15. However, one week before he was to begin service, it was discovered that young Wally had bowel cancer. After undergoing surgery to remove roughly 30 centimetres of his bowel, Wally was unable to retake his place and follow in the footsteps of his military father. However, the army's loss was the cenotaph's gain. The cenotaph cleaning was part of his duties as a Rover Scout, and in 1946 Wally took over the role of Custodian of the Cenotaph. For the past 72 years, Wally has been the caretaker of the monument, making sure it shines and gleams each Anzac Day.

Wally is an unsung hero. He has done the Australian people and the families of the fallen an admirable service through his devotion to the cenotaph. When our service men and women went overseas to fight in the Great War, many did not come home. Their bodies lie in the battlefields of France, Belgium and Turkey. Their blood fertilised foreign soil; the earth is their tomb. The families and friends they left behind did not have the option to go to the gravesites of the fallen to mourn. Instead, they built war memorials and monuments like the cenotaph in Martin Place to honour the dead and give mourners a place to remember.

Those memorials have kept the Anzac legacy alive, and so it is fair to say Wally has not only served this community as Chief Custodian of the Cenotaph, but as one of the custodians of the Anzac legacy. To Wally, on behalf of my parliamentary colleagues and the people of New South Wales, I say thank you. Wally, you have helped keep the memory of our diggers alive and ensure their legacy lives on for future generations. Wally, your selfless contribution means we are always reminded of our military heritage. Lest we forget.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (15:35): Today I speak on behalf of the New South Wales Labor Opposition to honour a truly remarkable Australian. Mr Wally Scott-Smith displayed unwavering dedication and passion in his role as the steward for the Sydney Cenotaph for nearly eight decades. It was moving to finally see Mr Scott-Smith's many years of service recognised at this year's dawn service in Martin Place, which also marked his last day on the job before entering a well-deserved retirement. Mr Scott-Smith is one of the most passionate Australians I have ever met, and I truly believe it has been an honour and a blessing for us all to have had such a loving, kind and caring man as the custodian of our beloved cenotaph for so many decades.

Despite 78 years of ongoing service, Mr Scott-Smith was surprised to have received a tribute for his custodianship of the cenotaph, as he humbly intended to simply stand down from his post. Mr Scott-Smith's dedication to his job stemmed from his desire to serve his countrymen and to honour those who have lost loved ones in war. Wishing to follow in the footsteps of his father and to have joined the army in his younger years, Mr Scott-Smith's dreams were abruptly halted when he required surgery to remove approximately 30 centimetres of his bowel due to cancer in 1937. It was but a few years later that, as a leader of the Rover Scouts, he first came to clean the cenotaph, a role he unknowingly would be serving for the next 78 years.

Despite entering retirement, we will definitely be seeing more of Mr Scott-Smith at future Anzac Day marches at Martin Place, as he intends to watch on and ensure the next fellow is doing as good a job as he once did, otherwise he will "go crook". Throughout his long tenure, Mr Scott-Smith has taken enormous pride in his posting as the Chief Cenotaph Attendant and we are all pleased his tireless efforts have not gone unrecognised. On behalf of everyone in this House, I extend our sincerest gratitude and admiration for everything Mr Wally Scott-Smith has done in service of our nation and the legacy our diggers have left behind. Mr Scott-Smith, you are a truly remarkable person, and I wish you the all the very best in your hard-earned retirement.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

*Announcements***MINISTERIAL STAFFER CALLUM FOUNTAIN**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I wish Callum Fountain from the office of Leader of the House a happy birthday. I know that his boss gave him a bottle of Fountain tomato sauce.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Pet Shops

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

Short-term Holiday Letting

Petition calling on the Government to ban the conversion of entire homes into short-term holiday lets and to introduce appropriate controls including a short-term letting registration system, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Daylight Saving Referendum

Petition requesting a referendum on the abolition of daylight saving, received from **Mr Philip Donato**.

Sydney Football Stadium

Petition requesting that the Government upgrade rather than rebuild the Sydney Football Stadium and invest the money saved into health, education and community sports facilities, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

*Committees***LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE****Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 53/56**

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

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:39): As Chair: I take this opportunity to speak about the Legislation Review Committee's fifty-third digest for the Fifty-sixth Parliament. In this digest, the committee examined four bills and one regulation. I will discuss those legislative instruments that contained issues identified by the committee. First, the Transport Administration Amendment (Sydney Metro) Bill 2018 amends the Transport Administration Act 1988 to facilitate the development, implementation and operation of a metro in Sydney by constituting Sydney Metro as a corporation and to provide generally for the corporation's management and functions. With regard to the issues set out in section 8A of the Legislation Review Act, the committee identified a few issues with this bill. First, the committee noted that the bill amends the Passenger Transport Act to allow Roads and Maritime Services, Transport for NSW and the Sydney Metro to enter into information-sharing arrangements with each other.

The information that can be shared relates to possible breaches of the Act, certain proceedings commenced against licence or accreditation holders, and the safe provision of public passenger services. The committee noted that the exchange of some types of information under the section may breach an individual's right to privacy, particularly as the regulations may also prescribe other information which can be shared. However, given that the information that is able to be shared is likely to be narrow in scope and relates primarily to the safe and efficient delivery of public passenger services, the committee made no further comment. A second issue the committee highlighted within the context of the Legislation Review Act related to the map which shows where Sydney Metro may develop land for a variety of purposes.

Under the proposed Act, Sydney Metro will be able to develop land in the locality of an actual or proposed metro station as shown on a map adopted by an order of the Minister and published in the gazette. The committee noted that "locality" is not defined in the bill and that the map to be referred to may not be subject to an appropriate level of parliamentary scrutiny. Having regard to the issues set out in section 8A of the Legislation Review Act, the committee noted this may insufficiently subject the exercise of legislative power to parliamentary scrutiny. A third issue the committee highlighted concerned a number of provisions in the bill that are expressed to be subject to the regulations. Such provisions included provisions relating to the operation of the Sydney Metro Board and the advisory committees convened by the board.

The committee noted that making many of the provisions "subject to the regulations" may not afford those affected provisions an appropriate level of parliamentary scrutiny. The committee noted this may insufficiently subject the exercise of legislative power to parliamentary scrutiny. The final issue the committee noted with respect to the Transport Administration Amendment (Sydney Metro) Bill 2018 concerned its commencement date. The committee noted that the 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 assent or a fixed date. However, given that the transition from the Sydney Metro delivery office to a standalone transport agency may involve some administrative complexity, the committee made no further comment.

I now turn to the Coal Industry Amendment Bill 2018 and the Farm Debt Mediation Amendment Bill 2018. For both of these bills the committee noted they are prescribed to commence by proclamation. As mentioned previously, the committee prefers legislation to commence on assent or on a fixed date. However, for both of these bills the committee considered that flexibility around their commencement may be beneficial as they introduce new provisions which affected parties will need to be made aware of. The final instrument I wish to discuss is the Terrorism (High Risk Offenders) Regulation 2018. This regulation prescribed matters for the purposes of defining terrorism intelligence authorities and also set out the circumstances and the kind of offender information that the Attorney General can require for the purposes of section 58 of the principal Act.

The committee noted that clause 7 of the regulation provides a range of documents which the Attorney General may require a person to provide. Such information includes letters to family members and documents relating to an eligible offender's education history and financial situation. The committee considered that the wide range of documents required to be produced may infringe on an individual's right to privacy and referred this matter to Parliament for special consideration. That concludes my remarks on the fifty-third digest of this Parliament. As always, I encourage everyone to read in full the 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) (15:44): I make a few brief comments on the Legislation Review Digest No. 53/56 dated 1 May 2018. The committee considered four bills and one regulation. It commented on three of those bills. Because the date of the digest is 1 May, May Day, I will refer to the Coal Industry Amendment Bill 2018 in my comments. It provides beneficial legislation for people working in the coal industry. The bill's provisions are now part of the Act. The bill's aim was to provide a fit-for-purpose compensation scheme and afford the same level of health and safety protection for all coalmine workers. The bill's need arose from a Supreme Court case, *Kuypers v Ashton Coal Operations Pty Ltd* [2014] NSWSC 1276, which raised some doubt as to whether employers who supplied labour to the coalmining industry were required to have the same sort of coal industry compensation scheme as employers who were coalminers.

The bill, which now forms part of the Act, corrects that issue. The committee's only comment on the bill in this regard was that the commencement of the Act was to be by proclamation. The committee generally prefers legislation to commence on assent or on a fixed date. However, the committee acknowledged there was a requirement for some flexibility in the start date of the Act to provide for proper communication of the requirements of the Act to the business community and to the industry. I have no other comments to make on the digest as I want to keep it brief. Once again, I thank my committee colleagues and the secretariat that supports the committee. I commend the digest to the House.

Report noted.

Matter of Public Importance

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (15:47): I mark National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day to recognise and mourn the scores of women, men and children who have suffered and whose lives have been marred or cut short by domestic violence. National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day falls on the first Wednesday of May, which is known as Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month in Queensland but not here. One day in a month or one month in a year can never be enough time to recognise the suffering of thousands of Australians everywhere, every day. I pay special tribute to Moving Forward, the organisation that organised the memorial flowers that were on the front gates of this Parliament yesterday. The Leader of the Opposition, who is in the Chamber now, and his parliamentary colleagues including me all showed our support for the most vulnerable people in our community who have lost their lives and for those who have been left behind to struggle with that loss.

It is a mark of how far we have to go as a nation in our handling of domestic violence that we are only now seeing governments begin to dedicate resources to collect and analyse data on this issue. Earlier this year the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare released its first report on family, domestic and sexual violence in

Australia. It found that in this country, on average, one woman a week and one man a month is killed by an intimate partner. It also found that domestic violence costs our country at least \$22 billion each year including health care, welfare and lost wages.

It is really important that we talk about this today because there have also been two reports released by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR], which have talked about the Government's approach to this very important issue. What those reports have said—and I think it is very important to think about those in the context of a day of mourning for people who have lost their lives to domestic violence—is that in 2014 the Government cut \$20 million out of the women's refuge sector and redirected funding to general homelessness services. Many refuges around this State were forced to close and many had to partner up with large national charities which did not have the same level of experience or capacity to assist victims and survivors of domestic violence.

One of BOCSAR's reports notes the failure of Safer Pathway, the Government's signature program to address domestic violence. Part of the reason for that failure is that it is a safer pathway that essentially goes nowhere. The refuges have been cut to the bone. We have minimal funds for counselling for case management. If we do not provide victims and survivors of domestic violence with adequate resources, accommodation—emergency and crisis accommodation in particular—or wraparound support such as case management and counselling, how can we expect them to find the courage to leave someone who has been emotionally, physically, financially, sexually and psychologically abusing them over a period of, in some cases, many years?

The other issue that has been found wanting in this Government's response in the BOCSAR reports released today have been the Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool, which has been criticised as being highly ineffective in identifying women at serious risk of harm. The tool is unweighted, with extreme violence such as whether someone's partner has ever choked, strangled or suffocated them or attempted to do any of these things—which we know are predictors of domestic homicide—being weighted the same as whether someone's partner is unemployed. Other States use weighted assessments tools. Other States work collaboratively through Our Watch, the national Commonwealth-State mechanism for sharing information for preventing violence against women and their children. This State is the only State that is not a member of Our Watch, which is shameful.

We are looking to the Government to address these issues. We know that the issues with Safer Pathway could have been addressed with more funding. They have had a 100 per cent increase in need for the program since it started, with a 20 per cent increase in funding. It is not good enough. The Government brags that it focuses on perpetrators. It is about time those opposite actually started supporting victims and survivors of domestic violence. On a day when we mourn the dead, they need to take action.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:52): I am proud to speak on the matter of public importance raised by the member for Maitland on National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day. As members are aware, yesterday marked a national day of remembrance for victims of domestic and family violence. Outside Parliament House there was a beautiful and moving event at which roses were placed in honour of fallen victims: red roses for women, white roses for children and yellow roses for men. The Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Attorney General and the Minister for Women went to lay roses in tribute to these victims. I note that the role of a Minister responsible for the portfolio of the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault was introduced under this Government.

The event was organised by Moving Forward, a wonderful organisation in the electorate of Oatley. I know the member for Oatley would want me to acknowledge the advocacy of this group and the work that he has done with them for this service and the case management that they provide for many victims of domestic and family violence. The New South Wales Government's record in tackling this grave social issue speaks for itself. Its investment of more than \$350 million over four years is supporting victim-survivors to rebuild their lives and holding perpetrators to account. This investment is in addition to the hundreds of millions of dollars the Government spends each year to combat domestic and family violence through mainstream services in justice, police, health, child protection, social housing and homelessness services. The Government will continue to be tough on perpetrators and to invest a record amount of money to support victims and help keep them safe.

We know that these efforts are already starting to produce results. BOCSAR recorded in the December 2017 quarter that, for the first time in almost a decade, recorded incidents of domestic violence related assaults have fallen in New South Wales. We have Start Safely to support people escaping violence to move into stable housing in the private rental market. We have behaviour change interventions for high-risk offenders. We have the Domestic and Family Violence Innovation Fund, to invest in innovative prevention, early intervention and crisis responses. We have the Safer Pathway program, a tailored multi-agency response to high risk domestic violence victims, which is now operating in 43 sites and will be statewide by September—it operates in my electorate.

Recently we have undertaken an online workplace survey to identify policies and practices across a range of industries and companies in New South Wales. We have the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service to support victims through the criminal justice system. I have met with them at Manly Court House, which services my community and hears domestic violence cases that occur in my community. We have Staying Home Leaving Violence, to support women and their children to remain safely at home while the perpetrator is removed. We have the NSW Police Force high-risk offender teams—two new teams are to be rolled out later this year. We have non-government organisation led community-based perpetrator interventions. We have the Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services Program, a coordinated multi-agency initiative to prevent the escalation of domestic and family violence. We have new global positioning system trackers to improve victim safety. We are also getting tough on the criminals who perpetrate domestic and family violence. We are putting them on notice through the wonderful work of our dedicated police officers, led by Commissioner Michael Fuller.

In the North Shore Local Area Command we have a number of dedicated domestic violence liaison officers, led by Superintendent Allan Sicard. Recently, whilst introducing myself to some of the new police officers in our local area command, Superintendent Sicard and I spoke about how crucial the introduction of the Domestic Violence Action Centre was for police in addressing these crimes and in seeing outcomes in the courts that change people's lives. As I said before, in my electorate we have the Lower North Shore Domestic Violence Network. I have worked with that network and the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service to try and achieve support for people escaping violence.

BOCSAR data for my electorate for the period between 2011 and March 2017 shows that Mosman recorded the most domestic violence incidents on the North Shore. As I said, I have met with the North Shore Local Area Command, with domestic violence liaison officers, with advocates and with community representatives to address this challenge. I thank Shelter Manager Jacquie Leonard and her team at the Manly Women's Shelter. I also thank the North Shore Women's Benevolent Association, which opened Mary's House Women's Shelter, including staff members Maggy Farago, Joanne Villacruz and Christine Clover. Finally, I thank local advocates like Michelle Howard, who worked on the Share the Dignity campaign, for trying to make a difference in women's lives.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (15:57): I thank the member for Maitland, the shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, for bringing this matter of public importance to the attention of the House. I also thank the member for North Shore for her contribution to this debate. It is important for members in this place to speak not only on National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day but at any time of the year about the work different people and different organisations are doing to try and prevent domestic violence. I thank Jan Christie and the members of Moving Forward who each year, in a respectful and gentle way, invite people passing Parliament House, as well as people who work here, to stand with them for a moment of quiet reflection and to lay roses along the fence line of Parliament House—red roses for women, white roses for children and yellow roses for men. It is an acknowledgement that domestic and family violence happens everywhere, in many ways, and that all sorts of people are impacted by it.

Moving Forward is a specialist case management service for women and children who are experiencing, escaping or have left domestic and family violence. Yesterday at the remembrance event members of the organisation were talking to me about the desperate need for more money. They are struggling to do the job they have set themselves because the demand for their counselling services and support far outweighs their ability to meet that demand. This remembrance event is designed to facilitate community expressions of grief but it is also a reminder that we need to talk about the issue of education and specialist domestic and family violence support services.

Also this week the Women's Electoral Lobby hosted an event in the Fountain Court foyer of Parliament housed called Keep the Lights on in Women's Refuges. It included a performance by the SOS Women's Choir. The stories that accompanied the songs were quite harrowing. I thank West Connect Domestic Violence Services. They provide specialist programs, services, refuges and crisis accommodation for women and children escaping domestic violence, and are based throughout my electorate. I also acknowledge the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme and the many local community organisations and services in my electorate and throughout this State for their work in the area of preventing domestic violence.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:00): By leave: I thank the member for Maitland for bringing this matter of public importance to the attention of the House. On behalf of The Greens I acknowledge our support for National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day. I join the member for Blue Mountains in acknowledging those wonderful voices of women who are seeking to make sure that we keep the rights and focus of women who need to seek refuge in our community front and centre in our minds when we make decisions in this place. I thank the Women's Electoral Lobby for bringing those voices and views to this place. Currently a number of women who are fleeing domestic violence are on priority housing waiting lists in my electorate.

I quite regularly see one or two women who are sleeping rough when I walk down King Street; they are still waiting for priority housing. As the member for Maitland said, it is important that we recognise the solution to being able to provide genuine support to women fleeing domestic violence—namely, being able to offer women a safe and secure place to call home. Ideally women should be able to stay in their own homes, but that obviously depends on their circumstances. As a State we need to be able to provide all women and families fleeing domestic violence with safe accommodation, and that means immediate access to a place to call home. I repeat: It means a housing-first approach to addressing homelessness in this State.

