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Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 9 August 2018

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 9 August 2018

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery high school students from China. I hope you enjoy your visit to the New South Wales Parliament this morning.

[Notices of motions given.]

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2018-2019

Debate resumed from 8 August 2018.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (10:12): I pick up from where I left off yesterday, when I was giving an insight into the fantastic budget and some of the investments that have taken place in and around the electorate of Manly. I was speaking about the massive investment that we have experienced and the two fantastic redevelopments that are underway in the electorate of Manly, one being Manly Vale Public School, which is forecast for completion in early 2020. This project will include the removal of all the existing buildings, with the exception of the administration block, and the construction of 40 new classrooms, a new hall, a library, a canteen, covered outdoor learning areas and enhanced open spaces. The setting of this school in the bushland has made the build particularly challenging, but I congratulate Tina Lee, the principal, and the Department of Education on the work they have done with the contractors in ensuring that this project is underway and that the precious environment around the school is taken into account.

In addition, planning is well underway for Curl Curl North Public School, which will be opened in early 2021. The school's setting is low profile in the suburb and the project includes the removal of existing school buildings and the construction of some wonderful new permanent teaching spaces, a new hall, a new library, new administration buildings, refurbishment of a number of existing buildings and an upgrade of external play and sporting areas. It is a staged build, with the new classrooms, the administration buildings and the new library being delivered for the beginning of the first school term in 2020. I again congratulate the Department of Education and its asset and building team on working collaboratively with our local community to ensure that this build is done in a way that is sympathetic to the local surrounds and nearby houses.

Being Education Week, I am looking forward to welcoming the Minister for Education to Mackellar Girls school on Friday, where we will be inspecting the school's new science labs. Funding of \$250,000 has been provided for that school, which has allowed the science labs to be upgraded. It is a fantastic investment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics at that school, and I know that the principal is looking forward to the Minister's visit. Whilst I have mentioned the infrastructure investment in some of my local schools, it is equally pleasing to recognise that, as well as a record \$15 billion being spent on school funding, we are ramping up our recruitment drive to lure more quality teachers to New South Wales public schools. An additional 900 full-time teachers will be rolled out in schools across New South Wales to ensure the future success of our children and young people. Since coming to government, the New South Wales Liberals and Nationals have added 4,569 teachers to the public school system.

Last year I had the opportunity—and I will again shortly—to meet more than 50 of my local primary and high school teachers as part of the New Teacher Network program run by the fantastic Vicki Treble. Vicki was previously the principal of Balgowlah North Public School and under her leadership the school became a best-practice model for innovative and effective teaching and learning, resulting in a NSW Department of Education and Training Director General's Award for School Improvement in 2011. Vicki is exactly the sort of teacher and educational leader we should be inspiring to join the public school system. She is also one of the judges of the Bear Pit Public Speaking Competition, which was organised by my predecessor and is in its tenth year this year. In a couple of weeks, primary school kids from the electorate of Manly will come into this Chamber and enjoy doing some public speaking, and Vicki will be one of the judges of that competition. That will be good

fun. I thank Vicki for her work and her support of new teachers in the electorate of Manly and on the northern beaches. Investing in our teachers is very important, and this budget has certainly delivered on that.

The budget also featured historic firsts for education, including record funding to expand the number of new and upgraded schools, unprecedented investment to air-condition more classrooms, and universal preschool for three-year-olds. The Government will invest \$6 billion over the next four years to deliver more than 170 new and upgraded schools, including planning for more than 20 new projects. In another landmark initiative, under a \$197.8 million program, New South Wales will become the first Australian State to provide universal access to community preschool for three-year-olds. That brings the total spend on early childhood education to \$474.3 million in 2018-19, which is an incredible amount of money and demonstrates the Government's real and tangible support for early childhood education and education in general.

I now turn to mental health, which is a passion of mine and is important to people in the electorate of Manly. This is the biggest single investment in mental health infrastructure in Australia's history and will help us build specialist mental health units across New South Wales. People living with mental illness, their families and carers will benefit from record investment of \$2.1 billion in mental health services and infrastructure funding. This is a significant increase on last year and will ensure that critical mental health services meet the needs of people in New South Wales who are experiencing mental health issues.

The record mental health budget includes \$700 million statewide for mental health infrastructure programs to support the 10-year Living Well reform of mental healthcare in New South Wales. I had the opportunity recently to welcome Minister for Mental Health Tanya Davies to Manly. We met with two fantastic groups. One was the Manly Marlins Rugby Union Club, which has taken the initiative to organise a number of workshops for their players. They have a fantastic women's team but the workshops have been organised for the young men in the club to discuss mental health and to empower those players to understand and appreciate the challenges that mental health might represent for young men, including the issue of suicide—the incidence of which is, unfortunately, staggeringly high.

I was delighted to welcome the Minister for Mental Health to Manly. We met with some of the club members, who explained to her the benefits of this workshop and discussed how they might be able to expand the workshop and roll it out further in the years ahead. I commend the Manly Marlins—particularly the president of the club, Anthony Bergelin, and the committee—for the club's work in identifying a need and looking at what they can do about it.

Following that the Minister and I met with the Chief Executive Officer of Lifeline Northern Beaches, Dave Thomas. Mr Thomas was instrumental in organising the Lifeline Northern Beaches Classic, which is a surfing competition up and down the northern beaches. It encouraged high school surfers to take part. The underlying important aim of the competition was to have a discussion about, and raise awareness of, mental health. I am grateful to the Minister for her support of the Lifeline Northern Beaches Classic in 2019, for which she provided some funding on her most recent visit.

A modest amount of funding for the Lifeline classic and the millions of dollars being invested across the State in mental health demonstrate this Government's willingness to make sure that mental health is well and truly on the agenda and being dealt with, and that support is there for people across the board. For both the big things and the small things I congratulate the Minister on the work that this Government has done. I commend the budget that has been put aside for mental health and the solutions that funding will bring with it.

The budget also included the Creative Kids rebate. It is a new rebate which will allow young people to experience cultural and learning activities outside school and help ease the cost-of-living pressure for parents. The Active Kids rebate was a huge success in Manly. The 7,515 vouchers that were applied for in the Manly electorate ultimately would have amounted to more than \$750,000 in claims, which helps mums and dads encourage and support their kids to participate in organised sport.

The Creative Kids rebate is a fantastic addition to this year's budget. It makes me think of programs like TinkerTank, which supports young people who have a passion for robotics. The TinkerTank program allows them to compete to build robots, which encourages an understanding of the importance of coding, which will be a key skill for jobs in the future. The Creative Kids program will allow mums and dads to make sure that their children can participate in programs like TinkerTank and all sorts of other cultural and learning activities outside of school. I commend the Treasurer and the Government for that. There has been \$216 million of funding allocated over the next four years to support the Creative Kids rebate program. From 1 January, parents of school-age kids will be able to access both of these programs—the Active Kids rebate and the Creative Kids rebate—for every school-age child at Service NSW centres across the State.

Investment in community safety is a hallmark of this budget. Thanks to an \$89 million investment by this Government over the next four years, the community will be better protected from high-risk offenders who hold violent and extremist views. That investment will fund frontline officers, surveillance, compliance checking, intelligence gathering and other activities of the Terrorism High Risk Offenders Unit. This is a joint operation between Corrective Services NSW and NSW Police to manage these offenders. This is another significant investment to make sure that community safety is being dealt with effectively by this Government. [*Time expired.*]

Announcements

MEMBER FOR CAMDEN BOOK LAUNCH

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): I take this opportunity to remind all members that the Government Whip, the member for Camden, Chris Patterson, will launch a book about youth employment in Western Sydney in the Jubilee Room from 10.30 to 11.30 this morning. The guest speaker will be Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon. Troy Grant. I encourage all those who are able to attend to do so.