The most recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that we have had a 37 per cent increase in the number of homeless people in New South Wales. That is devastating, and no-one can deny such a stark statistic. I acknowledge that it is crucial for us to address National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day but we should also recognise that we can make real changes in this place to help and protect people from dying as a result of family and domestic violence. We need to radically deal with the housing crisis in this State. Many of those on the public housing waiting list are at risk because they have fled domestic violence situations. We need to do more to address these lists. In fact, we need to immediately remove the time limit on the temporary accommodation that women and children fleeing violence are provided with. I urge all members to take this matter seriously. It is a matter of life and death to provide people with a secure place to live. The Greens believe all people have a right to safe, secure and affordable housing.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:03): In reply: I thank the members for the electorates of North Shore, Blue Mountains and Newtown for their contributions to this matter of public importance. Thanks to the efforts of the former Labor Government in establishing the Domestic Violence Death Review Team, we now know more than ever before about those who die as a result of domestic violence. For instance, we know that almost one-third of all homicides are domestic violence related, that nearly 80 per cent of intimate partner homicide victims are women and that these victims range in age from 15 to 80—they cover the full spectrum. The media's coverage of domestic violence is a critical factor. We know that across all news the language used by journalists minimises the culpability of perpetrators and blames the victim. Reporters often seek to explain and excuse the violence of men, emphasising retaliation, the use of drugs and alcohol, covert relationships and levels of dependence amongst female victims. Sex work is often cited as a rationale for violence.

This warped view that domestic violence is provoked and that it manifests in isolated incidents ignores broader patterns of emotional abuse, coercion and control. I pay special tribute to Our Watch, which, through its media awards, has made a strong effort to address this issue in the media. But we still see these attitudes and the incident-focused response of police and courts. We have seen cases where police officers did not review the case histories before call-outs, which means that, without knowledge of the history of the abuse, incidents are more likely to be assessed as isolated and perpetrators are less likely to be apprehended. As our understanding of trauma and mental health expands, we know that the scars left by violence, both physical and emotional, never fade. It often leaves victims, bystanders and survivors with devastating mental health issues. Too often, they choose to end their own lives—yet more victims of this terrible scourge.

We have arrived at a critical moment in the history of our nation and in the global community. The voices of victims of sexual and family and domestic violence are not only being heard, but also being listened to. Nations and peoples across the world are not simply questioning this epidemic; they are questioning themselves and their behaviours that may contribute to this epidemic. In recognition of National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day yesterday, I ask everyone in this Chamber for more than words; I ask for action. I ask that we honour the living and the dead by each of us asking ourselves what we do and how we can do better. I ask that the media understand and resist the urge to seek excuses for domestic violence and include the 1800 RESPECT hotline in their coverage, just as articles on mental health point us to Lifeline. I thank the truly inspiring work of grassroots organisations and community members, and I acknowledge all of those who died before we were able to help them.

Community Recognition Statements

TRIBUTE TO CAROLE LINDE JOBLING, OAM

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:07): This afternoon I pay tribute to the life of Linde Jobling, OAM, a stalwart of the Liberal Party for many years, and a particular champion of women in our community and supporter of women within the Liberal Party. My own journey to this place was touched by Linde, when early in my involvement with the Liberal Party she presented me with the Marlene Goldsmith award, named for another Liberal woman trailblazer from the other place. In doing so, she told me that she believed in me and that I had a future. The steps I then took to be elected and to serve as President of the NSW Liberal Women's Council were due to her early support of me. I was proud to join seven other former Liberal Women's Council presidents at her funeral today.

While Linde made her mark across the Liberal Party from the 1960s onwards, her greatest influence was within the Liberal Women's Council, where she nurtured generations of future leaders and pursued with grace and tenacity countless policy reforms, which she often saw become reality—including, most recently, supporting the harmonisation of organ transplant laws across the States and, during my tenure on the Liberal Women's Council, pursuing reforms to child protection. Many will miss Linde, but none more so than her family, including her husband of 57 years, the Hon. John Jobling, OAM—who served in the Legislative Council—her children and her grandchildren. Vale Linde Jobling.

AUSTRALIAN BUDGIES INDIGENOUS NETBALL TEAM

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (16:08): Recently I had the great pleasure of meeting two very talented young sportswomen at the Wyong District Netball Association who have been selected to play for the Australian Budgies Indigenous Netball team. Both girls have played for the NSW Echidnas. Kloe was selected in the under 12s and Olivia in the under 15s following a statewide selection trial in Newcastle. It is my pleasure to help sponsor their trip to the Gold Coast later this month. The Australian Indigenous Schoolgirls Netball Carnival is an initiative of the Budgies Australian Netball Indigenous Corporation. The Budgies has been operating for more than 10 years. Every year the States and Territories send their players, ranging in ages from 11 years to 19 years, to compete in the national carnival in January and in the tournament on the Gold Coast. From there, Australian Indigenous teams—known as Budgies—are selected and they compete in various carnivals throughout the year. Congratulations to these two young rising stars

PARRAMATTA HOLROYD FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (16:09): Recently I visited Parramatta Holroyd Family Support [PHFS] in Pendle Hill to hear about the great services it provides and to see the upgrades completed as part of a New South Wales Government grant. PHFS has an extraordinary team, and I was lucky to meet some of the hardworking staff members, including Hannah, Kellie, Linda, Matilda and Marnel, who run the team and have been supporting families in the Parramatta Holroyd area for an incredible 32 years. PHFS provides family services for those seeking support for various issues, such as domestic violence. It also has programs for child development, playgroups, and cooking and family finance classes for parents. The New South Wales Government's Social Housing Community Improvement Fund granted \$50,000 to PHFS, which allowed the organisation to refurbish its site with a new, accessible kitchen and bathroom. Once again, I thank PHFS for all its hard work in aiding the constituents of the Seven Hills electorate who live in Wentworthville, Westmead, Toongabbie, Northmead and Pendle Hill.

TRIBUTE TO UNCLE STEPHEN WILLIAMS

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:10): This afternoon I recognise Stephen Williams, known broadly throughout the Liverpool area as Uncle Stephen. He died on 16 April this year aged 65 years, and an overflowing funeral service was held for him on 23 April. He was a proud Wiradjuri man, an elder of the Aboriginal community. He lived at Sadleir within the electorate of Liverpool. He was well known as a strong advocate and voice for the Aboriginal community. He was also well known for conducting welcome to country ceremonies and traditional smoking ceremonies. He was a skilled and impressive artist whose Aboriginal artworks decorated many buildings in our local area, including Marsden Road Public School and the Miller Community Health Centre.

He was well known for having a delightful sense of humour and once told me that the point of the smoking ceremony was to drive away all spirits and that therefore, as a member of Parliament, I should be smoked twice. I pointed out that the then mayor should be smoked three times. He was an advocate for his culture and his community. He was an activist, a participant and a volunteer for a plethora of community activities. He was a proud member of the Green Valley branch of the Australian Labor Party and in 2004 Liverpool council made him Citizen of the Year. He was a good man, a great bloke and he will be sorely missed.

HEATHCOTE ELECTORATE SPORTS CLUBS

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (16:11): Today I recognise the hard work and dedication of committee members for Sutherland District Basketball Association, Bundeena Maianbar Football Club, North Sutherland Rockets Soccer Club, Garie Boardriders, Loftus Yarrawarra Rovers Football Club, Scarborough Wombarra Bowling Club, St John Bosco Youth Centre Netball Club, Southern Power AFC, Sydney Emeralds Synchronised Swimming Club, and Era Surf Life Saving Club, who were all successful recipients in the New South Wales Government's Local Sport Grant Program. These volunteers are the backbone of the club and I commend them for their hard work. Sport is a huge part of our way of life, and local clubs give hundreds of children and adults in our community the opportunity to participate. The Local Sport Grant Program aims to increase regular and ongoing participation opportunities, and I am pleased that the New South Wales Government recognises its importance for both social and health reasons.

RWANDAN GENOCIDE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:12): On 15 April I joined the Rwandan Community of New South Wales to commemorate the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, the theme of which was Remember—Unite—Renew. The moving tribute to the million people who lost their lives in the genocide and the trauma experienced by the survivors was a poignant reminder of the horrors of genocide and an opportunity for the community in Australia to come together to heal. We heard stories from genocide survivors, including those who had lost their entire families—stories, which were hard to tell but important to hear, not just about the genocide but also about coming to terms with surviving and how to go on.

I was honoured to speak and I passed on some of the horrific stories that I had been told on my recent visit to Rwanda, where I met with a small group of survivors of the massacre of 4,000 people at the Kiziguro church. While it was certainly upsetting, it was also uplifting to hear of the determination of so many to ensure that the genocide is not forgotten and is never repeated. I congratulate President Noel Zihambamwe and the Sydney Jewish Museum for hosting the event.

4 VILLAGES WALK

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:13): This Sunday the annual 4 Villages Walk will be held along the pathway connecting Kincumber, Yattalunga, Saratoga and Davistown. It is an easy-paced, flat, 3.3 kilometre walk around some of the beautiful lakeside suburbs in my electorate of Terrigal. Each participant will be issued with a special 4 Villages Walk passport, which gets stamped at each of the "border checkpoints" along the journey. The four suburbs of Kincumber, Yattalunga, Saratoga and Davistown were the hubs of major shipbuilding activity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A key component of this Sunday's walk will be the heritage and historical information available for people to learn more about our local area. I thank the Rotary Club of Kincumber and Peter Rea for the huge amount of work they have done to make this annual event happen. I look forward to joining many thousands of locals on the walk this weekend.

LAKEMBA ELECTORATE COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (16:14): Late last term I had the pleasure of attending a community breakfast hosted by Wiley Park Girls High School and Belmore Boys High School with my parliamentary colleague Tony Burke and local councillor Bilal El-Hayek. This great event celebrated the coming together of people around a table and strengthened the bonds of community. The staff and students at Wiley Park Girls and Belmore Boys high schools did an amazing job. With African, Arabic and Pacific Islander performances and food prepared by the hospitality students, the breakfast highlighted our community's strengths and showcased some of our exceptional local talents.

There was no shortage of laughs, smiles and food as my colleagues and I enjoyed this day together with wonderful students, dedicated staff and valued community members. It was great to see so many people come together, from all different walks of life, united under a banner of festivity. Sometimes these celebratory events are overshadowed by other issues, but let us not forget the bright side of what our community has to offer and commemorate all that makes our nation great. Once again, I commend the staff and students who organised the event and look forward to similar community celebrations in the future.

BRAZILIAN JIUJITSU COMPETITOR RIZA EL ALI

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (16:15): Today I congratulate Riza El Ali, an 11-year-old young sports star from Lurnea. Riza currently trains in Brazilian jujitsu and kickboxing five times a week at Kings Academy of Martial Arts in Moorebank. His original inspiration for the martial art came from watching his older brother, who also competes regularly in kickboxing. Riza competed internationally at the Abu Dhabi Professional Jiu-Jitsu Championship in April. I congratulate Riza on being chosen to compete overseas because it is a huge achievement for an 11-year-old. Riza has been nominated for the Young Sporting Spirit Individual Award as part of the local sport stars program. His dream is to become a professional jujitsu fighter in the future. Once again, I congratulate Riza and recognise his achievements in martial arts. I cannot wait to see what the future holds for this young star.

AUSTRALIAN SURF LIFE SAVING CHAMPIONSHIPS AWARD RECIPIENTS

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (16:16): As a member of the Caves Beach Surf Life Saving Club, I am particularly proud to pay tribute to the Caves Beach Seniors March Past Team, who, after coming first at the State Championships earlier this year at Blacksmiths, went on to come second at the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, which were held at Scarborough Beach in Western Australia last month. The team of 12, made up of Al Wallace, Don Ellercamp, Ian Richardson, Peter McConville, Andrew Rigg, John Carroll, Bruce Lottley, Sid Burnley, Ted Bine, Kris Sazdanoff, Gordon Richardson and Ray Johnson, put in an outstanding effort to bring

home the silver for Caves Beach. Similarly, the juniors march-past team came first in the State, though did not compete at Australian championships. I mention also that the Caves Beach boat crew came third in the State and backed it up with a bronze medal at the Australian championships. What a fantastic achievement for Caves Beach Surf Life Saving Club and its members. I extend a hearty congratulations to the medal winners.

SOUTHERN COMMUNITY MEDIA ASSOCIATIONS AWARD RECIPIENT GREAT LAKES FM

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:17): Local community broadcaster Great Lakes FM has again excelled at the three-day Southern Community Media Associations 'X' Awards in Wagga Wagga. Great Lakes FM came home with a swag of awards. It was finalist in six of the 10 categories and won three. Great Lakes FM won Best Outside Broadcast, Best Interview and Best Locally Produced Program (Non Music). I extend congratulations to Doug Hodgess and Reggie Russell; Janice Dance, who presents Tuesday Drive Show *Get the Party Started*; Kevin Walsh for the outside broadcast at Wallamba District Show; Robert Davis for Bert's Boom Boom Classics; Dr Dave and Robert Davis, who present *Pet Talk*; and station manager Andrew Farr for all his work. It is great to see industry recognition of Great Lakes FM and recognition of all the hard work and dedication of the volunteers and presenters at Great Lakes FM who inform and entertain.

FASHION REVOLUTION WEEK

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:18): On Friday 27 April, as part of Fashion Revolution Week, I participated in an inspiring event at The Sheds hosted by *Tommie Magazine* and moderated and hosted by *Tommie Magazine* founder Natalie Shehata. Other panellists included local women, creators, makers, designers and retailers from the electorate of Newtown, including Jackie Ruddock from The Social Outfit, Christina Kelly from Made 590, Danielle Atkinson from Milk and Thistle, and Luisa Franco from Madge Goods. I express thanks to all those who volunteered to make this event happen, including Laura Mari and Elizabeth Kruckhoff. I give a shout-out to the team at Fashion Revolution Australia—Melinda, Olivia, Kendall, Elyse, Laura, Kelli, Clara, Clare, Jane, Liane, Amanda and Kirsten. People should always be sure to ask: Who made my clothes?

AUSTRALIAN OPEN IRONMAN CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER KENDRICK LOUIS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:18): It does not get much better than being able to congratulate an Australian champion from the mighty Manly Life Saving Club, and following the recent Australian Surf Life Saving Championships in Perth that is what I have the pleasure to do today. Kendrick Louis of Manly has made his town proud with an outstanding effort by winning the Australian Open Ironman Championship at Scarborough Beach, Perth. Only last year Kendrick said he hoped to win his maiden open ironman crown, and he has gone and done exactly that. Holding off challenges from Coolangatta Gold king Ali Day from Surfers Paradise and eight-time champion Shannon Eckstein of Northcliffe, Kendrick took off on a wave in the final board leg. Kendrick is a role model to many young people across Manly, and I congratulate him on behalf of a proud community.

CLUBSNSW BOARD APPOINTEE SALLIANNE FAULKNER

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (16:19): I congratulate a fantastic local volunteer, mum, small business owner and community champion, the amazing Sallianne Faulkner, on her recent appointment to the board of ClubsNSW. Sallianne has served as President of the Ramsgate RSL Memorial Club since 2014 and has guided the club through a period of significant governance and commercial reform. It is amazing that she is able to find the time to take on another challenge as she already owns and operates two local businesses, volunteers countless hours of her time for community groups and sporting organisations, serves in a number of roles for charitable organisations and still has to fit in raising four children. Sallianne is only the second woman to be appointed to the board of ClubsNSW in its 90-year history, and I am sure she will do an incredible job not just advocating for our local clubs in the southern metropolitan region but also advancing the important role that clubs play in our communities across the entire State of New South Wales.

LAVINGTON LIONS CLUB YOUTH OF THE YEAR QUEST FINALIST GRACE ROUVRAY

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (16:20): In 2006, 16-year-old Grace Rouvray, a student at James Fallon High School in Albury, was an exceptional youth speaker in the finals of the Lavington Lions Club Youth of the Year Quest. On Monday 30 April 2018 Grace, who is now an actress based in Sydney, won the Outstanding Actress in a Comedy award at the Los Angeles Web Series Festival, LAWEBFEST, held at the Sony Picture Studios in Los Angeles. Grace not only starred in the series titled *600 Bottles of Wine* but also penned the eight-part web series, which gained her a nomination for best comedy writer. What a wonderful achievement. We wish Grace every success for the future in her acting and writing career.

CHARLESTOWN ELECTORATE SPORTS CLUB GRANTS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:21): I congratulate the recipients of the 2018 local sport grants from my electorate of Charlestown: Merewether Golf Club, Kotara South Netball Club, Charlestown City Blues Football Club, Kahibah Football Club, Kahibah Sports Club, Charlestown Bowling Club, Warners Bay Australian Football Club, Dudley Redhead Junior Rugby League Football Club and Redhead Bowling Club. These grants will go towards small, but necessary, purchases such as new training equipment, the installation of seating, shade sails and retractable shade awnings, website development and the provision of coaching accreditation. We value our local sports clubs in Charlestown and I know the clubs will do all they can to make the most of this funding. Again, congratulations to the clubs and I look forward to seeing the completed projects.

BOWRAL CLASSIC CYCLING EVENT

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:22): I congratulate those associated with the Bowral Classic cycling event and look forward to the results of this year's efforts. In its first year, in 2016, the Bowral Classic was crowned in two categories at the prestigious Australian Event Awards, beating hundreds of entries from every State and Territory, including the Sydney Royal Easter Show and the Nitro Athletics Series, which had the likes of Usain Bolt as a star attraction. An initial target of 1,000 riders was blown out of the water as more than 3,000 cyclists from around the nation and eight overseas countries descended on Bowral on 23 October 2016. Nearly half of the 3,023 riders who took part brought their families to Bowral for the weekend, injecting \$1.5 million into the local economy, while participants raised \$109,000 for a variety of charities. Stakeholders, sponsors and cyclists all took part on the day and it was a wonderful family event. I am pleased that the New South Wales Government backed the event last year and will make a financial commitment this year. I thank everyone involved in this great event.

FEMALE FOOTBALL WEEK ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR LISA DUHIG

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:23): I acknowledge Lisa Duhig who was recently acknowledged by the Northern NSW Football Association as its rebel Female Football Week Administrator of the Year. Lisa is both coach and secretary with the Lochinvar Rovers Football Club. Lisa is one of the countless volunteers who give up their spare time to ensure that our sporting clubs and our community groups can run. One of the things that encouraged Lisa to get involved with football is her passion for increasing the involvement of women in sport. Lisa coaches the next generation of young women footballers, and this season she coached the under-6s team, comprising just three girls. It is great to see that Lisa has been recognised for all her hard work and the valuable contribution she makes to the Lochinvar football club and the wider Maitland community. I note that she mentors a number of administrators from other sports clubs to try to help them with better administration of their clubs and facilities.

BABES AND PICNICS CHARITY ORGANISATION

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (16:24): I congratulate and thank Babes and Picnics Macarthur for donating around 1,000 items for the Share the Dignity Drive to provide women in need with feminine products. Members of the Babes and Picnics group meet once a month to bring mums and their babes together for a picnic-style gathering. I congratulate Babes and Picnics on its Pay it Forward initiative to support a local charity every month. I thank the group's ambassadors, Claire Stretton, Fiona Spinks and Eliza Kelly, for the wonderful effort they put into bringing the group together and ensuring that mums and their babes are supported in our local community. I wish Babes and Picnics well in all future endeavours.

CENTRAL COAST MUSIC ROUNDTABLE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:24): I thank all the wonderful people involved in the music industry on the Central Coast. We are a richer, more vibrant community thanks to the diverse passions of all those involved. I thank them all so much for giving up their time to join us at the Labor music round table last week to speak about their challenges and successes in working to improve the music industry sector in our community. It was the opening of discussions about how we can work together to strengthen the future of the industry, with discussions covering local, State and Federal government opportunities and barriers. We were joined at the University of Newcastle by music teachers, producers, technicians, small business owners, performers, fans of rock, jazz and drumming, music fans in general—as we all are—and the list goes on. We are looking forward to continuing to work together to enliven and support the music industry on the coast. I am especially looking forward to reconnecting with some of those music lovers this week at the Narara Music Festival—modern memories of great times. Bring it on.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE SHARE THE DIGNITY DRIVE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:25): We recently concluded the Share the Dignity April Dignity Drive collecting sanitary items to help support women fleeing domestic violence or experiencing homelessness, and I thank the North Shore community for their involvement in this cause. My office is a collection point for the Dignity Drive run by Share the Dignity. I am committed to this cause because I believe a woman who is fleeing violence, is in between homes or is suffering a financial crisis should not need to choose between her dignity and access to basic sanitary items.

Share the Dignity was born in 2015 and has grown significantly since then. Every April and August, the public are asked to donate sanitary items. At the end of the month, thousands and thousands of packets of donated unopened sanitary products are delivered to partner charities. I had an outstanding response from my local community, and I thank Lucy Hookway, our local volunteer coordinator. It is one small way of ensuring that women do not have to face the shame and trauma of going without sanitary hygiene products, often while escaping violence. I note the wonderful community spirit and generosity in North Shore.

TIME4KIDS FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:26): On Friday 20 April I had the great opportunity to help out our local police citizens youth club [PCYC] at its annual Time4Kids fundraising campaign. Our local PCYC does a phenomenal job as it passionately supports and assists at-risk youth throughout our wider community. It is great to see everyone in the local area dig deep to help out with this great cause, with this year's Time4Kids campaign raising more than \$10,000. I extend my sincerest appreciation to local clubs Club Marconi, St Johns Park Bowling Club, Mounties, Cabra-Vale Diggers, Guildford Leagues Club and Fairfield RSL and to residents who donated to this great cause. Together, we can all do our part to truly make a difference for youth in our local communities. I also make special mention of Mr Tony Cincotta from the Fairfield-Cabramatta PCYC, whose passion for helping our community continues to drive him forward as he makes a tremendous difference in the lives of so many in our community.

YAMBA COMMONWEALTH GAMES MEDAL RECIPIENTS

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:27): I offer my congratulations to two Yamba sportspeople, cousins Donna Urquhart and Cameron Pilley. At the recent Commonwealth Games held on the Gold Coast, Donna and Cameron won gold medals in the squash mixed doubles event, defeating the Indian doubles pair. They were down one game but came back strongly in front of a home crowd. Donna also won a bronze medal in the squash women's doubles with her partner, Rachel Grinham, which made her the most successful athlete in the 2018 Commonwealth Games squash program. Cameron's win makes him the first squash player in history to claim three Commonwealth Games doubles gold medals after also winning in Delhi in 2010 and Glasgow in 2014.

DAVIDSON ELECTORATE JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (16:28): We all know that justices of the peace [JPs] provide an invaluable service to our community. I attended the ceremony this week where the Attorney General congratulated JPs being honoured for 50 years of service by presenting them with awards in recognition. In 2012 the New South Wales Government introduced commemorative certificates for 50 years of service as a JP. Since then, more than 2,000 certificates have been awarded. From my Davidson electorate, I would like to recognise the following JPs for their 50 years' service: Eric Galloway, Peter Hutchison, Stanley Brogan, Trevor Bambrick and Ashton Brailey. Their certificates will show each of them our appreciation for such long and dedicated service. Fifty years of voluntary service to the community is a remarkable achievement and one that deserves to be recognised.

TENPIN BOWLING CHAMPION KALLAN STRONG

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:29): Today I bestow well-earned recognition on a champion in my electorate. Kallan Strong is a rising tenpin bowling star from Wadalba, and his story is deserving of recognition in this Chamber. Kallan is a young champion tenpin bowler on the Central Coast. At only 15, he has already bowled five perfect 300 games and continues to impress with great competition results. Kallan has autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and has already won numerous medals, trophies and accolades in his chosen sport. I have mentioned him once before in this place, recognising his achievement of being a runner in the Queen's Baton Relay prior to this year's Commonwealth Games. But Kallan's star keeps rising. He recently received a Variety Heart Scholarship to help him overcome barriers and reach his full potential in tenpin bowling. This scholarship will help Kallan to build on his existing talent, as he continues to blow us away with his commitment and results.

COMMUNITY LANGUAGES ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (16:30): Today I acknowledge the 2018 Annual State Community Languages Conference. It was a pleasure to attend the official opening of the conference last week. I am a passionate advocate for education and for promoting the importance of being multilingual. I believe knowledge is power. Learning a language is not easy; it is a timely process that requires much practice and study but it opens so many doors. I take this opportunity to congratulate and express my gratitude to all community language teachers who instil a love of language and a love of learning another language in their students. It is the best way to promote tolerance and understanding amongst different cultures. I thank all language teachers, particularly those in my electorate. Over the weekend I will be attending the sixteenth International Festival of Language and Culture. It is fantastic to see language and culture being celebrated.

*Petitions***M5 TOLL****Discussion**

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (16:31): I am proud to lead the discussion of this petition opposing the extension of the M5 toll—a petition signed by more than 12,000 people in south-west Sydney. This New South Wales Liberal Government has shown nothing short of contempt for the 12,000 people in south-west Sydney who signed this petition, and for the hundreds of thousands of other people in the region who will be adversely affected by the Government's unfair plans to extend the M5 toll for another 40 years. Currently, drivers on the M5 South-West between Moorebank Avenue and King Georges Road pay a flat-rate toll of \$4.69 each way for regular vehicles and \$14.06 each way for heavy vehicles. Drivers on the M5 East between King Georges Road and the Eastern Distributor do not pay any tolls. The M5 South-West toll is set to expire in 2026, at which point the road will have been paid off and ownership of the M5 South-West will transfer from the private operator, Interlink Roads, back to the New South Wales Government.

But this Government, in an act of political desperation and treachery—even by its own appalling standards—is looking to extend that toll by another 40 years by flogging off the M5 South-West as part of its privatisation agenda for the WestConnex motorway. For those opposite who might be a bit geographically challenged, I take this opportunity to point out the obvious: The M5 South-West is nowhere near the WestConnex motorway. The WestConnex motorway will involve the duplication of the M5 East tunnel, but that duplication will be paid for with its own new toll of \$6.60 each way. So what possible reason could the Government have for including the M5 South-West—which is not undergoing any improvements whatsoever—in its sell-off of the WestConnex project? The answer is actually quite simple. There have been budget blowouts of epic proportions on the WestConnex project that the Government needs to pay for—in fact, blowouts of more than \$7 billion. So the Government has decided that the good, honest, hardworking people of south-west Sydney are the ones who will pay for its incompetence and budget blowouts.

The people of South Western Sydney, Campbelltown and the Macarthur who signed this petition have sent a clear and loud message to the Government: They will not cop the unfair extension of the M5 toll. That is all it is, an unfair extension. How has the Government responded to the public outcry about its plans? Has it admitted it is unfair? Has it come up with an alternative proposal that does not unfairly disadvantage the people of South Western Sydney? Of course it has not. Instead it has doubled down and is now running around madly trying to lock in deals and sign contracts that will handcuff future governments and lock in the unfair toll extension for another four decades.

Those on this side of the House do not have a unilateral opposition to tolls. We understand that when designed and implemented fairly—I emphasise fairly—tolls are sometimes necessary. What we oppose is a tolling policy as blatantly unfair and illogical as that which the Government proposes for the M5 South-West Motorway. Proposing a toll on a new or upgraded road is one thing, but proposing another 40 years of toll on a road that is not being upgraded is absurd at best and unfair, no matter how hard the Government tries to spin it. I thank the members for Macquarie Fields and Liverpool, and all other members who have provided their support.

I thank the shadow Minister for Roads and member for Strathfield for her work in the campaign against this unfair extension of the M5 toll. The 12,000 signatories to this petition are sending a clear message to all those members opposite, but in particular to those with constituents affected by the toll. Those communities will be left out of pocket by hundreds of dollars each year as a result of this plan. This is unfair. The people of South Western Sydney will not cop it. I urge Government members to pull their heads out of the sand, listen to the concerns raised by thousands of people across South Western Sydney who signed the petition, but also those frustrated motorists who are currently sitting on a congested toll road as a result of this Government's incompetence. We will not yield on this. The people of South Western Sydney will not cop it and there will be no steps backwards.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (16:36): I acknowledge the people who signed the petition, and thank them for their community activity and involvement. It is wonderful that we can discuss these important issues. We should remind the opposition, and let the people who signed the petition know, that it is sadly and predictably a scare campaign by those opposite. We have said it before and we will say it again for the benefit of the Opposition.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Order! Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Dr GEOFF LEE: Thank you, Mr Temporary Speaker. They are very rude and they do not like to hear the truth. Let me repeat it for those opposite: The New South Wales Government has no plans to remove the cashback on the M5 South-West. Cashback refunds every motorist for every dollar. The tolling concession for the M5 West from 2026 was included in the original financing strategy for the project that has been publicly available for more than three years. The Government has been transparent about this concession being included as part of the project from day one. The Government has always been clear: tolls are an important part of the funding mix as they allow motorways to be built faster. If the M5 South-West concession was not included, the much-needed new M5 tunnels would not be built.

The inclusion of the M5 South-West concession in the sale of the Sydney Motorway Corporation [SMC] will ensure the rest of the project, including the M4-M5 Link, the most important part of WestConnex, is built on time and on budget. The extension of the M5 West tolling concession is part of the funding model for the new M5 tunnel duplication. This funding model has no impact on the current cashback arrangement that operates on the M5 West. As we have already confirmed, there is no change to the Government's cashback policy on the M5 South-West. As a result, eligible motorists on the M5 South-West can continue to have their tolls, excluding GST, repaid into the future.

The business case for WestConnex, which was released in November 2015 highlighting the tolling concession for the M5 West from 2026, was included in the original financing strategy for the project. It is also included in the new M5 project deed, which was published on the Roads and Maritime Services' website following financial close of stage 2 in December 2015. The M5 project deed has been publicly available on the Roads and Maritime Services' website for more than three years. The inclusion of the M5 South-West concession in the sale of SMC will ensure the rest of the project, including the M4-M5 Link, the most important part of WestConnex, is built on time and on budget.

What is disappointing is that those opposite will not reach a position. Labor presents two options in its plan to trick the public: First, strip the M5 South-West concession option from the sale of Sydney Motorway Corporation and cancel the rest of the new M5, risking thousands of jobs and pulling roadheaders out of the ground or; secondly, strip the M5 South-West from the sale of Sydney Motorway Corporation and build the much-needed M5 tunnel, implementing a more than \$20 toll to finance completion of the project. These two options are typical Labor cop-out options—push the hard decisions down the road and confine motorists to their cars.

I hear squawks from the Opposition. It is sad that they do not have a strategy. They want it both ways, they do not want to pay a toll but refuse to say how they will fund the WestConnex project. It is a sad day. The people of Parramatta will benefit significantly when WestConnex is finished. It will save 52 sets of traffic lights for my great constituents when they travel from Parramatta to the airport. This Government will deliver the missing link between the end of the eastern part of the M4 and the south-west motorway. This is a missing link ignored by those opposite. It is only this side of Government that is strong enough to make difficult decisions. I commend the people who signed the petition. It is important that this place debates issues to which we would all like to contribute.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I ask for silence in the House in order that the member for Strathfield may be heard.

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (16:42): Let us talk about incompetence and deceit: Let us talk about WestConnex. I thank the 12,000 people who brought this petition to the House. It is only through them signing that petition, instigated by the member for Campbelltown, that we are here in the House debating the petition. I acknowledge the member for Macquarie Fields and the member for Campbelltown. They are out there supporting their communities and making sure the issues important to their communities are brought to the House. At the core of the petition is the issue around the toll on the M5 South-West. Why this issue has to be debated today is that the M5 South-West is not part of WestConnex. It never was and never will be.

According to this Government, to boost the sale of the Sydney Motorway Corporation, it will make it part of WestConnex. That is how they are fattening the pig to sell to the private sector. They are including the toll on the M5 South-West so the motorists of South Western Sydney will have to pay in order to compensate those

motorists who are not using WestConnex. That is a convoluted way to say it, but that is exactly what is happening. The motorists of South Western Sydney are paying for the Government's blunders with WestConnex.

We oppose the sale of the Sydney Motorway Corporation. There has been no transparency around that sale and when we listen to what is being discussed, we can see where this Government is going wrong. We can see the incompetence and deceit of this Government. Just today we heard that the M5 contract has likely blown out by \$500 million. We heard that its completion date will be up to a year late. The Premier has not been honest with the community. She had every opportunity to speak on this subject in the House today. When we look at the duplication of the M5 and what is happening with the M5 South-West, which is highlighted in this petition presented by the member for Campbelltown, we get an idea of what is wrong with WestConnex.

All members on this side of the House know what is wrong with the project. Every day the member for Blacktown, the member for Londonderry and the member for Mount Druitt travel on the M4. They know what it feels like to pay a toll they should not have to pay. It is a toll on an old road. The Government is now inflicting even more pain by increasing the toll above the consumer price index. The toll contract should be lifted in 2026 but will last until 2060. That is what this Government is doing to south-west Sydney. The reason we are discussing this petition is that the people of south-west Sydney have said "no". The member for Campbelltown has said no. The member for Macquarie Fields has said no. The member for Bankstown has said no. Labor says no!

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): We will wait until members come to order. The member for Camden will be heard in silence.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (16:45): The member for Strathfield might have 20 members supporting her, but I have the member for Wollondilly behind me. The member for Wollondilly and I are committed. It is all systems go as we push ahead to deliver the new M5, which is part of the most significant infrastructure investment project in Australia right now. The new M5 will run parallel to the existing M5 East to provide a non-stop underground journey between Kingsgrove and St Peters. It will double capacity on the M5 corridor from two lanes to four lanes in each direction. This vital piece of infrastructure is not only about decongesting some of the busiest roads in Sydney's west; it is also generating jobs, driving opportunity for business and stimulating the economy.

On completion of the new M5, motorists will be able to travel from the King Georges Road interchange at Beverly Hills to St Peters in approximately 10 minutes. Motorists on the M5 South-West will be the prime beneficiaries of this timesaving travel. The M5 South-West concession is being included as part of the sale of the Sydney Motorway Corporation to ensure that the new M5 tunnels can be built. The congestion on this traffic corridor can be addressed once and for all. This Government has an unparalleled infrastructure agenda, but it is also a champion of the people. The Premier has been clear: The Government is considering options to reduce cost-of-living pressures wherever possible to put money back into the pockets of taxpayers—that includes motorists. Importantly, as we have already confirmed, there is no change to the Government's cashback policy on the M5 South-West Motorway.

We cannot be more clear: Eligible motorists on the M5 South-West will continue to have their tolls repaid. Another initiative designed to help with the cost of living is the registration rebate for regular users of all toll roads. From 1 July 2018 owners of most privately owned registered vehicles in New South Wales—including standard cars, utes, four-wheel drives up to 2,749 kilograms, and motorcycles—will be eligible for free registration. The scheme will commence on 1 July 2018 with spend on tolls for the previous 12 months counted from that date. Detailed information will be made available later in the year. Compare this to the record of Labor during its 16 years in office when the infrastructure indecision on projects such as the M4 and M5 left the New South Wales unemployment rate above the national average. Even today Labor stands opposed to these projects and the jobs they will create, including WestConnex.

Mr Jai Rowell: Point of order: I commend the contribution of the member for Camden.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I am glad to hear you have his back.

Ms JENNY LEONG: I seek leave to make a contribution.

Leave not granted.

Ms JENNY LEONG: I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave not granted.

*Community Recognition Statements***MOUNTIES CLUB FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY**

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:50): I recognise the Mounties club, which is one of the largest community clubs in Sydney. Many of its members are constituents of mine. This year the club is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary and had an anniversary dinner on 7 April. The club allocates substantial sums by way of donations and grants. This includes, but certainly is not restricted to, ClubGRANTS funding. A great deal goes from the club to the community. A significant number of the club's members also volunteer, especially for sporting teams. I acknowledge the current board of directors President Kevin Ingram, vice-presidents Steve Fitzpatrick and John Dean, and directors Lorraine Dean, Stephen Edwards, Trevor Forman, Leon Hansen, Jeanette McNevin and Tom Murphy. It is also appropriate to acknowledge Chief Executive Officer Greg Pickering and the club's hardworking staff. The club plays an important and significant role in our local community. I am delighted to acknowledge and recognise that role.