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2018-2019

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour) (10:25): In contributing to debate on this year's budget, I cast my mind back over the last 28 years in this place, including the 16 years I spent in Opposition. I want to compare those 16 years in opposition to the last 7½ years in government and the previous time in government. Regularly I hear in question time, via media and in comments from those opposite, Labor's disgust at non-attention from this Government. This is nothing but politics on behalf of the Labor Party. When the previous Coalition Government was in power—we lost government in 1995—the then Premier Bob Carr put a freeze on all capital works in regional New South Wales. He also promised, during the period that he held government, that an equivalent amount of funding to that which was spent on the Olympic Games would be spent in regional New South Wales to balance the books. That never happened.

In 1995 the Coalition Government had allocated forward funding for a new police station, court house and hospital in Coffs Harbour—in fact, a site had been purchased by the Coalition Government. The capital works freeze meant that the hospital in Coffs Harbour was not started in 1995, even though there was a desperate need for it. The plans that were put in place were severely curtailed. Eventually, in 2001, we got a hospital that barely met the needs of the people of Coffs Harbour. We have struggled with that ever since.

Labor has never met the needs of the people of the Coffs Harbour electorate. The police station and court house was put in the never-never. I remember speaking to a senior Minister in the Labor Government, whom I will not name for fear of embarrassing him. I asked, "Why on earth aren't we getting a new police station and new court house when the workload on the police was so desperate?" He said, "Mate, you're not in a marginal seat. Forget it: You're not even on the radar." The beauty of coming back into government in 2011 was that we were able to get a brand-new, state-of-the-art police station and court house in Coffs Harbour—over \$70 million worth. It was a matter of the Coalition Government providing for the wants and needs of regional communities, which were identified in 1995 and ignored for 16 years by a Labor Government.

When you look at the health spend across New South Wales in Labor electorates by the Coalition Government you see that it is providing for the needs and the wants of the people, not just in metropolitan New South Wales but also in regional New South Wales. When I look in the health spend in Western Sydney I think, "This is phenomenal." I do not envy it, because people in the regions need to be able to access specialist services and specialist hospitals in Sydney; I support that sort of funding for St George and other hospitals. My daughter had to go to St George Hospital a couple of years ago. Those specialist services, which cannot be provided in regional New South Wales, are able to be provided in Sydney because of proper financial management by a Coalition Government that cares about the wants and needs of all of the people of New South Wales, not just those in the metropolitan areas.

To that end, it is high time that the Labor Party, instead of playing political games, stood on the other side of the Chamber and thanked the Coalition Government for its competent management over the past 7½ years in providing the services and capital infrastructure that Sydney, New South Wales and their own electorates need. Labor members say, "Look, we haven't got an elevator on a station in Sydney," but over 16 years, what did they provide? Nothing. They allocated a lot of money, as the Metro showed us—\$500 million. I think there is more in today's paper about \$17-odd million that was spent in contracts, but nothing was ever delivered by the Labor Party when it was in government.

This Government is delivering new rail lines and new light rail to the city. Yes, the inconvenience of it all is a blessed nuisance, even for someone from the bush like me. But for those who have travelled in Europe, when the light rail is completed in Sydney, people will say, "We have a Government that has recycled assets and turned the asset base of this Government." While those opposite claim that we are selling the State, the reality is that because of the recycling of assets, we have more in value of assets now than what we had prior to the long-term lease and recycling of those assets back into the community.

I thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Health for an increased allocation to upgrade the Coffs Harbour hospital. Originally, some three or four years ago, we had planned \$156 million worth of redevelopment of the Coffs Harbour hospital. I took my case to the joint party room, the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister to say that \$156 million was not enough; what the Coffs Harbour electorate needed was \$194 million. I am extremely pleased and happy that in this budget, the allocation for the Coffs Harbour Health Campus is \$194 million. In fact, we will be able to provide services that are needed by people not only in the Coffs Harbour electorate but also the whole Coffs Coast region.

The Coffs Harbour Health Campus has the finest health staff that one would ever wish to see. It has a cardiac unit and a cancer care unit that is second to none. Whilst both units are probably operating at capacity, the \$194 million that has been allocated in this year's budget will enable the expansion of those services. There will be at least a doubling of the number of operating theatres in the Coffs Harbour Health Campus. I compliment the medical staff council, the doctors, management and board of directors for the information they have given to enable me to approach the Government and get the extra \$38 million required for the infrastructure rebuild at Coffs Harbour Health Campus, which will provide services until, I would guess, 2030 or beyond. The services it provides now are second to none.

The upgrade will enable the provision of timely care to people who have previously had to go on waiting lists outside of the area. For example, people have had to wait for treatment to hips and knees. Anyone with crook hips or knees—including the member for Tamworth and Parliamentary Secretary at the table, who has had a knee rebuilt once or twice—appreciates that unless they are able to get that done immediately, their health and quality of life suffer. Those who are fortunate enough to be able to access private health care can get it. But in the ageing communities on the North Coast, people who cannot afford private health care and rely on the public health system will, under our Government, be able to access that care in the very near future. That \$194 million will provide extra theatres and the opportunity to employ more staff, taking the stress away from current staff, doctors and the whole of the medical fraternity.

I thank Stewart Dowrick, Chairman Warren Grimshaw, Coffs Harbour Health Campus Chief Executive Officer [CEO] Theresa Beswick and Alan Tankel, previously medical staff council chairman and still on the medical staff council, for the opportunity they have given me to present the case properly and with all sincerity to the Government and have the Government respond. The plans are all but done; we are working through a few minor issues at the moment but we hope to be able to turn the first sod before the end of this year. Within the next 18 months to two years, I hope to see it completed and providing a phenomenal boost to the health care of people on the Coffs Coast and in the surrounding areas. The specialists provided by the Coffs Harbour health care catchment cover from Armidale to Kempsey. Kempsey, Macksville and Clarence have received good allocations for their health funding and health infrastructure funding. The services provided by the Coffs Harbour Health Campus support those areas as well, so it is a very large catchment. Again I thank the Government for its fine management over the past seven years which allows us to now provide them with those health services.

I turn to the issue of TAFE. This budget contains \$9 million of funding to complete the plumbing hub at the Coffs Harbour Education Campus. What do we hear from the other side? That we are running TAFE down; that TAFE is not running. In Coffs Harbour, we recently opened the SkillsPoint for hospitality and other services in relation to the expertise provided by the people at the Coffs Harbour TAFE campus. It is a great addition for people across the State to obtain the best possible skills in the hospitality area. In fact, Chef Mangan was at the launch; he has done some phenomenal things in relation to that.

Returning to the \$9 million spent on the plumbing, there is an old TAFE campus on Hardacre Street that has been split for many years. When the Coalition was last in government, it provided a brand-new joint education facility there, which is a university, senior high school and TAFE all operating with cross-accreditation out of the one campus. Those opposite and in the unions say, "They are going to flog off TAFE land across New South Wales." I suggest that once the new facilities are completed—the TAFE and education campus on Hogbin Drive—that land will be superfluous to the needs of TAFE NSW and there will be the opportunity to sell it. It could provide housing or a number of community facilities. I do not see a problem with selling that land to assist in paying for a brand-new facility that will provide education facilities for people from across New South Wales and especially within the Coffs Harbour electorate.

Everyone thinks their children need a university education. As I said the other day at the PointSkill opening with Minister Marshall, the vast majority of people who make the best money these days are people with trade skills and skills that have been provided by TAFE NSW. A lot of people with university degrees cannot get jobs, but I guarantee you will not find an electrician, plumber or carpenter who cannot get a job these days if they are a qualified tradesman. They probably will get paid at a far better hourly rate than university-educated people with social science degrees that really do not meet the needs or the wants of the community.

I encourage people to study at TAFE. I condemn the Labor Party for its bizarre criticism of TAFE, as it offers phenomenal courses in trade skills, such as in hairdressing and hospitality, and ancillary courses and provides facilities such as the new plumbing or mechanics hub at Coffs Harbour TAFE. The mechanics hub at the education campus is second to none. Any bloke who has an interest in a spanner would love to have that sort of facility in his backyard. TAFE courses are now provided via on-the-job training to carpenters, plumbers and mechanics in their workshops, rather than those businesses having to lose a day's work from an apprentice attending a TAFE facility. These days a trainer attends the workplace to accredit the apprentices.

The Government asked the industries, "How do you require these courses to be structured so that the graduates provide the services that you need for your business?" The Government has provided funding in the current budget for a number of Aboriginal projects, such as at Yarrawarrah where an Aboriginal corporation is providing education to young Aboriginals in the area. I compliment Clark Webb of Coffs Harbour, who is doing a great job educating young Aboriginal people in Aboriginal languages and culture and providing opportunities for them to hone their skills in order to create work opportunities.

Business interrupted.

Bills

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

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 3 May 2018.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight) (10:42): I speak in debate on the Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Incident Response Vehicles) Bill 2018, introduced by the member for Strathfield. As members would be aware, the Government has already taken action to improve safety for emergency workers who are stopped on the road or roadside, as well as for others who are present at the scene of an incident. In April the Governor approved the Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Stationary Emergency Vehicles) Regulation 2018 which introduces a new road rule and associated penalties to improve the safety of emergency workers on the road.

The stated objects of the regulation include: to require motorists to slow down and not increase speed when passing stationary emergency response vehicles, including police vehicles, ambulances and other emergency vehicles that display flashing blue or red lights; to require motorists to give way to any person on foot near such a vehicle; to provide that those requirements are offences and may be dealt with by way of a penalty notice; and to prescribe these as offences for which demerit points may be incurred. Debate on this bill comes down to the important issue of blue and red lights.

The Government's new rule will begin as a 12-month trial from 1 September 2018—I reiterate, a 12-month trial—following a comprehensive public education campaign which is currently underway. The new rule requires that drivers do not exceed 40 kilometres per hour when passing a stationary emergency vehicle displaying flashing red or blue lights. It requires also that drivers give way to any person on foot in the vicinity of an emergency vehicle displaying flashing lights and not increase speed until a sufficient distance past the vehicle so as not to cause danger to any person in the vicinity of the vehicle. The new rule will apply on all roads, including motorways, highways and freeways. However, if the road has a median strip and the stationary emergency vehicle is on the other side of the median strip the rule will not apply.

The decision to introduce this rule was based on input from the Incident Management Road Safety Working Group, which was established by the Government to review current regulations and risk management processes and consider all practical measures to increase safety around emergency situations on the road network. Representatives from the Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety, the Roads and Maritime Services, the NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Police, the NSW State Emergency Service, NSW Ambulance, the Volunteer Rescue Association and the motoring and heavy vehicle industry, including the NRMA, participated in the working group. Some of the key considerations when developing the new rule were to

ensure the approach does not introduce unacceptable risks and is simple and easy for drivers to remember and comply with.

Soon after the Government's rule was approved by the Governor in April, the member for Strathfield introduced the Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Incident Response Vehicles) Bill 2018 to Parliament. The Opposition's bill seeks to repeal the Government's regulation and replace it with a rule that is more complicated and confusing for motorists and ultimately create a situation that could be more dangerous to motorists. Limiting the rule to vehicles with a blue or red flashing light, as the Government has done, makes it easier for motorists to understand and comply with. In New South Wales, we already have a culture of giving way to vehicles with red or blue flashing lights. It has been part of our road rules for some time. However, the rule proposed by the Opposition also includes tow trucks and motor breakdown service vehicles displaying amber lights and captures many other vehicles that have an orange light.

The concern with including all these vehicles is that they are a small subset of a very large number of vehicles that may be fitted with amber lights. Requiring drivers to slow down to 40 kilometres per hour when passing some vehicles with flashing amber lights but not others has the real potential to confuse drivers, particularly from a distance when it is not easy to determine what type of vehicle has an amber light flashing. On 4 March 2018, the Leader of the Opposition stated that the Opposition's rule would apply to incident response vehicles, including the NSW Police, NSW Ambulance, St John Ambulance Australia, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Rural Fire Service and tow truck drivers.

There was no mention of roadside assistance vehicles. In May, the member for Strathfield introduced this bill requiring motorists to slow down for roadside assistance vehicles with amber lights. If claims of confusing road rules are to be levelled at anyone, they should be levelled at those opposite. The Government took the expert advice of the Incident Management Road Safety Working Group. Included in the working group were the Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety, the Roads and Maritime Services, the NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Police, NSW State Emergency Service, NSW Ambulance, the Volunteer Rescue Association and the motoring and heavy vehicle industry, including the NRMA. The Government's decision was determined by experts in the field for the safety of motorists.

For the member for Strathfield to introduce a bill that requires motorists to slow down for roadside assistance vehicles and some vehicles with amber lights is confusing. South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory already have in place road rules requiring drivers to slow down when passing designated vehicles with flashing lights. That is the Government's position. Victoria, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory have set the required passing speed at 40 kilometres an hour while South Australia has a 25 kilometre an hour speed limit. The Government's rule, which will commence on 1 September, will require drivers to slow down to 40 kilometres an hour when passing stationary emergency vehicles displaying flashing blue or red lights.

The new rule will include police vehicles, ambulances, fire trucks from Fire and Rescue NSW and the Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service vehicles and Volunteer Rescue Association vehicles. It also includes emergency Roads and Maritime Services vehicles and Transport Management Centre vehicles permitted to use flashing red or blue lights. While the rules differ across jurisdictions, we took into consideration the rules implemented by our neighbouring States and Territories. This was done to help minimise confusion, particularly for those motorists regularly crossing our borders along the east coast. I am advised that Western Australia is the only State where the rule applies to tow trucks and breakdown service vehicles with amber lights.

Labor governments in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory have taken the same approach as the New South Wales Government. We are putting road safety first and foremost. We are listening to the experts and not thinking that we have all the knowledge. We share our experiences and we look at what is happening around us. As I said, even Labor in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory have taken the same approach that we in New South Wales have taken and not extended their rules to include amber flashing lights. Safety and simplicity is why the Government decided the new rule would not include an additional requirement for drivers to undertake another driving task such as move over when approaching a stationary emergency vehicle.

The rule proposed by the Opposition includes a requirement to change lanes when safe to do so. It adds another layer of complexity for motorists. I reiterate that even the Labor governments in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory have taken the same approach that New South Wales has taken: they do not require motorists to move over. The Government's new road rule strengthens and complements New South Wales' existing regulatory framework to keep emergency workers safe. In 2012 the Government released the Breakdown Safety Strategy, which outlined actions to reduce the risks around breakdowns for all road users. The strategy was developed in consultation with Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Services, the NRMA, the NSW Police Force and WorkCover.

Key outcomes delivered as part of this strategy include the upgrade of emergency breakdown bays on the Hume Highway; the development of the Breakdown Safety Glovebox Guide to educate drivers about managing risks in breakdown situations; the development of the Slow Down and Give Us Space campaign to encourage safe driving behaviour around emergency services; changes to the law to enable drivers of motor breakdown services, such as NRMA, response vehicles or tow trucks, to drive in the breakdown lane or shoulder under certain conditions; and the development of new standards to enable tow trucks to be controlled from the left-hand side.