AUTHOR BRIAN CALDERSMITH

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:51): The term "car enthusiast" rarely applies to residents of the Upper North Shore, but it is an apt description of historian and artist Brian Caldersmith, whose book, *Caldersmith's Irreverent Guide: Classic Cars & Motorsport*, was published recently. It is Caldersmith's second book. In 1996 he wrote the popular *A-Z of Classic Motorsport*. The North Turramurra 75-year-old's interest and involvement in motorsport is not merely as an author. He is also director of the Australian Motor History Foundation, an honorary member of the Australian Racing Drivers' Club and a foundation member of Club Lotus Australia.

Caldersmith gained his first taste of the sport as an underage flag marshal at Parramatta Park and eventually became a member of the Australian Automobile Racing Club. He was also a member of the North Shore Sporting Car Club, a founding member of the Amaroo Country Sporting Car Club and was the vice-president and secretary of the Historic Sports and Racing Car Association of NSW. On a particularly wet weekend at Oran Park, Caldersmith danced on the track after skilfully winning all of the races in his Lotus Elite and was dubbed the "rain master", which is an appropriate sobriquet for a resident of one of Sydney's most rain-soaked suburbs. As the title suggests, Caldersmith's latest book is a light-hearted look at motor racing, including commentary, cartoons and illustrations from a man whose lifelong love for the sport has always been accompanied by his sense of fun.

ST MARYS RSL SUB-BRANCH ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (16:52): I congratulate the St Marys RSL Sub-Branch on another successful Anzac Sunday march and ceremony. Each year an ever-growing crowd of people gather to pay their respects at the march from Coachmans Park to Victoria Park in St Marys and the Anzac Day dawn service. Thousands of people attended this year. It was a privilege to once again attend these events. I thank the entire sub-branch executive including president Ron Blakely, vice-presidents Frank Lawton and John Foeken, honorary treasurer Ted Fish, OAM and honorary secretary Tony Fryer. I thank the sub-branch for all that it does in our community to uphold the Anzac spirit throughout the St Marys region. The crowd of thousands last Wednesday morning would not be possible without all of their hard work.

AUSTRALIAN SCOUT MEDALLION RECIPIENT JOSHUA AUDITORE

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (16:53): I congratulate the efforts of Joshua Auditore on being awarded the prestigious Australian Scout Medallion. This award is given only to those who have completed and received numerous other badges, who have demonstrated an active leadership role within Scouts and who serve others. As well as having to fill those criteria, Josh had to complete a three-day hike, run a leadership activity, and complete other special interest and scouting challenges such as abseiling, radio communication and first aid. Josh is the third Berowra Scout in the group's history to achieve this prestigious award. He is a tremendous young man who worked hard to achieve a goal. Josh is an inspiration to other scouts hoping to win the medallion. He encourages others of all ages to work for what they want. Josh is a role model. I wish him all the best for his bright future.

CHARLESTOWN ELECTORATE JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:54): I am delighted to formally acknowledge Mr Roland Millbank and Mr Walter Remington, who have served since 1968 as Justices of the Peace in New South Wales—50 years. To put that into context, this was the year the airbag was invented and the first automatic teller machine was installed. There is no reward for serving as a New South Wales Justice of the Peace [JP], other than the pleasure of volunteering a service for the community. However, JPs play an essential part in

the legal system and in the community in New South Wales. These men have helped people at key moments when they have been applying for passports, buying houses, accessing superannuation and much more. By volunteering their time as JPs for 50 years, Mr Millbank and Mr Remington have provided a valuable and important service to their community and places of employment. Thank you, Roland and Walter.

PICTON GEORGE IV INN

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:55): I praise everyone involved in the restoration of the historic George IV Inn at Picton. I am pleased to advise the House that the remnants the 1800s Australian convict history entered a new chapter in its long life when the inn re-opened earlier this year. To those unfamiliar with the history of the George IV Inn, it was established in 1839 and is one of the oldest colonial inns still operating as a hotel. Its most recent and troublesome history was the devastation in the 2016 intense storm, which flooded much of the Picton area, including the historic inn. It remained closed until new owners signed on to the task earlier this year of keeping the inn alive, and writing the next chapter of its history. Already visitors have flooded back into the town. I look forward to many more events. I have fond memories of when the West Tigers, Ray Hadley, the National Rugby League, *The Footy Show* and all of the community raised money for flood victims. That was the focal point. I thank everyone involved.

WINGA MYAMLY RECONCILIATION GROUP

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:56): I recognise the Winga Myamly Reconciliation Group. In particular, I recognise its organisation and hosting of the annual memorial ceremony to commemorate the Appin Massacre, which occurred on 17 April 1816 when military forces under orders from then Governor Macquarie killed Dharawal people at Appin. The commemoration is held at Cataract Dam and this year it was held on 15 April. I particularly acknowledge the roles of Uncle Ivan Wellington, Sister Kerry, Ann Madsen and Peter Jones. There were performances by John Therry students, the Wiritjiribin Dance Group, the Koomurri Birrays Dance Group and traditional performers, including Glen Doyle. There were a number of other contributions on the day with representatives of all levels of government present. This is an important event both for truth telling and for the longer-term cause of reconciliation. The Winga Myamly Reconciliation Group deserves to be recognised and praised.

NGROO WALKING TOGETHER PROGRAM

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (16:57): The New South Wales Government's Ngroo Walking Together program aims to help community preschools and long day care centres grow positive relationships with their local Aboriginal community and reduce barriers that may prevent Aboriginal children from accessing these services. It was a pleasure to mark the program's expansion with the Minister for Early Childhood Education, and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Sarah Mitchell, on Monday 30 April at Christ Church St Ives Pre-school. In my Davidson electorate, Belrose Kindergarten and Christ Church St Ives Pre-school are part of 360 services across New South Wales that are part of the program. It was wonderful to witness how Aboriginal culture will be integrated into everyday learning for young children in our local community. I thank all those involved in developing and partnering with this important cultural initiative.

Private Members' Statements

BISHOP PETER INGHAM, DD, RETIREMENT

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (16:58): I speak about the retirement of the outstanding former Bishop of the Diocese of Wollongong, the Most Reverend Peter Ingham, DD, Bishop Emeritus. After serving more than 16 years as Bishop of Wollongong, Bishop Peter certainly will be missed. Bishop Peter was ordained as a priest in 1964 and ordained as Auxiliary Bishop in 1993 by Cardinal Clancy. Bishop Peter wrote in his farewell message that he was overwhelmed by the affirmation and good wishes he had received on the announcement of his retirement, but I am sure all those involved in the diocese have received more from Bishop Peter under his guidance and advice. The Wollongong Diocese manages more than 130 parishes, schools and clergy in the Shoalhaven, Illawarra, Macarthur and Southern Highlands, which, when we think about it, would not be much different to running New South Wales. Bishop Peter studied for the priesthood at St Columba's Seminary, Springwood, and St Patrick's Seminary, Manly.

Bishop Peter has served in parishes, including at Rosebery, Newtown, St Marys, Auburn and Ryde. He was appointed private secretary to His Eminence Cardinal James Freeman and General Secretary of the Archdiocese of Sydney, and he was nominated a Prelate of Honour to his Holiness Pope John Paul II. Bishop Peter has participated in many Special Assemblies and Conferences of the Oceania. With more than 50 years as a priest and bishop, I am sure Bishop Peter will agree he has made lifetime friends and companions. I was very well informed that Bishop Peter has an amazing sense of humour and is very well known for his joke-telling—unfortunately, many of them dad jokes. That side of Bishop Peter showed he was a man of the people who was

well loved and respected. His caring attitude and sincerity held him in good standing in the difficult situations he encountered over the years. The farewell dinner held to celebrate his retirement was supported by so many local businesses. It was wonderful. It was a privilege and an honour to be there to say farewell to the Bishop.

I thank those who assisted to make sure the evening was a great success: King of Clubs, Rydges Campbelltown, Catholic Development Fund, Catholic Church Insurances, Primavera Flowers, H. Parsons Funeral Directors, Australian Catholic Superannuation Retirement Fund, All Organs Australia, McDonald's Macarthur Illawarra, Hansen & Cole Funerals, Guardian Funerals, JDH Architects, Harvest Journeys, Makinson d'Apice Lawyers, Michelle Roffe Funerals, Remac Fire Safety, St Francis Xavier Parish, Steve Watt Constructions, CEnet, Clearsafe Environmental Solutions, FAL Construction, Figtree Cleaning, KPMG Wollongong, Paul and Margaret Wakeling, Pro Sound and Lighting, St Mary Star of the Sea College, and Stuart Barnes Venues and Events. I also thank the students from Mount Carmel Catholic College Varroville for their outstanding music during the farewell dinner.

Through the years Bishop Peter has gained respect and love from all those he met. I sincerely wish him well and all the best in his well-deserved retirement. Some 700-plus attended the farewell dinner, which was sold out well in advance. Representatives from many businesses, schools, non-government organisations and communities were on hand on the evening, which shows the respect and reverence in which Bishop Ingham is held within our community and the good he has done within our community over the past 50 years. Bishop Peter, we thank you for your wonderful service, commend you on your wonderful service and wish you well in what lies ahead.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:03): I also acknowledge the wonderful work over the past 16 years of former Bishop of the Diocese of Wollongong, the Most Reverend Peter Ingham. Bishop Ingham confirmed me many years ago at St Declan's, Penshurst. Bishop Ingham is a marvellous person who recently celebrated 50 years of priesthood in the Catholic church—I think he has now served 54 years—with 16 of those years as a bishop. I remember that over the years Bishop Ingham has visited parishes in my electorate and, in the early days following his ordination as bishop, I was an altar boy at St Anne's when he visited. I congratulate Bishop Ingham on his many years of service and wish him all the very best for the future.

WYONG ELECTORATE ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (17:04): Today I bring to the House's attention a slow-moving planning disaster that is occurring in my electorate. The area I speak of is designated by council as mostly Precinct 7A, but to locals it is more commonly known as the residential area and bushland between Warnies Railway Cafe, the Pacific Highway in the south and Sparks Road in the north. The Main North Line runs through the area, and at the moment there is a small railway station. Currently, new housing estates are springing up all over the place. There is a new housing estate on Nico Road, one on Railway Road, one on the corner of Virginia and Warnervale roads and another one on Warnervale Road. There will be roughly 1,200 new residents of Precinct 7A once these developments have been completed, then drivers from all of these estates will empty on to Warnervale Road and add to the congestion on Warnervale Road, which crosses the railway line before its intersection with Sparks Road at a railway crossing.

Blind Freddy can predict that the railway crossing will become a massive problem with all the additional traffic on the road from the additional 1,200 residences in the precinct. Bearing in mind that the average residence has 2½ cars, we can predict that thousands of vehicles will be travelling along Warnervale Road to the freeway. I met with council on Monday and note that the council is aware of the issue. I asked if council had spoken to the State Government about the issue, and was told that it has made contact but has received no response. Members of this House, whether Labor or Liberal, are aware of the terrible silo called Transport for NSW. This bureaucracy has a track record of not listening. If Transport for NSW does not want to do something, it deliberately employs tactics to delay and to stall.

I tried to get the North Warnervale railway station built in 2007, and today there is no railway station or any plan to build a railway station. Every time we went to meetings about the station, Transport would send along a new representative, who at the beginning of the meeting would say, "You'll have to bring me up to speed with where everything is up to with the project", and at the end of the meeting would say, "I have no authority to make a decision." This would happen meeting after meeting.

The council tells me that this remains the case. In Precinct 7A we have an impending disaster that is not being addressed because there is a railway crossing that will lead to congestion with new and existing residents being forced on to Warnervale Road in order to access the freeway. We know that the railway line is busy because there are regular passenger trains and, more importantly, freight trains, some of them around a kilometre long. We can imagine that between 5.00 a.m., when tradies start to hit the freeway, and 9.00 a.m., when school starts,

there will be a bottleneck at the railway crossing when the gates close several times, sometimes for several minutes, to allow for the passage of trains.

It is simply not good enough to plan residential development of an area without at the same time planning transport upgrades, including railway crossings. Blind Freddy could see that this would be a problem. Transport for NSW is a bureaucracy that must start to engage in planning and in the process do what is best for people and not for the bureaucracy. When Labor was in government and the Wyong Council was the local government representative of the area, we found that we were given a raw deal by Transport for NSW—and the current Government and the newly formed Central Coast Council are finding out the same thing. Governments have put off building a road through Wyong for more than a decade because they cannot get proper answers from Transport for NSW. It is not good enough that this bureaucracy is mucking up transport plans that put the lives and the livability of our community at risk.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT CORRUPT CONDUCT

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (17:09): I wish to talk today about corruption. Former Labor Ministers Eddie Obeid and Ian MacDonald are now in jail, having been found guilty of corruption in office, and Coalition members have been found by the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] to have intentionally sought to evade electoral funding laws. We know that corruption clouds good judgement and diminishes the instinct for innovation and creativity in our democracy. It erodes public confidence in government and has the potential to steer our State off the path to prosperity.

Over decades, successive Liberal and Labor governments have passed hundreds of laws in this Chamber making clear criminal penalties for a range of offences from drink-driving to public violence, but one area of law they have failed to address almost completely is corruption, bribery and misconduct by public officials. Here in New South Wales corruption is still governed by common law offences that are complex with no set maximum penalties. As a result they can be difficult to interpret and apply. In this State we have the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Although the ICAC is able to identify where corrupt behaviour has taken place, translating those findings into criminal charges is not always straightforward. In its submission to the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption's inquiry into prosecutions arising from ICAC investigations in 2014, the ICAC highlighted the need to create a range of new criminal offences that capture corrupt conduct including misconduct in public office, bribery and conspiring to defraud a public official and public officials having a pecuniary interest in government contracts. In its submission to the inquiry, ICAC stated that "members of the public should readily have available, via legislation, a succinct and clear statement of the offence of misconduct in public office and the maximum penalty that may be imposed where the offence is found to be committed." ICAC went on to say that:

This is consistent with the notion that the criminal law should be accessible and comprehensible, and that members of the public (and in this particular case, public officials) are informed of the seriousness with which society regards breaches of public duty and are able regulate their conduct accordingly.

Quite simply, the ICAC asked the Government to close the gap between its powers to investigate and the Department of Public Prosecution's powers to prosecute by introducing new criminal offences that capture corrupt conduct. This request has been ignored by the Government for four long years. It is pertinent to look at what the ICAC was doing around the time it made this request. In 2014, the ICAC exposed alleged illegal political donations and other misconduct that saw 10 New South Wales Liberal members of Parliament resign or go to the crossbench. It also was wrapping up an investigation that eventuated in a five-year sentence for former Labor Minister Eddie Obeid. These two investigations describe the type of rot that has been permitted to fester in the politics in New South Wales. But rather than increasing the strength of the ICAC, this Government seems to be going in the opposite direction.

Rather than listening to the ICAC's request for new criminal offences that capture corrupt conduct, the Government has sat on its hands. That is why I intend to introduce a bill that will make it easier to close the gap between ICAC's findings and criminal prosecution. The Crimes Amendment (Misconduct in Public Office and Other Matters) Bill 2018 creates new, modern criminal offences that capture criminal conduct. It adds a level of clarity over what precisely constitutes corrupt conduct and what sentences these offences should attract. Most importantly, it responds to the ICAC's request for help from this Chamber in its work to fight corruption in this Chamber. This bill is an essential step in restoring public confidence in governmental decision-making. If all parties in this place, Labor and Liberal in particular, are serious about cleaning up their ranks, they will support these changes. I encourage all members to examine this private member's bill and offer it their full support.

COOGEE ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (17:13): For the best part of 20 years I have attended the Anzac Day dawn service conducted by the Coogee-Randwick-Clovelly RSL Sub-Branch. Traditionally the

service has been held at the memorial in High Cross Park in Randwick. Until recent years, it attracted no more than 1,000 members of the community, which was an improvement on the 200 or so who attended when I first did in the 1990s. In 2015 it was decided to temporarily move the commemoration to Coogee Beach due to the construction of the light rail project and the anticipated increase in attendance, it being the one hundredth anniversary of the Gallipoli landing. In the darkness as I descended the hill from Randwick towards the beach, scores of people—walking, riding and driving from every direction, on every street, of every age—were heading there too. To say that those stalwarts of the service were gobsmacked at the turnout is not hyperbole.

From the mateship memorial on the promenade above the beach, I looked back over the assembled thousands and thousands, quiet and respectful, who were there to take part in this very special anniversary. Randwick City Council provided the necessary support to ensure that the event was conducted seamlessly. I know how grateful the Coogee RSL Sub-branch is for the council's assistance, particularly over the past few years for the commensurate skill of the Randwick council's events team, combined with the tireless work of the dedicated outdoor staff who tends to the beachfront. However, the success of the last few Anzac Day commemorations has its origins in the efforts of those who have for many years—indeed, some for decades—maintained the tradition. They have stood vigil on 25 April each and every year through the times when the tradition was, for a growing number in our community, coming to be regarded as antiquated, losing its relevance or even, quite wrongfully, as warmongering.

These are people who also deserve our praise and our gratitude each and every Anzac Day as we remember, pay our respects and give thanks to those who suffered and perished in the theatre of war. Amongst them are many who served, those who did not, those men and women who lost loved ones in war after, and those who were spared such grief. These people include Barry Collins, Pattie Bostick, Ted Love and his daughters, John Needham, David Cohen, Laurie Manning, Joe Fleming, John Clifford, Dudley Williams, Kiki Mendez, Shirley Lambert, Betty Desab, Faye Payne, Marge Johnson, Ronnie Peacock, Brian Elliott, Graham Keating, Mark Spooner, Billy Smart, Graham McColl, Santia Digovanni, Edna Monk and Tracey Despea. Sadly, many of those people are no longer with us. I simply cannot remember everybody and I know there are many more that I have not included in that list. The 324 Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets always do a professional job in providing the catafalque party. The dedicated St Jude's Choir and the Anglican ministers, formerly Reverend Greg Job and now Reverend Craig Seger of St Nicholas Church, led the prayers.