Furthermore, in 2013 the Government introduced legislative changes relating to the safe passing of emergency vehicles and personnel. This meant that a court could consider the presence of obstructions or hazards, including stopped emergency vehicles and personnel when determining whether a driver has been negligent. If negligent driving does not cause death or harm, the penalty includes a \$448 fine and three demerit points. The New South Wales Road Rules 78 and 79 also contain provisions requiring drivers to keep clear or give way to police and emergency vehicles that are displaying flashing blue or red lights or sounding an alarm. These are existing road rules, which the Government's new road rule will build upon from 1 September.

The Government's regulation introduced also the following penalties for failing to comply with the new rule: a \$448 fine, three demerit points and a maximum court-imposed penalty of \$2,200. However, the Opposition's bill does not include any changes to allow police to issue an infringement notice or demerit points. It only includes a maximum court-imposed penalty, which would mean that all drivers would be required to go to court. The Government made the decision that its rule would commence on 1 September 2018. Despite claims made by the Opposition, the Government has clearly stated that this date was chosen to ensure the community is given time to understand the requirements of the new rule and the reasons it is being implemented.

A communications campaign was launched on 29 July to build driver awareness and understanding prior to the commencement of the Government's new road rule. The comprehensive public education campaign aims to help drivers understand their responsibilities in relation to ensuring the safety of emergency workers attending to incidents at the roadside. On Facebook, the initial post featuring the online video has reached more than 2.4 million people, it has been shared almost 20,000 times, and it has attracted over 19,000 comments in the past week. I thank the member for Strathfield for agreeing with us and stating in her second reading speech that "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." Guess what? That is exactly what this Government is doing. That is why we set the 1 September starting date for trial of the new road rule—to ensure the community is aware of these new laws before they commence.

The Opposition, on the other hand, fails once again to practise what it preaches. The Opposition's bill proposes that the new rule commences on the date the bill is assented to, which would not provide the necessary time for effective community education and communication and could increase compliance and road safety risks. Furthermore, the Government's new rule will begin as a 12-month trial. The trial will be overseen by Transport for NSW, in close consultation with NSW Police, emergency service organisations and stakeholder groups. An independent evaluation of the trial will be undertaken with data, including crash statistics and traffic congestion, to be collected throughout and immediately after the trial period.

The evaluation will allow us to monitor the implementation of the new rule and how it impacts on the safety of emergency workers as well as the safety and behaviour of all road users. The evaluation will also consider driver awareness of the new road rule and community attitudes, as well as any unintended consequences that may arise. Importantly, the review will take into account the reviews and outcomes from other jurisdictions implementing similar rules. Any expansion of the rule to cover vehicles with other coloured lights will be considered in conjunction with the evaluation of the 12-month trial. The Incident Management Road Safety Working Group will meet throughout the 12-month trial period to ensure that the Government continues to receive feedback, input and advice from road safety experts, emergency responders and industry and community representatives, such as the NRMA.

In closing, I reiterate that the Government has recognised the need to take a balanced and staged approach with its new road rule. We are doing this by implementing a rule that applies to one set of flashing lights—red or blue. I acknowledge also the work of Peter Frazer, the father of Sarah Frazer. Sarah's life was taken, along with that of a tow truck driver. Peter has had an incredible impact on the Government in supporting safer rules and safer standards. I know that Peter would like us to adopt the Western Australian model of the amber lights. I understand where he is coming from, given that the tow truck driver who stopped to assist his beautiful daughter had his life taken.

Duncan Gay, as Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, did a lot of work to ensure we adhered to the rules relating to the width of stopping lanes. Sarah's death was the most dreadful thing that happened to the family, but Peter took it upon himself to do great things in the area of road safety. During Road Safety Week we turned

the Sydney Harbour Bridge yellow because of Peter's canvassing, passion and commitment. I understand his concerns and I respect the concerns of Roads and Maritime Services. It is not that we do not think those workers and industries should not be supported or protected; but the work we did with the working safety group showed us that we need to take a balanced and fair approach.

As I said, we have considered what happened in our neighbouring eastern coast States—Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. It is important that we have alignment, that we work together and that we learn from each other. We acknowledge that this is a big change. When I spoke to Peter last week he said, "I wish that we didn't have to have rules like this and that motorists would show common sense and courtesy." On that issue I concur with Peter. He is a good and decent man who was rocked by a tragedy that no family should ever face. Peter, along with his wife and other daughter, Jessica, is dedicating his life to ensuring there are good rules and provisions in the Road Safety Act. We will continue to work with him and to take his advice. Even though we have not accepted the argument for orange lights at this point it does not mean we do not accept or respect his advice.

As I said, it is a 12-month trial. We need to see how these rules work. Similarly, I have heard concerns from the heavy vehicle sector. If we are going to slow down to 40 kilometres an hour we need to be aware of what is in our rear-view mirrors and do it safely, knowing that it takes trucks longer to slow down. Our balanced and staged approach is reflected in the new road rule being trialled and monitored over a 12-month period. We will seek and receive feedback from motorists, emergency responders, industry stakeholders and the community over the period. We will evaluate the effectiveness of the rule in improving safety for emergency responders and all road users. We will look at the facts and the outcomes, share them with the community, and determine whether any changes need to be made. At this point in time our focus is on communicating with and educating the community on a simple and clear message, "Look for the flashing blue and red lights."

The community needs to be aware of and understand the new road rule to continue to drive safely on our roads. Like all new road rules, this rule requires behavioural changes by motorists. It should be common courtesy and we should slow down as we go around emergency responders. We need to have a clear and simple rule in place. The Government has taken and will continue to take a considered approach and listen to all stakeholders. Our approach focuses on safety and simplicity for motorists so they can understand and comply with the new road rule from next month. I remind members that more than three months ago, the Government made the regulatory changes to implement its new road rule. The communications campaign to educate the community on the road rule is already underway. We need to take one step at a time, maintain our focus on safety and simplicity and minimise any potential confusion for motorists. The Government opposes the Opposition's bill.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (11:05): I commend the shadow Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight for her hard work and commitment in introducing the Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Emergency Vehicles) Bill 2018, which can and will make a real difference for the safety of our State's emergency and incident responders on our roads. The primary objective of the bill is to require drivers to slow down, move over [SLOMO] and ensure they are travelling at no more than 40 kilometres per hour when passing stationary emergency or incident response vehicles. Back in February this year, following a horrific accident when two police officers were seriously injured when they were crushed between two cars by a speeding driver, the Leader of the Opposition called on the Government to immediately introduce SLOMO legislation to protect our State's emergency and incident responders. The Opposition bill makes it clear that the Government sat on its hands and took no action.

SLOMO laws have been championed also by emergency services personnel and associations and Mr Peter Frazer and his family, who lost their daughter, Sarah, in 2012. Sarah's car broke down on the Hume Highway and although she did the right thing and pulled over into the breakdown lane, the roadway was too narrow for her to get her vehicle completely out of the path of passing traffic. Sadly, both Sarah and a tow truck driver, Mr Geoff Clark, were killed when a truck ploughed into their vehicles. It is a shame it has taken this long for such legislation to be introduced and I trust that those opposite will do the right thing and support the bill. The need for such legislation is recognised throughout Australia. SLOMO laws were introduced in other States and Territories. The laws are backed by the National Roads and Motorists' Association and emergency responders, including paramedics, the Health Services Union, the Fire Brigade Employees' Union, the Police Association of New South Wales and the Rural Fire Service Association of NSW Volunteer Firefighters and Staff.

A petition organised by Michael Mills in support of the introduction of SLOMO laws has been signed by more than 26,000 individuals. I have met with a number of key stakeholders on this issue in my capacity as the shadow Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services and heard their concerns and advocacy on the importance of introducing SLOMO laws. Those of us on this side of the House cannot fathom why those opposite would be reluctant to support the introduction of these protections and why they are dragging their feet on this issue. We have a responsibility to protect the people of New South Wales and to introduce laws that include such

protections. We need to ensure our emergency and incident responders are not placed at a greater risk simply because we have failed to introduce protections for them.

The bill provides greater protections for incident response vehicles, including those from the NSW Police Force, the Ambulance Service of NSW, St John Ambulance, fire and emergency services, the NSW Rural Fire Service, tow truck drivers and motor breakdown service vehicles. Failure to obey these laws will carry a penalty to deter individuals from breaking the law. The penalty for failing to obey the law in Western Australia is a \$300 fine and three demerit points. In Victoria the penalty is \$272 and no demerit points. In New South Wales the offence will carry a penalty of 20 penalty units per offence, which is a \$2,200 fine, and no demerit points. NSW Labor calls on the Government to give bipartisan support to the legislation as the safety of our State's emergency and incident responders is at stake. I thank the shadow Minister for introducing this legislation in a timely manner. I only hope that the Government comes to the table and puts the community's safety before petty politics. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (11:09): I oppose the Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Incident Response Vehicles) Bill 2018. Members on this side of the House always have the safety of our emergency service workers at the forefront of our minds. I had the pleasure of being in the Chamber when the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight elegantly and succinctly put on the record the Government's new road rule, which commences on 1 September. The Minister certainly takes to heart the safety of emergency services workers and all other road users. I draw the attention of the House to legislation that she introduced this week dealing with prescribed concentration of alcohol offences, increasing fines, and the role of alcohol interlock devices. That is great work and I commend her efforts to the House.

The Government's new road rule will protect emergency responders who are out and about every day protecting us and keeping us safe. As I said, from 1 September 2018 drivers will be required to slow their vehicles to 40 kilometres an hour when passing a stationary emergency services vehicle displaying flashing red and blue lights and to give way to any person on foot in the vicinity of the vehicle. Concerning circumstances have been reported recently in the media and in the House involving police at random breath testing locations or operating on the side of the road. Having been an operational police officer, I understand the necessity for taking whatever steps we can to ensure that emergency responders are protected. They are dealing with difficult situations and they need the protection of this House.

As I said, the Government's new road rule will apply to stationary emergency services vehicles displaying flashing red and blue lights. That includes police vehicles, ambulances, fire trucks from Fire and Rescue NSW and the Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service vehicles and NSW Volunteer Rescue Association vehicles. It also includes emergency Roads and Maritime Service vehicles and Transport Management Centre vehicles that are permitted to use flashing red and blue lights. The message to drivers is clear and simple: If they see a stationary vehicle with flashing red and blue lights, they should slow down. The Minister emphasised that one of the key principles of road safety is simplicity. There is nothing more difficult for drivers than someone in a vehicle ahead being confused or not understanding the road rules and as a result doing something unusual or unpredictable that could cause serious problems.

The Opposition's bill proposes that the rule apply to drivers when approaching and passing additional vehicles; that is, vehicles that are permitted to display amber flashing lights, including tow trucks and breakdown service vehicles. While only designated emergency vehicles can be fitted with blue and red flashing lights, amber flashing lights are fitted to a broad range of vehicles that operate on our road network. Other vehicles that display flashing amber lights include street sweepers, garbage trucks, private security vehicles, escort vehicles, oversize vehicles, special purpose vehicles, utility and energy company vehicles and so on. The list goes on. As there is no requirement to register the use of amber flashing lights, the exact number is not known. However, it is estimated that many thousands of vehicles using them operate every day on New South Wales roads.

Requiring drivers to slow their vehicle to 40 kilometres an hour when passing some vehicles with flashing amber lights but not others has the potential to confuse drivers, particularly given that it is not easy to determine what type of vehicle in the distance has amber lights flashing. This risk would increase at night and at other times when the flashing lights are visible before the vehicle is identifiable. Once again, simplicity is at the heart of this issue. That is why the Government has decided that this rule, which will be trialled over 12 months, should apply only when drivers are passing vehicles displaying flashing blue and red lights. Of the four jurisdictions that have already introduced a requirement for drivers to slow their vehicle in emergency situations, only Western Australia requires drivers to slow down near tow trucks and breakdown service vehicles displaying flashing amber lights. Limiting the rule to vehicles with blue and red flashing lights will make it easier for drivers to understand and to comply with it. It is also more consistent with this State's neighbouring jurisdictions, such as Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory.

While the new rule does not apply to drivers when passing tow trucks and breakdown service vehicles, there are nevertheless strong penalties for drivers who drive negligently near these vehicles or at a speed dangerous to the public. In 2013, this Government amended the Road Transport Act 2013 to clarify that a court can consider the presence of obstructions and hazards, including broken down or crashed vehicles, fallen loads and accident or emergency scenes, in a decision to charge a person with negligent driving. This Government has taken a considered approach that focuses on safety and simplicity for motorists so that they can understand and comply with the rules. On that basis, I oppose the bill.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (11:14): I acknowledge the impressive work of the Leader of the Opposition, Luke Foley, and the shadow Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, Jodi McKay, who have led the public debate on the Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Incident Response Vehicles) Bill 2018. The Leader of the Opposition called on the Government for the first time in February to introduce slow down, move over laws to support emergency service workers. His call followed the tragic incident on Campbelltown Road in Leumeah when two police officers were seriously injured when they were crushed between two cars by a speeding driver. Our thoughts are with those police officers and their families. When the Leader of the Opposition called on the Government to act, volunteer firefighters in the Rural Fire Service had already asked it to introduce a law requiring drivers to slow their vehicles to 40 kilometres an hour when passing emergency service vehicles that have slowed down or stopped.

South Australia introduced similar laws in 2014, Victoria adopted them in 2017, and Western Australia followed suit earlier this year. In late April, the Government took the first step towards introducing slow down, move over laws, with the announcement of a one-year trial beginning in September 2018. While this is a step in the right direction, the Government's plan does not go as far as Labor's proposal and excludes a number of important road users. Notably, the Government's proposal does not include tow truck drivers, Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] incident vehicles or NRMA roadside assistance vehicles. There could easily be a situation in which a tow truck driver clearing a vehicle after an accident would be protected by this system if a police car or fire truck were still at the scene. However, if the police car or fire truck were called away before the damaged vehicles had been loaded—or if they were not required in the first place—the protection afforded by their presence would disappear.

I was pleased to see that the chair of the NRMA, Peter Khoury, and the president of Safer Australian Roads and Highways, Peter Frazer, have both backed Labor's commitment, enshrined in this bill, to ensure that tow truck drivers, RMS incident vehicles and NRMA roadside assistance vehicles are provided with the same protections as others responding to roadside incidents. Peter's loss of his daughter in an accident is a tragedy that underpins Labor's bill dealing with this issue.

Commuters from the Hunter and Central Coast will not soon forget the horror of last week on the M1. Families have suffered unimaginable losses. We know that accidents are not simply statistics; they represent broken families and broken hearts. If we can prevent these tragic accidents, which impact so many people's lives, we should do everything we can to do so. Among those responding to these crashes are the tow truck drivers and RMS incident vehicles, but their value to these situations is ignored in the Government's trial of these slow down, move over laws. RMS incident staff can be some of the first on the scene of incidents on the M1, which is one of the busiest roads in the State. However, the Government's proposal does not give those workers the same protections that are provided to other first responders.

I am particularly aware of the importance of these laws in regional areas. Like many Hunter residents, I spend a lot of time on the M1 and on rural and regional roads, many of which do not have the sealed road shoulders and wide lanes that city residents enjoy. When accidents and breakdowns occur on these roads, there is not always the room to pull fully out of a lane or even off the road. In these situations it is even more important for passing traffic to slow down and to navigate around the vehicles involved in the accident.