Like many local members of Parliament I attend a number of events leading up to and after Anzac Day. Year on year that number of commitments continues to grow. At first my Anzac duties required my attendance at local Anzac Sunday, Randwick council's Anzac civil reception for RSL sub-branch members and finally the dawn service, which was followed by a hearty breakfast and far too many shots of rum and milk at the Coogee Diggers. In the past month I have attended 12 commemoratives services, and there were many others I could not get to. Many of those services were at local schools, which was an initiative of the late Pattie Bostick and Barry Collins, who is still with us today. They saw the dwindling ranks of their sub-branch and sought a means to ensure survival of the tradition of Anzac Day observance.

Local schools now play an important part of each dawn service. Pat and Barry's mission has been a success. I pay tribute to all the sub-branch members and their supporters who have played an integral role in all those dawn services I have attended over the years. They can count each and every one of those 12,000 or so people who attended this year's dawn service at Coogee Beach as a measure of their success and a reward for years of service and dedication, ensuring this solemn day's tradition will remain at the centre of the heart of every Australian. We will remember them. Lest we forget.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (17:18): Today I update the House on the devastating drought conditions currently being experienced not only in the electorate of Tamworth but also in the New England, the north-west of and greater New South Wales. As the grinding challenge of this drought continues, my heart goes out to those caught in the grip of the terrible conditions we are experiencing. Last Sunday I invited Deputy Premier John Barilaro to visit my electorate, to walk the country, to talk to farmers and to see firsthand the extreme conditions they are operating under.

It is not unusual to hear of farmers spending big dollars to keep their stock alive but the challenge is how long those dollars will last. When I talk to farmers some will say, depending on the location, that it is the worst drought in 20 years, 30 years, 40 years or 50 years. It is costing one farmer I know a minimum of \$800 per week to feed around 1,200 lambs. That number is significantly increased for cattle. Lambs and sheep will eat 3 per cent of their body weight, so to keep them in some sort of condition and get them to hold on through this period is extremely difficult.

I acknowledge the Local Land Services [LLS] in my region. They have ramped up assistance for farmers and landholders. Today in Gunnedah the LLS partnered with Meat and Livestock Australia for the North West Beef Producers Forum. More than 70 people registered to attend the forum to hear from industry leaders about business, marketing, nutrition, animal health and planning for the future. We need to keep delivering rural resilience forums to farmers. Even in these extremely debilitating conditions farmers are still resilient. They are still looking forward as they wonder what they can do to hold on and prepare for the future. LLS is also delivering pop-up stands at events and saleyards to assist farmers who are seeking to fight this drought with the best information available. They are also assisting farmers with fodder quality assessments and water quality testing. LLS is providing strong representation on behalf of landholders in areas considered under Drought Watch to present a case for more assistance.

Farmers are proud people and they will hold on until the very end. In some instances, that end is too late. I urge farmers who need assistance to ask for help. The New South Wales Government, through the Department of Primary Industries, has drought assistance available at the website www.droughthub.nsw.gov.au. A raft of drought assistance measures are listed on that website. We often find from talking to landholders, regardless of where they live, that they are unaware of this drought assistance. I have printed a document from that website which highlights the assistance available in New South Wales. I have sent that document to every farmer on my database. I also try to spread the message to every farmer I talk to about this assistance—whether it be the Drought Transport Fund, the Farm Innovation Fund, the transport of donated fodder fund, the Animal Welfare Transport Subsidy and more.

The Rural Financial Counselling Service is also being inundated by farmers who are dealing with, or are at risk of, financial hardship. There is also the Rural Assistance Authority for those in desperate need. The telephone number for that authority is 1800 678 593. We are also looking at measures to help B-triple trucks, which are carrying hay from South Australia to my electorate, to get into some of the harder to reach areas to deliver some of that crucial feed to stock closer to home. We will continue to do everything we can to support farmers but I invite all members of this Parliament to pray for rain. It is my hope that it rains soon.

AUSTRALIAN SIKH ASSOCIATION CELEBRATIONS

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (17:24): Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh. Today I recognise and acknowledge the importance of the Australian Sikh Association for its contribution to Australia. It was my pleasure to attend the Khalsa Sajna Diwas, or Vaisakhi, celebrations in Sydney last weekend. I publicly acknowledge the parade and the reception in Martin Place—they were exceptional. I say on behalf of the New South Wales Government that we appreciate all the work done by the Australian Sikh Association, especially by the management committee and the volunteers of the Gurdwara at Glenwood. Gurdwara is one of the largest Sikh temples in Australia, if not the largest. It is the epicentre of religious and community activity and it provides a wonderful place for people not only to celebrate religious activities but also to be involved in many community activities, such as a Punjabi school where people can speak the native language of Punjabi. I am a great proponent of second languages and the school is certainly a great addition.

Gurdwara at Glenwood also has a library where children and youth can come together and explore and read things written in Punjabi. It offers free classes such as turban classes, computer classes for seniors, English and Punjabi language classes and, of particular importance, Kirtan classes for listening, practising and performing Kirtan as part of the celebration of Sikhism. Sikhism is one of the world's great religions and it is practised not only in India but around the world. The Vaisakhi celebrations on the weekend celebrated one of the most important days in the Sikh calendar which is celebrated right around the world by 25 million Sikhs. It falls on 14 April and commemorates the birth of the order of Khalsa. Khalsa Sajna Diwas is very important in the Sikh culture: It is the first day of the month of Vaisakh and the second month of the Sikh calendar.

I am very privileged to live in Western Sydney and to have in my electorate Glenwood Gurdwara, which is the largest community not-for-profit Sikh association in Australia, and certainly the temple is testament to its good work over many years. It has also been my privilege to visit the Golden Temple in Amritsar. That is certainly one of the modern wonders of the world. I found it inspiring and I have been lucky enough to go there a couple of times. Of note is that the Golden Temple is set at the lowest part of the land, surrounded by water, because it is a place for everybody, regardless of race, religion, creed, sex or caste. It is a place of open doors where everybody is welcome, no matter what their religion, and it is a place of worship. Visiting the temple is an enlightening experience. Not only can people go there to meditate, worship and pay homage to Sikhism but also everybody gets a free meal. What could be better than finishing off that experience with a meal?

The Australian Punjabi community have made an important contribution to today's society. It is a hardworking and entrepreneurial community that works together for the benefits of not just the Sikh community but for everybody in our community. That was reflected recently in the Sikh Games held in Bass Hill when 80,000 people came together from around Australia, as well as from New Zealand and some of the smaller islands.

It was a spectacular event that rivalled the Commonwealth Games. On behalf of the New South Wales Government, I commend the Australian Sikh community for their wonderful contribution to Australia and I look forward to doing what I can to help them in the future.

UNITED HOSPITAL AUXILIARIES CONFERENCE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (17:29): In my role as a parliamentarian, I often have the honour and privilege to be invited to participate in significant community events where we take measure of the rich history of our community and recognise the efforts of those who worked hard to create it. I had such an experience recently when I was asked to open the annual Hunter Region Zone Conference of the United Hospital Auxiliaries, which was hosted by the Belmont Hospital Auxiliary at the Belmont Golf Club. The United Hospitals Auxiliaries of NSW was established in 1933 and through local branches its members have been responding to the needs of health facilities and the community throughout New South Wales ever since. The Hunter zone includes two very active auxiliaries whose members come from the Swansea electorate. For decades, the Belmont District Hospital Auxiliary and the Wyong Hospital Auxiliary have worked tirelessly to improve health facilities in the local community.

The Belmont District Hospital Auxiliary was formed in 1948 by a small band of women to raise money for a campaign to build a hospital at Belmont. This year's zone conference was particularly important for Belmont Hospital Auxiliary, not only because it played host but because it was the seventieth anniversary of the Belmont Hospital Auxiliary and the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of Belmont Hospital. The women of the Belmont Hospital Auxiliary, all of whom were volunteers, doorknocked, hosted games of housie and demonstration parties and held street stalls, raffles, fetes and morning and afternoon teas to fundraise for the hospital. In May 1968 Belmont Hospital was finally opened. It took 20 years of campaigning and fundraising to build a hospital at Belmont. This is testament to the auxiliary members' passion and dedication for local health services in the community. This same passion and dedication continues to drive them today.

While the hospital opened in May 1968, it was the ambition of the Belmont Hospital Auxiliary to run a kiosk on the grounds of the hospital to ensure that patients, visitors and staff were fed and watered during their time at the hospital. They realised this ambition in August of that year, laying the first stone on the hospital grounds. The total cost of building the kiosk was \$11,700, and almost 80 per cent of that funding was raised by the local auxiliary. Once the kiosk was up and running, the auxiliary turned its efforts to raising money to purchase equipment for the hospital. These efforts are still obvious today.

On average, the auxiliary raises \$100,000 a year for equipment for the Belmont Hospital. It is fair to say that the Belmont Hospital would not exist today if it were not for the incredible advocacy from the auxiliary members. I particularly mention President Dot Butler and Secretary June Chapman and the other 50 hardworking volunteer members of the auxiliary who spend so much of their time raising money for the hospital. Amongst those members is Bess Birkett, a life member who has been with the Belmont Hospital Auxiliary for 40 years, and Olive Jackson, who has clocked up 30 years of service.

The local hospital for those at the other end of the Swansea electorate on the Central Coast is the Wyong Hospital. I am sure the good member for Wyong will not mind my saying that the Wyong Hospital Auxiliary is also an incredible community organisation that is made up of passionate advocates whose staunch defence of community assets is unparalleled. The members of the Wyong District Hospital Auxiliary have always been on the front foot when it comes to advocating for good public health facilities in their local community. They were instrumental in establishing the Wyong Hospital committee in 1956, and after 24 long years of campaigning the newly built Wyong Public Hospital admitted its first patient in 1980.

This was not the end of the advocacy from the Wyong Hospital Auxiliary, whose members continued to fundraise for the hospital to deliver much-needed equipment and infrastructure. The Wyong Hospital Auxiliary, along with the broader Central Coast community successfully saved Wyong Hospital from privatisation in 2017. What an achievement. I have said it before and I will say it again, the best thing about our community is the people who live there and who invest so much of their time and energy building it up. At the official opening of Wyong Hospital in 1980, the then local Labor member for Peats said that the efforts and subsequent achievements of the community in building a local hospital:

... amply demonstrates that when we work for the community we should not be daunted by delays, frustrations or obstacles placed in our path as tenacity and determination will overcome such problems.

Now in Belmont and Wyong, decades down the track, the tenacity and determination of those women who worked so hard to build a local hospital has left a legacy which lives on.

ALBURY ELECTORATE COMMONWEALTH GAMES AWARD RECIPIENTS

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (17:34): It is always interesting to see which sports feature in the lives of one's hometown athletes and swimmers. Does the town or suburb regularly nurture elite cricketers, marathon runners or competitive frisbee players? The Albury electorate and border region has a history of producing successful sports men and women, according to its resources and infrastructure: Margaret Court in tennis, Lauren Jackson in basketball, Britteny Cox in snow sports, as well as sportspeople in hockey, water polo, AFL and so on. The area is a landscape of harsh extremes of weather. Sport in Albury does not suit the dilettante. This year's Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast brought a number of local athletes into our lounge rooms. Some we have seen before, others were getting their moment to shine. Now that the Commonwealth Games have concluded, I congratulate local athletes who represented our nation and the border region in their various disciplines. We are proud of them all. They stand as great role models as well as ambassadors for the benefits of a country upbringing.

Mother of three and Albury resident Eliza Ault-Connell, whose day job is a director of Meningococcal Australia, finished a mere 12 seconds behind compatriot Madison de Rozario in the wheelchair marathon event. She also placed fifth in the Women's T54 1500 metre final. It has been a long road for Eliza to reach these games. At the age of 16 Eliza nearly died of meningococcal disease. She survived but unfortunately had amputated both legs above the knees as well as a number of fingers. She has already enjoyed a long, successful athletics career. Eliza won silver at the 2002 Commonwealth Games and has represented Australia at the Athens Olympics and world championships. After having her children, she has returned to the track with maturity and strength. We hope to see her racing in marathons around the world.

Albury-born Jocelyn Bartram is the Australian Hockeyroos goalkeeper. As a member of the Hockeyroos, Jocelyn has been to the World League semifinals in Belgium and the Oceania Cup in Sydney last October. Now she has won a silver medal on the Gold Coast. Jocelyn has hosted clinics for young goalkeepers in border teams. I have heard about her passion for coaching and developing the talents of young country hockey players. She certainly knows the difficulties faced by young sports men and women growing up in a regional area, where it can be hard to get that level of expert mentoring.

I have spoken before in this place about shooting superstar James Willett. James grew up in Mulwala on the Murray River and continues to train on a custom-built range on the family property. In his favoured event, the double trap, James is a stand-out, having won Shooting Australia's Male Shooter of the Year award for three years in a row. He has represented Australia across the world for a number of years, including at the Rio Olympics. I met James a couple of years ago and was most impressed by his down-to-earth authenticity. He is a great ambassador for the border region and also for his former school, Corowa High School. Indeed, Corowa High School offered shooting as a school sport and thereby contributed to the development of its own Olympian and Commonwealth Games representative.

Corowa-born Josh Thornton has had a remarkable career, excelling in lawn bowls events for people with a disability and in open competition as well and taking out the Australian Open men's pairs final in 2017. The results were there for all to see when his team triumphed in the Open B6/B7/B8 Triples gold medal match on the Gold Coast. Josh, who is Bowls Victoria regional bowls manager and coach at East Shepparton Bowls Club, grew up in Corowa where he went to St Mary's Catholic Primary School and later Corowa High School. At the age of just 15 Thornton won the under 19 Victorian bowls State championship. Twenty-one years later he is a Commonwealth Games gold medallist.

I congratulate also another border star, Wodonga walker Michael Hosking, who began his serious athletics career in the steeplechase race and cycling but has now settled into race walking, representing Australia in the 2018 Commonwealth Games. In recent years Michael has featured prominently in Albury's Nail Can Hill Run, the most prestigious race in my electorate. Michael won this event—which takes place over 11.3 kilometres of Albury's most vertically challenging landscape—in 2014 and 2015. He can walk and he certainly can run.

What is it that we as a community gain from supporting athletes and swimmers as they start their long and torturous path towards potential greatness? Is it gold, silver or bronze? It is much more than that. Just as the presence of art in our community enriches our lives, there is a role for our sports stars and, indeed, for all who engage regularly in sports activity. As the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games showed us, it is wonderful to have disabled athletes competing in or alongside open competition. There is a naturalness to it which was clearly demonstrated to the world. Our sports stars are role models but our neighbours become inspiring role models when we see them go for a jog after work or help out at the equestrian centre or with Little Athletics. Once again, I thank our border Commonwealth Games representatives for all their effort, sacrifice and talent. It has been fun catching up with them.

MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE ROADS FUNDING

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:39): I inform the House that today I had the pleasure of presenting to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, Mrs Melinda Pavey, a petition calling on the New South Wales Government to provide \$50 million in funds to the MidCoast Council—one of the newly amalgamated councils—to be used on local roads and bridges within the Myall Lakes electorate. Providing the MidCoast Council with that \$50 million grant would open the door for the MidCoast Council, if it wished to do so, to apply to TCorp for a \$50 million low interest loan. What does that mean? With a \$50 million grant and the \$50 million low interest loan, a \$100 million roads and bridge package could be provided.

The MidCoast Council has recently applied for and been granted a rate rise of 20 per cent over four years, inclusive of the rate pegging amount. Nobody wants rate rises. We all agree about that. It is difficult, but with the backlog of work that is required on the roads and bridges—in excess of \$180-million worth—something extraordinary needs to be done. The rate rise will be used exclusively to pay down the loan. The \$100 million will be used for roads and bridges only, not for any other projects or operational costs. Ratepayers are doing their bit by paying off the loan through the special rate variation. I am calling on the Government to partner with and work with the community to get on top of the roads and bridges backlog. This is unique; it has not been done before. If nothing is done the \$180 million will blow out and become a far bigger amount very quickly.

When I travel around the electorate and visit community groups in the towns and villages, the number one local issue is roads, roads, roads. There are over 300 wooden bridges and thousands of kilometres of dirt roads. The bitumen roads are like patchwork quilts. I thank the community for backing this petition with thousands and thousands of signatures. The petition was presented to the Minister today. I have spoken about this matter before in this House and I have spoken with the Minister, the Deputy Premier and the Premier on numerous occasions. I have taken the roads Minister, the Deputy Premier and the Premier over those roads. We have travelled those roads out to Forster, Old Bar, Wingham and places in between so that they have firsthand knowledge of how bad the roads and bridges are.

What does the state of the roads mean for local communities? Roads are so important for the connection of communities and villages. The Myall Lakes electorate is made up of two major commercial centres—Forster-Tuncurry and Taree—and about 29 other villages, so roads are important to connect them. The roads carry freight trucks, dairy trucks, school buses and family cars. Through a campaign that was launched a few weeks ago we know that these days it is the local people on local roads that have the serious accidents which sometimes result in deaths.

There are so many reasons why this funding needs to be provided. We want people to move to regional New South Wales but people moving to these areas want decent roads. If we want tourists to come to regional New South Wales we must remember that they want to drive on decent roads in order to get from one place to another. Businesses want to be able to employ more people but they need decent roads and bridges before they can do that. That is why this funding is so important and why I am calling on the Government again to fund this special grant so that we can do something about the roads and bridges in the Myall Lakes electorate.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:44): I thank the member for Myall Lakes who over the last seven years, day in and day out, has come into this place championing his local electorate and the issues that need to be funded such as upgrades to schools, upgrades to roads or upgrades to hospitals. I wish him the best in his campaign for funding for better access to local roads. He makes a good point: In cities and rural and regional New South Wales roads are vital to access education, food, medical supplies, hospitals and to travel from point A to point B for work. They are vital as connectors for local communities, particularly in rural and regional Australia. I wish the outstanding member for Myall Lakes all the best in his campaign for funding as these roads are overdue for much-needed repairs.