Let us imagine a breakdown on one of these rural roads, where the broken-down car has pulled 90 per cent out of the lane or off the road, or if they get as far off as they can go but they just cannot get all the way off the road. A tow truck or an NRMA vehicle is there with its lights on, but there is no need for a police or ambulance vehicle to respond. In that situation, the tow truck driver or NRMA mechanic has none of the protections of the slow down, move over laws. On rural or regional roads, where traffic can be travelling at high speeds on single lane roads, these tow truck drivers or NRMA mechanics work hard to get broken-down vehicles back on the road or towed to safety, while also focusing on protecting themselves and the drivers of the vehicles. Applying the slow down, move over laws to these vehicles as well would offer that extra bit of protection to help those tow truck drivers and NRMA mechanics get home safely to their families.

As a parent of teenagers learning to drive I know a common instruction for new drivers is that if they have a breakdown or a flat tyre, they should focus on their own safety as they deal with the breakdown. Too often we learn of drivers being injured while changing a driver's side tyre or when walking back to a broken-down car.

These laws will give extra protections to police, firefighters and ambulances drivers in their line of duty, as they should. But the risk of injury and death on our roads is not just in the dramatic incidents and crashes. The risk on our roads is present in the smaller incidents as well—in the changing of a tyre or the loading of a broken-down car onto a tow truck. Put simply, if a car has a need to have its flashing lights on it should not matter whether it is a police random breath-testing unit or an RMS incident truck or an NRMA vehicle, it should not matter what colour those lights are; drivers should slow down and give these responders a wide berth to do their important work.

Labor's bill is a commonsense bill that seeks to extend the protections offered by the Government's plan. I have listened to the Minister and other Government members today and I still do not understand why the Government's plan does not seek to include everyone attending to drivers who have experienced a problem on the side of the road. Simplicity has been mentioned today as a reason. I do not see how it is any simpler than slowing down regardless of what colour the flashing lights are, whether they are red, blue or orange. There is nothing simpler than that. If you see flashing lights on the side of the road you slow down.

Having seen far too many near misses and having been involved in far too many near misses, as I am sure have many people in this House, and having witnessed the rising tragic road fatality statistics, I urge everyone to show respect to each other on our roads. It is not worth risking your life or anyone else's. Take personal responsibility for your own actions and drive safely. I commend Labor's bill to the House. I thank the shadow Minister for her hard work on this important issue, which hopefully will see a reduction in tragedies on and alongside all of our roads.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (11:22): I speak in opposition to the Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Incident Response Vehicles) Bill 2018. The Opposition's bill seeks to repeal the Government's regulation and replace it with a rule that is more complex to both understand and implement. The primary purpose of the Government's new rule is to increase the safety of emergency responders who are on the road attending to an incident. To achieve this, it is important that the rule is simple enough for drivers to understand, remember and obey.

After careful consideration, the Government decided that the rule should apply only when passing stationary emergency vehicles displaying a blue or red flashing light. Blue or red flashing lights are already well recognised by the community. Drivers know that when they see these lights they must give way and move out of the way of the emergency vehicle. The new rule provides certainty for drivers about how they should behave when these vehicles are stationary and responding to an incident on the road. While Western Australia extended the rule to tow trucks and breakdown service vehicles with amber lights, it was decided that limiting the rule to vehicles with blue or red flashing lights will make it easier for motorists to understand and comply with the new rule. We already have a culture of giving way to emergency vehicles with red or blue flashing lights and we want to ensure that continues.

While some other jurisdictions require drivers to slow down around stationary and slow-moving emergency vehicles, having a subjective aspect of the rule that requires drivers to make a decision as to whether a vehicle is slow moving or not could result in inconsistent driver behaviour, which we do not want. That is why the Government decided that the rule should apply only when an emergency vehicle is stationary. Safety and simplicity is also why the Government decided the new rule would not include an additional requirement for drivers to move over when approaching a stationary emergency vehicle. That is because requiring drivers to change lanes while also decreasing their speed could introduce complexity and risk, especially in high-speed environments and situations. This rule is about bringing clarity to drivers about what we need them to do to ensure the safety of emergency responders while working on the road, whether it is the M1, the M4, the M5, or King Georges Road in my electorate. The Government has made a conscious decision to make the rule simple so that drivers can comply with the rule easily. Therefore, the Government opposes this bill.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (11:25): I speak in favour of the Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Incident Response Vehicles) Bill 2018 brought to this House by my colleague Labor's shadow Minister for Roads and the member for Strathfield. The bill seeks to protect those who assist motorists. It is the culmination of work by Peter Frazer and the Sarah group to ensure that motorists, first responders and emergency services workers, as well as incident response workers such as NRMA mechanics or tow truck drivers are kept safe on our roads and highways.

The member for Strathfield introduced this bill in May during National Road Safety Week. At the time I made the observation that while road safety is important for every electorate, it is especially so in the Blue Mountains electorate. The Great Western Highway is a way of life for almost every resident of the Blue Mountains. Not only is it our connection to jobs and commerce in Sydney or Lithgow, it is also our main arterial road between each village and town to the shopping centres of Springwood, Katoomba and Winmalee.

Likewise, for constituents in Mount Wilson, Mount Irvine and Mount Tomah at the northern end of my electorate, the Bells Line of Road is a similar fact of daily life for every resident.

For those reasons, road safety is front of mind for everyone in the Blue Mountains electorate. It is therefore not surprising that the push for a slow down, move over bill that properly protects emergency services workers and incident response workers has been brought to this place on the back of the tireless work of one of our own, Blue Mountains resident Peter Frazer. The Frazer family tragically lost 23-year-old Sarah in 2012, when she and the tow truck driver assisting her were struck by a heavy vehicle as they stood beside the road on the Hume Highway. The section of road at that location did not have a wide enough breakdown lane, which was clearly a contributing factor to the accident. But with a posted speed limit of 110 kilometres per hour, there was considerable risk regardless of the space available. That is why it is so important that vehicles slow down and move over as they pass a breakdown or road accident.

I note that the NSW Rural Fire Service Association, the Fire Brigade Employees Union and the Police Association of New South Wales have also been campaigning hard for the safety of their members and that this has culminated in the Government's legislation to protect emergency services workers exposed to similar risks on our roadsides. But the NRMA and the Safer Australian Roads and Highways Group make the point that the current legislation, due to come into effect in September this year, does not go far enough. I note the genuine efforts by the Government to grapple with the road toll in this State. We have a situation on our roads where, despite cars being built to ever-improving safety standards and new roads infrastructure being of a higher quality and designed to ever more stringent requirements, the road toll is rising once again.

Motorists in the Blue Mountains would recall the horror road toll of the 1990s. In that decade, the average annual rate of road fatalities per 100,000 population was 10.92. We can put that down to a few things. The average age of the vehicle fleet on New South Wales roads then was older, the cars were less able to withstand a significant crash and they were more likely to be in a crash to begin with as they lacked active safety features such as traction control and anti-lock braking systems. Moreover, major arterial roads such as the Great Western Highway were often narrow, two-lane roads, where cars, trucks, cyclists and pedestrians competed for space on a narrow, winding road corridor.

I highlight this because in the absence today of these circumstances it is timely to consider why the road toll is still so high when our cars and road infrastructure have never been safer. Whereas in the 1980s the road toll was 16.75 per 100,000 people and in the 1990s it had reduced to 10.92 per 100,000, it has been stuck, over the past decade, at 5.66 per 100,000. The road toll in Germany, however, last year was 4.3, in Denmark it was 3.5 and in the United Kingdom it was 2.9. While we can account for some of these discrepancies with the types of journey undertaken and the prevalence of road trauma on country roads involving long journey times, where fatigue is clearly a factor, we must also acknowledge that driver distraction and inattention is a significant contributing factor to traumatic road accidents.

So the Government, rightly, has had to step in to create new laws to ensure safety on our roads. New laws allow electronic surveillance of roads to catch drivers using mobile phones. We have new laws to ensure drivers provide adequate space when passing cyclists, prompting—you would hope—motorists to pay closer attention to vulnerable road users in cycle lanes and on road shoulders beside the main traffic lane. Now we have a new law to compel motorists to slow down and move over as they pass emergency services vehicles. Once again, it is hoped that motorists will notice, pay attention to, and then respond thoughtfully, to roadside emergency services workers.

The bill we are debating seeks to address the one glaring omission in the Government's otherwise commendable legislation—the safety of motorists and incident responders such as NRMA workers or tow truck drivers on our roadsides. Labor acknowledges the work of the NRMA and their interstate counterparts on this issue. For example, the Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia, 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. Furthermore, the Royal Automobile Club of Queensland [RACQ] urged our colleagues in the Queensland Parliament to avoid adopting the New South Wales Government's legislation, which the RACQ described as confusing and failing to offer proper protection to emergency services and roadside workers.

New South Wales has fallen behind nationally on this issue. South Australia has had similar laws in force since 2014. Victoria has had laws in force since last year and Western Australian laws came into effect in May 2018. There is therefore no reason I can see not to follow suit and harmonise our legislation with other jurisdictions. This is, after all, the standard practice with other road safety matters. We harmonised the vast bulk of our road rules nationwide with the adoption of the Australian Road Rules Act in 1999 at a Federal level and the States adopting this Act as their own rules by legislation.

It should therefore not only be a very easy process but indeed a very desirable one to have a single standard across as many States and Territories as practical for the safety of roadside emergency service workers and incident responders such as NRMA mechanics and tow truck drivers. So it ought to be a very simple and very unremarkable process that we now follow, in which the Government either supports this bill today or it amends its own legislation to capture the objects of this private member's bill. This bill is not about the Minister for Roads being wedged by the Opposition, though I fear if she continues to dig her heels in against the measures we have put forward that she will find herself wedged nonetheless in the eyes of the community and within the public debate.

We should set that to one side and come together to give these workers left out by the Government's legislation the safest possible work place, include in these new road rules incident responders such as the NRMA mechanics and tow truck drivers who come to our aid on the roadside and make sure motorists do slow down and move over as they pass breakdowns or road accidents. The Sarah Group's catch cry is "Drive So Others Survive". I note that Peter Frazer has been putting forward this very simple message in the six years since the tragic loss of his daughter Sarah. It is therefore high time we put that message into the statutes and ensured that everybody who travels or works on our roads is safe, and that they are given the best possible chance of making it home safely on our roads and highways.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (11:36): It is with great sadness that I speak on the Road Rules Amendment (Slowing Down for Police and Incident Response Vehicles) Bill 2018 today. As the member for Gosford and a member of the Central Coast community, I know that we have to do as much as we possibly can to protect every single life on our roads. Two weeks ago my sister called me to make sure I was not on the M1, as another fiery truck accident took the lives of two people and sent five people to hospital. The next morning we awoke to hear about another life lost at Warnervale.

Nine people have died on the 130-kilometre stretch of the M1 since this time last year—well above the 2.9 annual average of the past 10 years. Police and transport officials have issued alerts for at least 38 accidents on the M1 in the past year, all of them serious enough to close lanes and back up traffic for kilometres. Almost half occurred on or between the Hawkesbury River and Mooney Mooney Creek bridges in the Gosford electorate. I thank all of the emergency workers and roadside workers who have stopped to support people who have been injured on the roads of New South Wales. Six of the nine fatalities in the past year involved trucks, and three of those who died were struck while outside their vehicles. We must do more to warn motorists of risks ahead, and commit motorists to slowing down. The current banked-up traffic on the M1 due to upgrades is creating havoc enough for commuters. Let us act now to ensure we lose no more lives.

As a wheelchair athlete I have a number of friends who have been injured in motor vehicle accidents on New South Wales roads, and would like to share the story of Illawarra champion Eino Okkonen, as it relates to the importance of protecting workers in the light of today's SloMo—slow down, move over—legislation. As an able-bodied man, Eino stopped to assist a woman change a tyre on the edge of a busy road, and was sideswiped by a speeding vehicle. Eino's leg was severed just below the knee during this accident. He recalls putting a tourniquet on his own leg. He has gone on to lead the foundation of the Illawarra Roller Hawks wheelchair basketball team and continues to play in local and regional competitions.

Eino took the risk and stopped to help. While this bill does not address individuals such as Eino, it does address protecting the lives of all those who are professionals whose job it is to assist on the roadside at the time of an accident. The Government must protect all workers at their places of work in New South Wales. Eino is a great example of someone who is living life to the fullest as an amputee, but let us protect all our workers, because we do not want people going home from work missing a limb or, even worse, families missing a family member as a result of injury on the roadside.

We call on the Berejiklian Government to ensure the slow down, move over bill will include all incident responders, including tow truck drivers, Roads and Maritime Services incident vehicles and NRMA roadside assistance vehicles—not just those with the blue and red lights. Tow truck drivers and roadside assistance workers also heed the call when motorists get into trouble on the road, so we must make sure the roadside, their workplace, is safe. Incident response vehicles should include the NSW Police Force, the Ambulance Service of NSW, St Johns Ambulance, Fire and Rescue NSW, the NSW Rural Fire Service, tow truck drivers, and motor breakdown service vehicles.

Next month the Berejiklian Government will start a one-year trial only of Slow Down, Move Over [SLOMO] laws but they will not include tow-truck drivers, Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] incident vehicles or NRMA roadside assistance vehicles. I ask members to think about the families of workers who are out there on the roads as we consider this trial and move to include those people in the trial. Labor's Slow Down, Move Over laws require drivers to reduce their speed to a maximum of 40 kilometres per hour when passing stationary emergency or incident response vehicles.

On behalf of the husbands and wives, kids and families of workers out there every day—just like Eino's family—on the sides of our expressways and roads supporting people injured at times of accidents, working to save lives and protect properties, I say, "Please! We want to ensure that every worker in New South Wales goes home safe at the end of the day." Our shadow Minister for Roads, Jodi McKay, is joined by the NRMA's Peter Khoury and SARAH—Safer Australian Roads and Highways—President Peter Frazer, who are also calling for SLOMO laws to ensure protection and include all New South Wales incident responders.

The Government must legislate and educate drivers. We know that the Berejiklian Government's trial of SLOMO laws does not go far enough. We need to ensure that we put in place the best protection we can for all emergency responders when they are on our roads. People need to remember that every time they get behind the wheel, they are responsible not only for their own lives but also the lives of every motorist. In closing, I send love and condolences to the families and friends of all those who have lost a loved one on New South Wales roads.

Business interrupted.

Visitors

VISITORS

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I welcome to the Speaker's gallery today Mr Amar Haddad, head of the engineering department in the city of Mena, Lebanon, and representatives from the Mena association of Sydney. They are guests of the member for Lakemba.

Motions

EDUCATION WEEK

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (11:42): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises that this week is Education Week.
- (2) Recognises the important role that public education has across New South Wales.
- (3) Congratulates the New South Wales teachers, students and their families on their contribution to public education.

This week is Education Week, when we celebrate the achievements of our 2,200 public schools, more than 800,000 students and more than 83,000 school staff including principals, teachers and support staff. On Monday, the Premier officially launched Education Week, and she reflected on the opportunities that her public school education offered her as a child and the fact that she could not speak English when she started school. The Premier said that our public schools in New South Wales were the best on the planet, where students have the opportunity to be their best, learn and give back to the community. Education Week is a wonderful reminder to all involved in public education that we must give every child and every student across the State the opportunity to be their best. It is a time to acknowledge the commitment and dedication of principals, teachers and support staff who inspire our students to become lifelong learners and the parents and carers who entrust their children into the care of those staff.