CHARLESTOWN ELECTORATE SCHOOL MAINTENANCE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (17:45): I will speak to an issue raised by parents of students in my electorate: the disturbing state of school buildings and grounds across the Charlestown electorate. There are 25 government schools in the Charlestown electorate, 21 of which are experiencing a significant maintenance backlog. Two of these schools have maintenance backlogs in excess of \$1 million. An additional five schools have a maintenance backlog in excess of \$500,000. Combined, the public schools in the electorate of Charlestown have a maintenance backlog of almost \$10 million. Over the 2017-2018 financial year the anticipated expenditure to tackle this maintenance backlog on schools in my electorate is \$1.5 million. That is a mere 15 per cent of the \$10 million required to get the public schools of Charlestown up to scratch. Clearly, there is significant disparity between the need and the budget.

The type of maintenance works required in these schools is wide ranging. These are not luxury items. It is the maintenance of simple items that we would expect to find in an average school. I have met with several parents and citizens [P and C] association representatives from schools across the electorate and many have raised with me that they feel betrayed by the \$2.2 million commitment to sports stadia when the unrepaired maintenance backlog in their children's schools is at a record high. These are some of the simple jobs that need to be carried out at these schools: Charlestown East Public School has asked for disability access for children with disability at that school. They have asked for mould removal from the walls of the classrooms, security fencing and ground improvements so that children can play across the grounds of the school.

Whilst the Government is offering \$100 grants to motivate parents to encourage their children to be active, it is the belief of the P and C representatives at Charlestown East Public School that properly maintained school grounds would be significantly more effective. Merewether Public School needs a refurbishment of the school toilet blocks, the driveways need to be resealed and the play areas need to be improved. Charlestown South Public School has outgrown its hall and needs a hall extension in order to fit all the children inside for assemblies and presentations. The school also needs soft fall fitted under the play equipment to ensure the safety of the children.

Wiripaang Public School also needs a hall which fits all of its students, urgent repairs to all existing classrooms and buildings due to white ant decay and rotting, and the removal of asbestos. These are examples of a handful of issues faced by P and C groups, who have become very frustrated with the situation. These parents and carers can see very clearly that things need to be done, but the budget that is given to schools does not meet their needs. Quite often P and Cs are meeting the costs of basic school maintenance. P and Cs are working very hard to raise funds to improve the education of their children, and what that money is going to in some cases is basic school maintenance.

Teachers are undertaking cleaning tasks on a regular basis such as the washing down of mouldy walls because it is not being removed. The actions being taken by teachers, parents and friends of schools are shocking and have been for a number of years. Our teachers, principals, support staff and students should not have to work and learn in a second-rate environment, left frustrated by bureaucracy. This is not about capital works; this is about maintenance. It is about peeling paint, threadbare carpets, heating and air conditioning. We are less than one year out from an election. Labor has already committed to delivering \$300 million for air conditioning in classrooms and there is much more to come.

Mr Mark Coure: In Western Sydney.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: It is across the State in areas that need it. We value public education and know that environments that are conducive to learning are incredibly important. My Labor colleagues and I will work with schools and parents and citizens associations to get to the bottom of these school maintenance backlogs. We will commit more funding for the needs of schools and not blow \$2.2 billion on sporting stadia in Sydney.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:50): This is an exciting time in New South Wales. We are spending \$4.2 billion on new schools and classrooms over the next four years. This will create 1,500 new classrooms across New South Wales. New South Wales schools will need to accommodate an extra 269,000 students by 2031. This is a huge but exciting challenge. Labor's legacy to New South Wales public schools after 16 years in office was a \$1 billion maintenance backlog. This Government is spending a record \$747 million over the next four years on the school maintenance backlog, helping to fix the problems that were neglected for 16 years under Labor. This Government takes education seriously. The next time the member for Charlestown makes a private member's statement I hope she thanks the Government for its record spend on education infrastructure.

MACLEAN DISTRICT HOSPITAL HELIPAD

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (17:51): Tonight I refer to the importance of rebuilding the helipad at Maclean District Hospital. Ensuring the health and wellbeing of the community is my number one priority and should be the number one priority of all governments. The helipad, which was built on hospital grounds, was designed and built by members of the Rotary Club of Maclean in 2005 for approximately \$70,000. In May last year Northern NSW Local Health District Chief Executive Wayne Jones announced that an independent safety audit of helicopter landing sites in the Northern NSW Local Health District had been recently conducted, benchmarking existing helipads against new safety and engineering guidelines. The audit identified that the elevated landing site at Maclean District Hospital did not meet the independent audit of existing helipads against new safety and engineering guidelines and the introduction of newer and heavier helicopters.

The Rotary Club of Maclean has embarked on another campaign to rebuild the helipad to restore helicopter retrieval services to the hospital; however, the funding required is beyond the capacity of any local community group. Revised costing for the rebuild of the Maclean District Hospital helipad have dropped from

\$1.5 million to \$750,000, but this is still excessive and beyond the scope of the rotary club. As I said previously, health is the number one concern of the community and I share that concern. Both the Northern NSW Local Health District and the Ambulance Service of New South Wales have agreed that an alternative temporary helicopter landing site at McIntyres Airfield on Northbank Road, Palmers Island, will be used for helicopter retrieval services at Maclean District Hospital while options for the new permanent landing site are being explored.

This is not an optimum situation because the airfield is approximately 12 minutes away from the hospital and helicopter transfers require patients to be transferred to the airfield by ambulance. Coordinating an ambulance to be available for a helicopter retrieval is not ideal as there are often extended waiting times, which are critical to treating emergency patients. While the Northern NSW Local Health District is working closely with the Ambulance Service of New South Wales to ensure that there is no disruption to helicopter retrieval services, this is not always the case. A fully functional helicopter retrieval service saves lives. While we do have a helicopter retrieval service that works, we are reliant on having an ambulance available. Sometimes patients have to wait and that waiting time is critical. I commend Anne Farrell, President of the Maclean Rotary Club and former Director of Nursing at the hospital, for leading a renewed campaign to have the helipad built. I am 100 per cent behind this campaign.

I have written to the Minister for Health, Brad Hazzard, and have advised him that the helipad at Maclean hospital is a vital piece of infrastructure. Maclean is a district hospital and does not have the staff and resources to deal with complex medical cases. Often those cases are transferred to Lismore Base Hospital or hospitals on the Gold Coast where there is specialist medical expertise. I acknowledge that the New South Wales local health districts have competing priorities. However, the helipad is the number one priority for the Maclean District Hospital and a fundamental need for the local community. While we have a helicopter retrieval service that works, it is reliant on having an ambulance available and sometimes that waiting time is critical. A timely retrieval to a medical emergency is paramount and will save lives. I ask that funding be provided in the NSW Health budget to enable this vital piece of infrastructure to be upgraded as a priority.

NORTH RYDE ELECTORATE EVENTS

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (17:55): Last week the Ryde community came together to commemorate Anzac Day. It was an honour to pay my respects and express my gratitude to the many service men and women from Ryde who gave their lives to ensure that we enjoy our freedoms today. I was equally honoured to express my gratitude to the current serving members of our armed forces. The sacrifices our troops make to protect our way of life should not be taken lightly. It was a privilege to stand alongside the Armenian community at Ryde's commemoration of the Armenian genocide. We came together to remember those who lost their lives in the first genocide in modern history. The New South Wales Parliament was the first to recognise the Armenian genocide and the Republic of Artsakh and it is important to affirm this support each year. I thank Councillor Sarkis Yedelian for organising the service and for his strong advocacy on behalf of the Armenian community in Ryde.

I recognise the commitment and dedication of Helen Crouch to the people of Ryde. Initially Helen joined North Ryde Community Aid and Information Centre [NRCA] in May 2009 to advise the committee of management on creating a forward view for the organisation. Helen's extensive capabilities were quickly recognised and she took on the permanent role as executive officer, focusing on community establishment and recognition. Helen was also tasked with ensuring the organisation was fully compliant with appropriate accreditations and that its governance structure reflected a professional, modern and efficient caring organisation. During her time with the NRCA Helen doubled the aged-care funding, which allowed the expansion of social and support programs for the aged. Those programs included essential tasks such as shopping and home maintenance and also social programs to address community isolation due to age, ability or cultural differences.

The corporate community support for NRCA also increased and expanded. Last year, some 20 corporates joined the NRCA staff on a wide variety of projects. One close to my heart is the Christmas hamper packing and delivery to approximately 300 people in the area. It involves a massive task in organisation, which is made much easier by the army of people that Helen and her staff coordinate to help. Helen's contribution to the North Ryde Community Aid and her dedication and caring for the Ryde community was significant. I wish her every success in her next endeavours.

The generous spirit of our community was also on display last Saturday at the Salvation Army's launch of the Red Shield Appeal. The Salvos do a great deal for us, and the Red Shield Appeal is its signature fundraising drive which helps to fund its vast network of social and community services. In a typical week the Salvos provide more than 17,000 beds for those suffering homelessness, 40,000 meals for the hungry, and more than 1,400 financial counselling sessions and refuge for more than 100 women affected by domestic violence using money raised through the Red Shield Appeal. I encourage everybody to get involved and volunteer on the Red Shield Appeal.

I commend Minister Goward, who recently visited my electorate for the official sod-turning of the Ivanhoe Estate, which was a social housing complex with about 300 residents. We have changed it from a social housing estate to a community by ensuring we meet some key objectives. We have salt-and-peppered the estate, by which I mean that the development will have a combination of social and affordable housing together with non-social housing. We will not lump one group of people together but mix different groups together. That will provide far better outcomes. The real genius of the Ivanhoe Estate is that we will build a school, which we put out for tender. I am grateful that the Catholic Church will be building that school. It will let us know by the end of the year whether the demographics show that we need a high school, a primary school or both. The estate will also include an aged-care facility, two childcare centres and a gymnasium. We are transforming the estate into a community. I am very proud of the Government's work on the project.

KAMAY BOTANY BAY NATIONAL PARK

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (18:00): In 1770, 248 years ago last weekend, in what is now Kamay Botany Bay National Park at Kurnell, James Cook brought the *Endeavour* to anchor and became the first recorded European to set foot on the east coast of Australia. Two years out from the 250th anniversary of Cook's landing, I am thrilled that the Hon. Scott Morrison and I have each secured half of \$50 million from the Federal and State governments for a major upgrade of the park, including new ferry wharves at Kurnell and La Perouse and a new visitor centre. The Prime Minister, the State environment Minister, La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council Chair Noelene Timbery, Deputy Chair Raymond Ingreby and Sutherland Shire Mayor Carmelo Pesce attended last weekend's announcement.

Proper recognition of the historic site has been a longstanding passion of mine. I am old enough to remember the 200th anniversary of Cook's landing in 1970 and seeing the Queen when she came to the shire. I have pushed for funding since my election in 2011 and spoke in my inaugural speech about the under-recognition of Kurnell. Previously as environment Minister, I commissioned the community reference panel of stakeholders and the draft master plan is now being exhibited for public comment. I thank all contributors and stakeholders in that master planning process, especially the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council.

I thank the Premier, the Treasurer and the environment Minister for their support of the project. I also thank the Prime Minister and my colleague the Hon. Scott Morrison for his passionate advocacy. I encourage everyone interested to look at the draft master plan on the Office of Environment and Heritage website, which is available for comment until 2 August. The project represents an outstanding opportunity to upgrade a site of major national significance to commemorate our Indigenous culture and history, Cook's story, the meeting of two cultures, our modern heritage and a shared future.

For nearly 250 years, the history of the first Australians and European settlers has been intertwined. The first meeting at Kurnell was not a happy one. The history has, at times, been stained by violence and conflict. This project simply cannot and will not be white triumphalism or present a white blindfold view of the world. Instead, I hope it is an important part of reconciliation. Facts do not change but how we interpret and commemorate them can. I expect that in 2020 the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the meeting of two cultures will be very different from the one in 1970. There are different views of history, but the fact that history is controversial does not mean we should neglect a site such as Kurnell. The worst thing to do would be to say that it is too hot to handle and turn our back on it. If it encourages interest and discussion about history, that is a good thing. As a country, we do not know where we are going unless we know where we have been.

The anniversary will be an important occasion to reflect upon our history and commemorate the first Australians, who, for several millennia before Cook's arrival, cultivated a tradition built on spirituality, kinship and synergies with our unique natural environment. Today, it remains as our most ancient enduring culture. It will also give us an opportunity to commemorate a highly skilled cartographer who later became known as Captain Cook. During three voyages between 1768 and 1779, Cook sailed tens of thousands of kilometres in previously unmapped parts of the world. His contributions to navigational techniques and scientific inquiry were monumental.

Cook embodied the culture of scientific inquiry and of enterprise that characterised eighteenth century England. It is a chance to commemorate the start of our modern story. Cook was the forerunner of a European settlement that endowed us with fundamental rights and freedoms that have been the bedrock of Australian society. This will be a chance to reflect on our history with the same critical eye and inquisitive spirit that defined James Cook's voyages so that our history may inform our progress. It is a chance to examine that initial contact. It is a chance to examine interwoven stories since, to reaffirm our commitment to reverse wrongs of the past, to celebrate the achievements of all cultures and to let all Australians continue to develop a vision for a positive, shared and reconciled future.

LIVERPOOL CITY NETBALL ASSOCIATION FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (18:05): On Friday 27 April the Liverpool City Netball Association, known as LCNA, held a celebration of its fiftieth anniversary at the Liverpool Catholic Club. Since its establishment, the LCNA has provided the chance for large numbers of people to be involved in netball in the broader Liverpool area. The LCNA is an important part of the Liverpool region. The organisation represents a massive amount of volunteering by local residents and supporters. The association played at Woodward Park in 1969, moved to Collimore Park in 1976 and then back to Woodward Park in 2008, with 32 new courts.

I should acknowledge a number of members of the association's executive. Estelle Lawler is currently the association's secretary and has been involved in the association for 40 years. The current president is Cath Penning, who has been the president for 20 years. Prior to that she was secretary for 20 years, commencing in 1978. Kath Whitely is a life member and current vice-president. In 1969 she was elected treasurer, in which position she remained until she was elected president from 1974 to 1989, then vice president until 2007, and then treasurer again until 2017. I should also particularly acknowledge the role of the late Barbara Long, who moved to Green Valley in 1963 and was critical in establishing the organisation of netball in the Liverpool area.

For the anniversary itself, acknowledgement should be made of events coordinator Rachel Stoddert. Present LCNA clubs include: Prestons, Miller, Mounties, Liverpool Catholic Club, Hawks, Smithfield Catholic Club, Sydney United, OLMC, Cabra Vale, Canley Heights, Infusion and Bossley Park Netball. Several of these clubs have existed for 50 years. Prestons club has not only existed for 50 years, but also has been part of the LCNA since the formation of the association. The club was formed in 1968 at Prestons Public School. Roy and Barry Downs, Barbara Potter, Ian Long, Billy Merchant and Pat Kusack are acknowledged as being among those who gave reality to the hope of establishing a club. The club benefited from the early financial generosity of Bob Ingham. The club's colours are maroon and gold—the colours of Prestons Public School. The club currently has 14 life members: Margaret Robson, Wendy Burns, Angie Clarkson, Lorraine Agostino, Jean Carter, Annette Hyslop, Ethel Melville, Frances Morgan, Kris Morris, Marjory Osborne, Barbara Potter, Linda Radnai, Sheila Sikorski and Libbie Young.

Another longstanding club is Miller. Miller Sports Club was formed in 1966. At that time it fielded teams in soccer, rugby league, softball and netball. By 1968 it had become Miller Netball Club, and 50 years later it is still going strong. As its history records, "It was hard to believe that after that first enrolment day at Miller High School we would still be in existence today, and this is thanks to the hard work and dedication of a few faithful workers and many volunteer members." Mounties Netball Club—then known as Mt Pritchard and Community Netball Club—was formed in 1968 and joined LCNA in 1969. The co-founders were Norma Smith and Margaret Shannon. It commenced with seven teams and at one point this increased to 30 teams. Life members of Mounties, who are also life members of LCNA, include Cath Penning, Kath Whiteley, Robyn Low and Maria Wakefield.

Liverpool Catholic Club is another important club, having commenced in 1972. It is now one of the largest netball clubs in the association. Life members of this club include Jan Baverstock, Shirley La Rance, Yvonne Jones, Maureen Murray, Kerry Booth, Jan Cleary, Julie Bradley, and Catherine and Cheryl Page. I note that the club's current treasurer, Catherine Coleman, brought up her fortieth playing year in 2008. Former Australian player Jo Morgan began her netball career with Liverpool Catholic Club Netball. But Liverpool Catholic Club is not the only member club of the association whose players went on to bigger and better things.

On the night of the fiftieth anniversary celebration, for example, one of the special guests was Kristiana Manu'a who, having played with LCNA, was named in 2017 in the inaugural Giants netball team for the Suncorp Super Series. Because of injury, her playing debut was postponed to this year. As was said of her on the night of the fiftieth anniversary, "Kristiana has always called Liverpool home, she works hard promoting the game within the community and works even harder on being ruthless on the court." Mounties can claim to have been represented at State level by three players—Julie McCarthy, Donna Power and Suzanne Brown. The largest club in the association currently is Moorebank Sports Netball Club, which fields between 32 and 40 teams every year. It started in 1970 with just five teams.

The association and its clubs are an important part of Liverpool that I have known and been associated with for many years. Indeed, I remember attending as a newly elected alderman at its twentieth anniversary event, held in 1988 at the Roma Classic in Northumberland Street. I have been to a plethora of its events since, including its thirty-fifth anniversary gala day. The fiftieth anniversary booklet says this about the LCNA:

Netball is not simply a game, it's a passion, and if not for that passion we wouldn't be here tonight celebrating this amazing milestone of LNCA's 50th anniversary. Over the past 50 years, Liverpool City Netball Association has provided the opportunity for thousands of people to participate in the game of netball which extends beyond just playing to anyone who has contributed. To Liverpool both past and present you should be congratulated as well, for like all things it takes a team of dedicated people to achieve what Liverpool has achieved in 2018.

Special thanks were given to families, umpires coaches, managers and executives of clubs. I also particularly acknowledge the work of current secretary Estelle Lawler and her long-term involvement. It was a pleasure to be at the event. The association has provided an invaluable service to Liverpool.

MIRANDA ELECTORATE SPORTS CLUBS

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:10): I speak today about three local sporting clubs in the Miranda electorate that were successful through the New South Wales Government's 2018 Local Sport Grant Program, which has provided \$50,000 to each New South Wales electorate to fund local sporting projects. The funding provided can go toward the improvement of club facilities, training development, new equipment or the facilitation of sport events. Sport is the lifeblood of the Miranda electorate. It is important for our community to invest in grassroots clubs and encourage people of all ages to stay active. On weekends, the sounds of people playing sport and spectators cheering on their teams can be heard from nearly every park in the Shire. Investing in local sport is also essential to nurture up-and-coming athletes, as well as maintaining the health and fitness of all members of our community.

On 18 April I was joined by the Minister for Sport to announce the successful applicants of the 2018 Local Sport Grant Program. We visited St Joseph's Junior Rugby League Football Club—the Joeys—Kirrawee Kangaroos Football Club and Sylvania Bowling Club, all of which will undertake improvements to their facilities thanks to this additional funding. The maximum grant of \$20,000 was awarded to the Joeys for the provision of a fence around their home ground, Kareela Oval. The fence will improve the overall safety of children and parents by preventing footballs being kicked out of the grounds during games and training.

It was great for the Minister and I to throw a ball around with a few of the Joeys players, and talk to them about the importance of this new fence, and how it will improve their weekend sport and training experience. The Joeys executive has been diligent in upgrading its club facilities in line with the needs and expectation of parents and players, and this fence is an important part of the ongoing upgrades. I acknowledge the following people for their hard work and thank them for bringing this important project to my attention: president Michael Evans, senior vice president Peter Matheson, secretary Nichole Mayne, treasurer Ray Kennedy, registrar Peter Sertori, general manager seniors Michael Schembri and general manager juniors Paul Vanderwert.

Kirrawee Kangaroos Football Club was successful in securing \$12,000 towards the installation of a roller shutter system to improve security and weatherproofing for its clubhouse. During the visit, the Minister and I had the pleasure of kicking the ball around with the club players. It was obvious how passionate the kids were about the sport and their club. This funding ensures that the Kangaroos can continue to grow its club and that the clubhouse is protected from weather conditions and antisocial behaviour. The grant has provided the additional funding that the Kangaroos needed to start these much-needed improvements for a better sporting experience. The funding would not have been possible without the commitment from the Kangaroos' executive and I commend them for bringing this worthy project to my attention: president Tim Fitzgerald, vice president Greg Sharkey, secretary and registrar Kelly Manna and treasurer Matthew Kirby.

Sylvania Bowling Club was also successful in the 2018 Local Sport Grant Program, receiving \$5,000 towards upgrading existing shade canopies and purchasing new uniforms. The new uniforms will facilitate a sense of belonging and encourage participation in sport for seniors, while celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the original Sylvania Bowling Club playing green and clubhouse. The upgrade of the existing shade canopies will provide much-needed respite from the sun in the warmer months and it is essential that these are easily accessible and reliable to use by all participants. During our visit, members of the Sylvania Bowling Club showed off their new uniforms and tried to teach me how to play lawn bowls. I have to say that the Minister picked it up very quickly, but it was a bit more of a challenge than I expected.

I thank members of the Sylvania Bowling Club executive for their dedication and for bringing this important project to my attention: president Alan Wick, secretary Peter Sprötte, treasurer Keith Howell, vice president Max Galvin, bowls secretary Reg Harris, directors Michael Newton, Sandra Constable, John Maxwell and Tony Robins. We all know that sport is incredibly important for health and wellbeing, but it also encourages social engagement and brings our community together. I thank the Minister for Sport for facilitating the Local Sport Grant Program and congratulate all the clubs and executive committees that were successful this year.

LISMORE ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Mr THOMAS GEORGE (Lismore) (18:14): I have said many times that I am lucky to represent some of the best country towns and villages in the State. Today I take the opportunity to speak about one of those towns, the City of Lismore, and what the Government is doing to fund infrastructure that improves the lifestyle and wellbeing of its residents. Lismore City is the regional centre of my electorate and is the business, education and

cultural hub of the Northern Rivers. Lismore is renowned as a sporting centre with fantastic facilities, committed local clubs and strong affiliations with State and national sporting organisations.

Earlier this year I had the pleasure of welcoming the Deputy Premier to Lismore to announce \$4.95 million in New South Wales Government funding to upgrade the Albert Park Baseball Complex to enhance the current playing and spectating facilities, thereby continuing to attract regional, national and international baseball events to New South Wales. With more high-profile baseball events coming to Lismore, the region will enjoy a significant boost to the local tourism sector and economy. The New South Wales Government is committed to investing in Lismore and providing residents with improved facilities the whole region can enjoy. Grants of almost \$1 million to Lismore City Council from our Stronger Country Communities Fund will go towards recreational facility enhancements at Kadina Park, with the northern area of Lismore Park receiving upgraded amenities and club facilities including an integrated pathway, and Thistles Park, the home of the Thistles Soccer Club, is improving the field lighting and relocating the practice cricket facilities to Hepburn Park.

In addition to the grants from the Stronger Country Communities Fund, I was proud to announce \$170,000 for local business chambers and councils to promote the region and bring tourism dollars back into the community through the Northern Rivers regional marketing program, which was much appreciated following the floods we endured 12 months ago. A grant of \$20,000 through the Flagship Event Fund was received for Lismore's annual street food festival. Eat the Street was held earlier this year and it was a great success. I had the pleasure of attending and viewed the showcase of our local food vendors and producers. The New South Wales Government is committed to delivering the infrastructure that northern New South Wales needs to prosper, and this is evident through its continued investment in our community. Lismore's regional library recently received \$198,000 towards refurbishing its library with mobile shelving, smaller service desks and comfortable furniture. This refurbishment will provide much-needed spaces for youth, quiet study, a children's area, browsing and programs.

The improvements I have mentioned are simply a handful of the most recent projects that are being delivered in the City of Lismore. Upgrading the Lismore Base Hospital, which features the commencement of a second tower, was made possible by total funding of approximately \$400 million over the next 18 months. Upgrading the Pacific Highway, establishment of the Lismore solar farm, support for the Lismore Regional Gallery, and funding for organisations through the Community Building Partnership program are other projects to which the Government is proud to have contributed. The Berejiklian-Barilaro Government has been very generous to the Lismore electorate and tonight I recognise that, as a member who has the privilege of representing some of the most beautiful parts of the State.

TRIBUTE TO PETER BAKER

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (18:19): I bring to the attention of the House the loss of a great member of the Wollondilly community and pay my respects. Like many people in my local area, I have been saddened by the passing of Peter Baker. Peter was a friendly and affable bloke, who loved life and a laugh as well as politics—as would be known by many from within the Liberal Party, which Peter represented as a delegate to State council with his wonderful wife, Jan. Peter was a regular at branch meetings and country conferences, making many lifelong friends. Peter was always willing to share a joke and, equally, his opinions on a broad range of topics, for which many of us were thankful. He was many things over the course of 70 or so years of life. Born late in 1944 in London, Peter was a survivor of the severe bombing by the Germans in World War II. In fact, as legend has it, he was born under the stairs of his house on 27 December 1944, a day after the very heavy Boxing Day blitz during the V-2 missile campaign.

As a child, Peter suffered recurring bouts of pneumonia, which were believed to be the result of playing in the dusty ruins of bombed-out buildings. Seeking a healthier environment for him and his siblings, his parents, Jim and Lydia, packed up the family and moved them to the coast, where they bought a coffee shop. The clean sea air obviously agreed with young Peter, as his health recovered to the point where he became quite the sportsman, winning medals for cross-country running and also playing in the school rugby team and performing to a high level in cycling. Apart from being gifted in the sporting arena, he was also a very bright dux student. In fact, he was a brilliant mathematician. He also helped his family at home, on occasions preparing dinner when his mum was out working as a home help nurse, and he took up a newspaper delivery route to bring in some extra money.

Peter's academic career continued beyond the schoolyard. He obtained a degree in pure maths and electronics from the London Polytechnic when he was in the Royal Navy. His navy career saw him serve aboard HMS *Hampshire* and HMS *Belfast*, helping design missile systems. He also saw active service, receiving commendations and achieving the rank of lieutenant commander. Peter's first marriage produced three children—the third of whom was born in Australia. Peter later met his second wife, Jan—a very good friend of mine—to

whom he was married in 1976. At this stage, I would like to share Jan's recollection of her first meeting with Peter, which I think sheds light on the character he was. Jan said:

My first encounter with Peter was in 1975 when I worked for 3 days in my new job.

A dark haired man wearing burnt orange stovepipe trousers, a white shirt and psychedelic tie approached me and leant at my desk.

He asked "What's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?"

Looking up from my desk I replied "I'm busy right now but you can come and talk to me anytime".

Three weeks later he proposed and we were married 40 years.

During the last week of his life the last joke I heard was when a nurse said to Peter: "I bet you had a girl in every port when you were in the Navy?"

Peter looked up at her and smiled and nodded, and said "Of course!"

Peter was always politically incorrect, very British, and best—the life of the party.

I had many opportunities to observe Peter when he was absolutely the life of many parties. Jan went on to state:

He was deemed "good value" by many a political friend, material things never mattered to him. He would give you the shirt off his back if he thought you needed it more than he did.

Peter formed lifelong friends wherever he went, and the people at his funeral came from all walks of life and from every area of his life, from dog showing to community service, to volunteering, and the nursing home where he spent his last days. The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps and I had the honour of attending Peter's funeral—which was not the average funeral. We raised a glass of Peter's favourite drink to Peter. It was a beautiful service. Peter and Jan have four children, Peter, Stephen, Amelia and Christopher, who are also very much in our thoughts. Amelia shares Peter's strong affection for breeding and showing Rhodesian ridgebacks. Peter was a proud attendant at last year's Southern Highlands Kennel and Obedience Club's dog show—one of his last outings. He looked on proudly at the show for one last time while Amelia exhibited their wonderful-looking dogs.

His volunteer work is also something of which he can be proud. The Baker family is well known among organisations like the Salvation Army, Meals on Wheels and the Hill Top War Memorial Hall, where his funeral was held. His naval career also stood him in good stead. He was invited to become a volunteer at Sydney's Maritime Museum where he took the public on highly entertaining and informative tours of the destroyer that was on display. Peter's life was rich and colourful; it informed the sort of person he was. We are all made a little poorer by the loss of characters like Peter. I again extend my condolences to his family and friends.

HAY WAR MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL ANZAC DAY SERVICE

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (18:24): In the week after Anzac Day it is fitting to recognise an outstanding and unique school in my electorate: Hay War Memorial High School. It is my understanding that it is the only war memorial high school in Australia. On Anzac Day it was my absolute pleasure to attend a very moving service at the high school. I congratulate school captains Eddie Jones and Mikayla McCartney on their insightful addresses in the Anzac Day service. The meaning of Anzac Day is woven into the DNA of this school—for example, a couple of years ago Mikayla went on a school excursion to France where she attended the sod turning of the John Monash Centre at Villers-Bretonneux. That centre was recently officially opened. The Hay War Memorial High School opened on Anzac Day 1923. The school is a daily reminder of the contributions made by our Australian service men and women.

The school was built as a war memorial to honour the extraordinary commitment made by the citizens of the Hay district in World War I. I note that in World War I Hay had one of the highest per capita enlistment rates in Australia. Sadly, 133 of the 700 people who volunteered from the Hay district never returned. The names of 20 of those people appear at the Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux, where 10,773 names of soldiers of the Australian Infantry Forces with no known graves who were killed between 1916 and 1918—from when the Australian forces arrived in France and Belgium until the end of the war—are listed. The school motto is: For so much, what shall we repay? On either side of the main entrance to the high school building are marble tablets on which names of those who fought in the Great War are inscribed. Inside the school are honour rolls for all the major twentieth century conflicts.

The school museum, which houses both war memorial and school exhibits, is open to the public during school hours. That museum is curated by school and the community. I encourage anyone who visits Hay to visit that outstanding museum. They should also take a look at the Dunera Boys museum at the train station, which has a collection of objects from prisoner of war camps and the HMT *Dunera*, an English ship that brought Italian and German people here—they were our enemies at that time. The story goes that they had better food than the people guarding them because they were all chefs from the best hotels in London, including the Ritz and the Carlton hotels. Another interesting place is the Hay Gaol, where Lieutenant Edgardo Simoni escaped through a very narrow gap and travelled the entire length of the Murrumbidgee River down to the Murray River. He lived off the land and got all the way to Melbourne before finally being captured. I digress.

On Anzac Day the address was made by recently retired Hay local Major Ben Jarrett. He was very appreciative of the community support that continues to grow each Anzac Day. But his challenge to all in attendance that day was to extend that support to the other 354 days of the year. These days we know more about the impact that military operations have on people. We have always been aware of the physical injuries, particularly those that are visible. Indeed, as Ben said, they are generally a "clean-cut assessment". But in recent years our awareness has grown in the area of mental health. This is particularly so in post-traumatic stress disorder, which affects so many of our veterans. Ben highlighted the number of veterans that are homeless. I note that in a motion the member for Manly mentioned some of those figures.

Earlier this week when I spoke to Ben about what the Government can do to help veterans he was complimentary of the New South Wales Veterans Employment Program. He said that, according to those he has spoken to, it has been a marvellous success. He suggested ways to improve the program, and I will take those suggestions to the Government. The comment that stuck with me was from Major Jared who spoke of the supportive crowds that we see heading to Anzac Day dawn services but said that it was incredibly troubling that those crowds often walk past veterans who are sleeping rough and are homeless. Lest We Forget.

BAYSIDE COUNCIL ANTI-HOONING TASKFORCE

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (18:30): I raise a major problem experienced by my community, that is, car and bike hooning, particularly along the beautiful foreshore of Botany Bay, and speak about my efforts together with Bayside Council to establish a dedicated anti-hooning task force. For far too long different levels of government have been passing the buck and failing to take effective and united action to make our local roads safe and welcoming, particularly at local destinations such as Brighton-Le-Sands. I am pleased that Bayside Council recently resolved to establish a dedicated anti-hooning task force, with the intention of bringing together the resources of our local and State authorities to overcome barriers in combating this issue.

Unfortunately, due to the mixed pattern of responsibility that overlays our road network and the many offences committed by irresponsible drivers which cannot adequately be addressed by police, the laws and regulations we have in place play right into the hands of the hoons. The limited ability of the Environment Protection Agency to enforce breaches of noise controls and the inadequate measures police are provided to issue on-the-spot penalties for defective vehicles mean that hoons get off scot-free when they should have their vehicles impounded. It is embarrassing to me that car and bike hoons know that if they are caught by the police with their vehicle muffler removed or with a similar antisocial modification to their vehicle they will almost certainly have the opportunity to fix the problem before having their vehicle checked. After a quick fix and a visit to Roads and Maritime Services to check that the vehicle is defect free, they are back on the road causing trouble.

I have spoken at length on this issue with the Minister for Police. I thank the Minister, the member for Dubbo, for taking the time to visit Brighton-Le-Sands and to inspect firsthand the problems experienced by my community. At the time, the Minister accepted a petition signed by 10,000 local residents from the local area. I appreciate the additional police resources we received to combat hooning over the summer period. However, it will take more than extra cops on the beat to tackle this problem, and I believe Bayside Council's dedicated anti-hooning task force is the platform we need to take united action on this problem.

Bayside Council will be reaching out to State authorities, including local area commands, highway patrol, the Environment Protection Agency, Roads and Maritime Services, as well as State members of Parliament, community groups and residents. I kindly request that the relevant ministers encourage their agencies to support this worthwhile project. I note the recent correspondence from the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. While I appreciate that a request has been made to Roads and Maritime Services to consider a red light speed and safety camera at the intersection of Bay Street and The Grand Parade at Brighton-Le-Sands, I encourage the Minister to intervene and direct her department to take action at this location. Not only is this a major issue of community safety, with several pedestrian crashes and a number of fatalities within a block of this location, it is also an issue of faith in government.

These are not new problems. Local residents in my area have a right to ask why successive governments have not been able to stop something as simple as car hooning and why in many cases progress has been invisible or non-existent. I am pleased to report that new roundabouts are being constructed on Moate Avenue, which is one of the major problem roads near The Grand Parade. I look forward to seeing the Anti-Hooning Taskforce continue to chip away at the issue with practical measures such as this. However, the problem will only be resolved if all relevant authorities are actively involved. I once again thank the Government for its work on this issue and ask for its assistance in dealing with this problem once and for all.

GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY TRANSPORT CORRIDORS

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (18:34): It may come as no surprise to members in the Chamber that my private member's statement this evening relates to an issue that has concerned the people of Western Sydney since the end of March when the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight and the Minister for Western Sydney announced a range of proposed transport corridors that are designed to rip up some parts of greater Western Sydney. We have heard much debate in the community, and even in this Chamber this week, about the impact of the Government's proposed Bells Line of Road—Castlereagh Connection, particularly on the communities of Castlereagh, Llandilo and Cranebrook in the electorate of Londonderry. Those people straightaway took the opportunity to form themselves into a very powerful community organisation to fight the Government's attempt to gazette a corridor that would rip up hundreds and hundreds of homes, when there is an alternative—a gazetted freeway known as the "Castlereagh Freeway" that has been in existence since 1951.

I, as the local member, and local councillors have attended not one meeting with fewer than at least 400 or 500 residents present. We surely cannot ignore their pleas to save their family homes and their businesses. It is one of the last remaining semirural parts of Sydney. Market gardeners who provide food from part of the food bowl of Sydney, people working hard to contribute to the local economy and people generating jobs are under threat from a government that wants to gazette a corridor without any funding for the road it proposes. Unfortunately, the same announcement included proposals for a range of other corridors. I also draw attention to a group of residents in the suburb of Orchard Hills, in the neighbouring electorate of Mulgoa, who have raised concerns with me—because I do not think they are having much luck with their local Government member—about the proposal for the North-South Rail Link.

These residents are not opposed to the rail link, and nor are the State and Federal governments or the State or Federal oppositions. Everyone agrees we need the North-South Rail Link. In fact, I am proud to have served on Penrith City Council when it called for this rail link—before it was trendy to do so. But the North-South Rail Link corridor that the Government proposed in its very undercooked transport corridor announcement took all the residents of Orchard Hills by surprise. The corridor will take out a small community in Orchard Hills, and they are not prepared for that at all. Residents are pleading with the member for Mulgoa to listen to their concerns and to seriously lobby her own Government to amend the corridor to travel alongside the orbital proposal. Many communities are concerned about the transport corridor for the orbital—the Government has not announced a corridor that has not made hundreds of people concerned for their homes and their families.

The suggestion that the North-South Rail Link run alongside the orbital corridor seems to make sense. If that is not achievable, these residents have even provided an alternative solution: Perhaps the tunnel that connects St Marys station with Lansdowne Road in Orchard Hills could be continued and extended from Werrington directly to Patons Lane, avoiding all the homes that would potentially have to be acquired and the Patons Lane Resource Recovery Centre. I plead with the Government to listen to the communities of Western Sydney on this issue. It will be very dangerous for the Government if it does not do so. It has been a sham consultation.

The Government announced the draft corridors, saying they were proposed, and then other Government members said they were preserved. When the Government announces corridors for consultation and then sends Transport for NSW contractors to people's homes, saying, "Here is a letter with a pink line going through your property; here is an invitation to go and see a property expert", it is no wonder the communities of Western Sydney are up in arms and that even Liberal State and Federal members are against the proposal. We plead with the Government to listen to our concerns about these transport corridors and with the member for Mulgoa to listen to her constituents in Orchard Hills.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:39): Today I recognise and praise the people of the North Shore for the services and events celebrated on Anzac Day this year. On the sombre morning of 25 April I attended the North Sydney dawn service, and as with every service commemorating the sacrifice of the fallen, the experience was truly humbling. North Shore has a long and distinguished tradition of military service and is home to some of the longest serving military bases in the State. HMAS *Waterhen* at Waverton and HMAS *Penguin* at Mosman date from the 1930s and 1940s respectively, and their continued presence is felt and appreciated by the North Shore community. There were many services across the North Shore. I give my sincere thanks to all who took part in organising these tributes.

I attended the Kirribilli RSL Sub-Branch Sunday service held at the Kirribilli Club. I thank Mr Tom Richardson, OAM, President of the Kirribilli Club, and Mr David McDowell, President of the Kirribilli RSL Sub-Branch. I was joined by other speakers, including four local school students, Claire Guthleben, Sam Davis, Laura Furguson and William St Quintin; the mayor of North Sydney, Jilly Gibson; and Reverend Paul Dudley.

I also note the musical contribution of Tamara Bentsen who sang the national anthem supported by the Hornsby RSL Pipe Band.

The Mosman RSL Sub-Branch also provided our community with a Sunday service which I attended. I thank the president, Victor Danko, for his contributions to the day along with Rex Vidler, Reverend Tim St Quintin, Mr Peter Reid, Mr Vaughan Price, Ms Kris Myers, Neal Garrett and the Manly Band who played under the musical direction of Damian Butler. I also thank the Mosman RSL club, including the president, Mr Jim Malloch; vice president, Mr Andrew Clancy; treasurer, Mr Robert Maul; and directors, Mrs Jeanette Bruce, Mr John Dooley, Mr Roy Bendall and Mr Malcolm Munday; the Mosman Lions Club and the Mosman State Emergency Service for their contribution to the Mosman dawn service.

The North Sydney dawn service was a moving event, and I thank the North Sydney RSL Sub-Branch and the North Sydney Council for their support of the service. I was pleased to join Mr Geoff Watson, Mayor Jilly Gibson, Chief Petty Officer Mark Ham, Chaplain Richard Quadrio, Lieutenant Colonel Elisabeth Barnett and Mr Bronte Pollard, who made contributions to the service alongside me, as well as the bugler, Mr Jordan O'Brien. I note the efforts of patrons, Mr Trent Zimmerman, MP, and Mr Bob Walsh, as well as the president of the RSL sub-branch, Mr Alex Wilson, and Mr Peter Kendall. Later in the day our Anzacs were thanked at the Neutral Bay Club Anzac service, which was hosted by Malcolm Stradwick. I was joined once again by the Mayor of North Sydney, Jilly Gibson. I thank the Neutral Bay Club for the service they put on every year for our community.

Last weekend Cremorne Synagogue paid tribute to the Anzacs with a Saturday service led by Rabbi Chaim Koncypolski, Mr Ben Hoch, Mr Roger Selby—who gave a wonderful speech about two Jewish ex-servicemen who served during World War I—Mr Mike Swerdlin, and Adon Olam. Anzac Day deeply moves me and I treasure its observance every year. On Anzac Day we look to something more than ourselves. We forget our own busy lives and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. It is imperative that we cherish and honour the brave men and women who helped make our nation what it is today.

Like that of so many Australians, my family history is intertwined with the Anzac tradition and marked by service to our nation. My grandmother Edna served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in World War II. My grandfather David served as a Lancaster bomber pilot in World War II. He flew 31 missions over Nazi Germany and Europe and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service. It was a great honour for me to wear both of their medals at this year's Anzac services for the first time ever. My great-aunt Noala Chandler served as a nurse in World War II. It is these stories and the personal family histories of service that are mirrored in the stories of every Australian. We all have a significant story to tell and a significant connection to the Anzac tradition.

As I stood in silence at the North Sydney dawn service I reflected on what the Anzac story teaches us. It teaches us that our nation is unique, that where we have come from is important and that we all have a role to play. Anzac Day is not about venerating war or celebrating victory. It is about considering the challenges that we faced and learning from defeat. The values of mateship, courage and sacrifice are at the core of the Anzac story and are as much about the individual as they are our national identity. Each one of us can learn from the Anzacs what it means to serve the people around us. This spirit of self-sacrifice is what I was humbled to witness with many thousands of locals at the dawn service. I am proud to extol the people of the North Shore as those who remember in the most honourable and moving of ways. It is with great joy that I reaffirm that the community of North Shore remembers with integrity and reverence that the Anzac story will never be forgotten.

FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:44): On Wednesday 25 April communities across Australia came together to pay their respects and to honour and remember all Australians who served and died in the service of our great nation. On this day Anzac Day commemoration services were held throughout my electorate with a tremendous turnout by local residents. In light of the numerous organisations and community groups that host commemorative services on the day, we are fortunate that many of them start at staggered times to allow everyone in the community to attend. This provides us a unique opportunity to share in this solemn time with local residents and diggers throughout the electorate to honour those who served and to remember the sacrifices of our fallen.

It was my great honour to have attended several services alongside local diggers on the day at Cabra-Vale Diggers, Fairfield RSL, Guildford Leagues and Mounties, which all take great pride in hosting commemorative services each and every year. It was also great to see a number of aged and palliative care facilities starting to host commemoration services on Anzac Day to cater to those who would otherwise be unable to attend a dawn service or to march due to ill health. Anzac Day is an important time for our nation as we remember significant contributions made by Australians through the course of our country's brief history. On this day we recognise valiant efforts of our brave men and women who took the step and put their own lives on the line in order to

protect the Australia we all know and love today. Many diggers have paid the ultimate price and sacrificed all so we may enjoy our freedoms and continue living free from fear and tyranny.

It is always warming to see young families and schoolchildren in attendance at commemorative services. Every year we pass these traditions on to tomorrow's generation and instil the importance of remembering and honouring our fallen. Many members have spoken at length about the importance of the spirit of the Anzac, which embodies bravery, perseverance, sacrifice, endurance and mateship above all else. Over the past four years we have commemorated many historic milestones in our nation's history since the spirit of Anzac commemorations commenced in 2014. Throughout this time, the bravery and efforts of our diggers have been celebrated throughout our nation with commemorative services that have been growing in size each year.

As proud Australians, it is our duty to continue the legacy and ensure future generations know the true meaning and importance of Anzac. I am incredibly proud that the Anzac spirit is alive and well in Fairfield and that its significance will live on for generations to come. To all of the Australian and New Zealand troops who have served or are still serving in the armed forces today, I am sure I can speak for members on both sides in thanking them for their service. As long as we continue to instil the importance of tradition, the spirit of our Anzacs will never be taken for granted, nor will their sacrifices ever be forgotten. Lest we forget.

DRUMMOYNE ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoynes) (18:47): It was a great privilege to be part of the Anzac commemorations that honour those who have so selflessly served and fought for the freedoms we enjoy today. Anzac Day commemorates the anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli in 1915 that became the first major military battle fought by the Australian and New Zealand forces in the First World War. This year's celebration marked the end of the centenary during which we have remembered the fearless, the heroic and the fallen. The Anzacs embodied the very best of what defines our nation. The profound loss of soldiers in this battle that lasted eight months has shaped our national identity. The spirit of the Anzacs represents human qualities of courage, sacrifice and camaraderie. Anzac Day has now become a day on which we show our respect to all soldiers from Australia and New Zealand who are currently serving and those that have served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.

I ask the House to note the community's participation and pride in Anzac Day services across the State. It is always a real pleasure to see young families educate their children on the importance of Anzac Day. Across the many events I attended in the Drummoynes electorate, there were countless young people paying their respects—something that captures the very essence of being an Australian, which is to stand strong with our brothers and sisters who have made the ultimate sacrifice to defend our great nation. Anzac celebrations began in the Drummoynes electorate on Sunday 22 April with a dawn service at the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway in Concord West.

I have spoken many times about the importance of the Concord General Repatriation Hospital in this House. This hospital was originally established to administer medical treatment to returned service men and women. It is a very meaningful gesture to have the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway right next to Concord hospital and it makes Anzac Day services so much more special to our community because of that connection. At this dawn service I was proud to represent Premier Gladys Berejiklian and lay a wreath alongside Governor-General His Excellency the Hon. David Hurley and his wife, Linda. I thank the Sydney Local Health District and the staff at Concord hospital, particularly Alice Kang, for their tireless efforts in organising a successful event that paid our respects to our diggers. Following this, I attended an 11.00 a.m. service on Sunday at the Five Dock War Memorial at Five Dock Park, held by the Five Dock RSL Sub-Branch.

The service began with an Anzac march through Great North Road into Five Dock. It is important on days such as Anzac Day that we step away from the hustle and bustle of our hectic lives and reflect on the enormous sacrifices others have made. I am very proud of the large number of patriots in my community who attended the march and service in Five Dock. On Anzac Day three dawn services were held in my electorate—one at the Breakfast Point War Memorial, one at the cenotaph at the Canada Bay Council Chambers in Drummoynes and one at Concord RSL Club, where I was joined by the Federal member for Reid and Minister, the Hon. Craig Laundy, MP.

I make special mention of the Rotary clubs in my electorate—the Five Dock, Drummoynes, Concord and Breakfast Point Rotary clubs—for their assistance in coordinating Anzac Day services. I thank the Five Dock RSL and Concord RSL clubs for their tireless service in recognition of our Anzac soldiers. Finally, on behalf of the Drummoynes community, I thank soldiers past and present, and honour their contribution to the advancement of our great nation. On Anzac Day—indeed, every day—we stand proud of the selfless sacrifice our diggers have made by fighting for their nation in order to protect our way of life.

MAITLAND ELECTORATE JOB CUTS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (18:54): Tonight I raise a matter of grave concern to everyone in my community. Today we heard the news that the Minister for Finance, Services and Property, Victor Dominello, again has cut some 34 or 35 new jobs from Maitland. A campaign had already been undertaken by a Lithgow councillor and me to fight 50 jobs that were slated to be cut from the Office of State Revenue, 25 from Maitland and 25 from Lithgow. That campaign was successful but unfortunately it is now proposed that by the end of the year another 40 jobs will move to Gosford.

People who originally moved from Sydney to Maitland as part of the former Labor Government's decentralisation policy to put jobs into the regions will now have to move to Gosford. The price of housing in Gosford is triple that of Maitland. The alternative to moving is commuting to Gosford via the M1, which currently has an 80 kilometre speed limit due to roadworks, so the daily commute will be three to four hours. Of course, we no longer have a direct train service from Maitland to the Central Coast. With all the problems the people of Maitland have had to fight already, the news that some 34 staff from this office will lose their jobs, be made redundant or be sacked is just devastating.

The State Government and Maitland City Council have poured money into the levy bank in Maitland to make a new vibrant area for the community. The former Labor Government relocated the Office of State Revenue to that area in a great new building that is only about 10 years old to help drive the central business district economy. The small businesses in that area were to rely on those office staff to create jobs for our growing community. By Christmas those shopkeepers and small businesses—the accountants, lawyers, financial planners, photo shop owners and coffee shop owners—will have 74 or 75 fewer people wandering the streets doing their Christmas shopping and putting money into the community. The average cost of those wages, some \$65,000 to \$70,000 per person, adds up to millions of dollars being ripped out of our economy from a government that is completely heartless.

The Maitland area cannot afford to lose any more jobs from the public sector. This is not the only agency that has cut staff. Crown Lands has cut 11 staff. It has reduced its workforce to such an extent that it has moved out of its building into the building where the NSW Department of Primary Industries is located. There have been cuts to the Department of Family and Community Services. Departmental staff will be put on the scrap heap when the Hume Community Housing Association becomes the community housing provider. They may be able to get a job in their sector, but with a lower wage. Community Health Services has been cut by the Government. Maitland is the fastest-growing city outside of Sydney, yet the Government is ripping out jobs wherever it can. It is an absolute disgrace.

I call on the Minister for Finance, Services and Property to reverse this decision. I asked him about the 40 jobs relocating to Gosford, why none of them were being lost in the reorganisation—that was an election promise. I did not see the candidate for the Liberal Party in Maitland stand up in front of my community to say there were plans to rip 100 jobs from the community. We have saved 25 of those jobs, but another 34 or 35 will be lost today. How were those staff advised? Was there any consultation with the union? No. There are allegations that union members who have been speaking out and trying to advise the union of what is happening have been suspended with pay to keep them out of the place so that they cannot tell anyone what is going on. It is an absolute disgrace. It is a disrespect to those workers. It is an economic vandalism of a regional economy in our community and the Government should be ashamed. The Government should reverse it.

SHELLHARBOUR ELECTORATE ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:57): Once again I condemn the inaction of those opposite and express my support for the additional M1 on-and-off ramps at Dapto. Currently the M1 Princes Motorway near Dapto has no entry or exit ramps on the southern sides of Kanahooka Road or Fowlers Road, and no entry or exit ramps in either direction at Emerson Road. I remind the House that Dapto and West Dapto are one of the fastest-growing areas in New South Wales. Every day more and more people are settling in this area and building for their future. Yet, they are still unable to access critical paths between Dapto and key areas to the south such as Shellharbour, Kiama or Nowra. When travelling in this direction residents are forced to drive through Mount Brown on smaller residential roads before they are finally able to join the M1.

The only southbound and northbound entry ramps catering to Dapto and West Dapto residents are located in Mount Brown. Currently, the Emerson Road interchange passes over the M1 via a bridge, without providing any connection to the road below. The interchanges at Kanahooka Road and Fowlers Road provide only northbound entry and southbound exit ramps. This journey is a part of so many residents' daily lives. The fact that these ramps were never built beggars belief. These ramps are needed to effectively connect Dapto to the southern parts of the Illawarra and beyond. The land is there and so is the demand. It is time for the Minister to come clean with the community, establish a firm timetable and tell us when these critical road upgrades will be built.

There is a massive wave of development coming for Dapto and West Dapto, and it has started to break. Over the next 20 years—probably less—Dapto will become a mini-city, with another 20,000 dwellings and more than 50,000 people calling the area home. The road infrastructure in the area is not meeting basic standards as it is, and it is only going to get worse. The New South Wales Government has a responsibility to ensure that Dapto's infrastructure keeps pace with the expected population growth, but it is failing. Dapto's access problem is worsening each and every day. It is a massive oversight on the part of this Government that the issue has not been rectified already. That being said, the need for these ramps is not news to the RMS. In fact, according to the Roads and Maritime Services' website, it has been in the "preliminary investigations" stage of this project since June 2015. It is now May 2018. It has been three years and we have not seen an ounce of action.

Earlier, back in 2014, the Government identified these additional ramps as "necessary" in the Illawarra Infrastructure Growth Plan. Despite their being considered necessary four years ago, no real steps have been taken to deliver the project. Those opposite have spent 1,000 days looking busy and talking about upgrading the M1, shuffling papers from one side of the desk to the other, from Dapto to Figtree, but they still have not delivered a single study or design. This project is as far off as it has ever been. I have been calling for these desperately needed on- and off-ramps since 2013. Whilst it does not seem to have made a difference as yet, I am not giving up. Labor committed to these upgrades as part of the 2015 election campaign. Those opposite have also said they are necessary.

If those opposite concede that Dapto needs these ramps—and they have made that concession—then they now need to get on with the job. It is one of the fastest-growing suburbs in New South Wales. The upgrades are critical to the livability of Dapto, West Dapto and the local area. Residents need these on and off-ramps. It is not the first time this Government has put Dapto dead last in its priorities, but that does not make it less shocking or unacceptable. It is time the Government finally got on with the job. It has been stuck in stage one preliminary investigations for this project for three years. Everyone in Dapto is sick of this Government pandering to their concerns without delivering anything. It happened with the threatened closure of Dapto dogs and there has been a lack of consultation regarding the West Dapto jail.

I call on those opposite to abandon the blatant disregard for the residents of Dapto and finally build these much-needed additional M1 on- and off-ramps at Kanahooka Road, Fowlers Road and Emerson Road. I call on the Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast, and member for Kiama, Gareth Ward, to publicly support my campaign for these on- and off-ramps at these roads. We all know the member for Kiama loves a photo opportunity; it is time for him to deliver some good news for the people of Dapto.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:02
until Tuesday 15 May 2018 at 12:00.**