This year, Education Week looks into the future with its theme "Today's schools—creating tomorrow's world", which highlights how the New South Wales public schools are equipping young people with the skills and capabilities they need to thrive in a rapidly changing world. Many local members and colleagues have visited local schools this week to see firsthand the magic of learning that occurs every day in the thousands of classrooms across New South Wales. On Monday in the Holsworthy electorate, I was fortunate enough to attend Casula High School with the education Minister. We met with the acting principal, Mr Gareth Smith, student leaders Jaala Ungaro, To'alia Pakofe, Robyn Taute and other students, staff and teachers.

The three student leaders at the school gave a very inspiring presentation to us on the school's wellbeing and welfare initiatives, which are truly phenomenal and impressive and something that the students spoke very highly of. It was great to hear from them. Some of the initiatives they spoke about included a breakfast club, mentoring initiatives, their transition program, and the creation of a student success coordinator, which is a fabulous position. We also heard about and took a tour of their excellence and engagement hub. This hub provides students with support from specialist teachers and tutoring, which is a great initiative providing support and assistance for students to ensure that they get the most out of their education journey.

It was incredibly inspiring to hear from a student undertaking their HSC this year who had been in the country only three years. She is a refugee from Syria. Everyone is stressed when they undertake the HSC but I can only imagine doing it with that kind of background, when she had been in the country for only three years. I wish her all the best. She is an inspiring young lady. I encourage all members to take the opportunity to visit our public

schools—not just in Education Week, but any week—and acknowledge the quality of our teachers and support staff and their support network of parents and P&C associations.

This week, the Minister for Education told the House that schools are perhaps the most important infrastructure that governments provide. Our public education system is foundational to our social contract and public education is in many ways the incubator of our prosperity and the catalyst for the social cohesion we enjoy. That is why this Government is proud to put school infrastructure front and centre of spending priorities. The New South Wales Government is spending a record \$6 billion for more than 170 new and upgraded public schools—the largest investment by any State Government in history. These projects will create more than 2,000 new classrooms and more than 42,000 additional student places. Importantly, these future-focused learning spaces integrate advanced technology and promote connection and collaboration between students and teachers. Prestons Public School will be just one of the many schools benefiting from this investment.

The State budget continued the Government's essential work to provide future-focused schools and classrooms to meet the once-in-a-generation student enrolment growth forecast to 2031. This included \$500 million in the budget to sustainably improve the classroom comfort of our students and teachers by providing reverse-cycle air conditioning and mechanical ventilation to improve temperature, humidity and indoor air quality, which is so important to helping young people learn. But it is not just the record investment in school infrastructure that is making a difference. With additional funding to hire in business managers or extra administrative staff, this Government has provided more practical support for principals to free them up from red tape and administration so they can lead the teaching and learning in their schools. We have set up the first review of the curriculum since 1989 and invested more than \$340 million to deliver the new State Literacy and Numeracy Strategy—the core foundational skills on which all other learning sits.

Just this week the Premier announced the \$23 million STEMShare Community program—cutting-edge digital learning resources for every public school student to learn new technology skills to flourish in our rapidly changing world. We live in a digital age, where our students need new knowledge and skills to succeed in their studies today and their lives ahead. Our students will need to think critically, solve problems creatively, work in teams, communicate clearly in a range of media and continue to learn new and ever-evolving technologies. The STEMShare Community program will provide students with access to robotics, 3D printing, coding, film-making, and virtual and augmented reality—all vital technologies for the study of science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM] subjects. This coordinated program of STEM technology kits, teacher training, curriculum-linked learning challenges and an online community of practice will empower schools to teach students to solve the problems of tomorrow. It aims to raise awareness of the effective use of technology to improve student learning and to enable teachers to understand, experience and embed STEM technologies into teaching and learning.

Finally, we are asking our students to be involved in designing how they want to learn in the future. A new initiative in Education Week this year is the Game Changer Challenge, run by the Department of Education from its new State office in Parramatta. For the past three days, almost 100 students and 30 teachers from 16 public primary and secondary schools have pondered the question: What will the school of the future look like? What a cool question. It looks nothing like the school I had; in particular, libraries look nothing like the education I had. I cannot wait to see what the future holds. I thank members for allowing me to move this motion today.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (11:50): I thank the member for Holsworthy for moving this motion today. It was lovely to hear what she spoke about. There would not be a person in this place or the other place who would not see the value of education. It is a great opportunity for us to talk about Education Week but also acknowledge the wonderful things that education can do. It is no secret that I have had the great privilege of working in classrooms. As great as this job is, I have to say that there is no greater job than being able to work in a classroom and to see the difference that you can make in an instant and the way you can change people's lives. The theme "Today's schools—creating tomorrow's world" is what the philosophy of education is about. We know that what we can do in schools can change the way of the future. My colleague the member for Holsworthy touched on it, as did some members yesterday in their speeches on the matter of public importance. The great thing about public education is that every person has an opportunity to be their best self. There is something for everyone. This is a gate that is open to everybody in the community. We are not going to distinguish whether people have a certain faith or colour or the amount of money that they have in their investment account. It is about ensuring that every person gets the best education possible.

It is important that we talk about and continue to have bipartisan support for needs-based funding. The student at Casula High School who the member talked about needs to have the same opportunity as a student at Menindee Central School, or a student who goes to a school in the heart of Sydney. That is what needs-based funding does. Why do I get so passionate about it? Because I have seen with my own eyes the difference that education can make. If a straw poll is taken of the members in this place, a number of them have not only been to

public schools but they are also strong advocates for them. I say on the record: there is not an us and them when it comes to public schools and non-government schools. Parents can make a choice. I do not want that choice to be made because the local public school is not good enough. If people choose to send their children to a non-government school because of a faith-based reason or another reason, that is fair enough. But that choice can never be made because the local government school is not good enough.

Any investment that we make in education is an investment in our future and in our society. This is nothing new, it happens around the world. As I speak, one of the most inspirational teachers I know has come into the Chamber, my colleague the member for Gosford. Recently we visited some schools together, one of which was Glenvale School of Special Purposes. We talk about the amazing things that public schools do. Sometimes we refer to the students who are great achievers in public speaking, dancing or sport. My admiration for this school, its principal and all of the staff, goes beyond words. These are kids with some of the most severe disabilities that I have seen, yet no-one was giving up on them. Whilst there is a big discussion around integrated education, we still come back to that core principle that we must as a government ensure that every child has the best opportunity possible.

The Public Education Foundation has put together a wonderful two-minute video celebrating public education. I hope other members have seen it, and I ask them to share it as much as they can. The Public Education Foundation was set up by Verity Firth to ensure that we promote public education. The video features the Hon. Michael Kirby, whom we all know, and Craig Reucassel, a media personality and social justice advocate. He says in the video that we should not be talking down public education, we need to be proud of the public education system because it gave him everything that he ever wanted. He says we need to be bragging about it. Professor Larissa Behrendt was also impressive. She is of first nations background. She was the first Indigenous Australian to graduate from Harvard Law School. One of the most beautiful things that she spoke about was walking past some students in a school in Redfern and hearing one say, "I'm going to go to Harvard just like that Aboriginal girl." That is the opportunity that we can get through public education. It does not matter where you come from, what your background is, you have the same opportunities to achieve everything.

We talk about the values that education can bring. When you are in a classroom or a playground you do not distinguish between who has got what, who is eating what, whose parents drive what car; you know you are part of that local community. School communities—the teachers, the relief teachers, the principal, the administration staff and the cleaners—serve the local area and become a lighthouse. That is why I am so passionate that we not only support public education but also support local public education as much as possible. There is nothing more heartbreaking than seeing a student walk straight past their local school to go to another one. That is a discussion that we need to have at another time. I will finish with what public education can do. I have been blessed with three beautiful children. They all attend public schools. My wife is a teacher in a public school. I was a teacher in a public school.

Recently, I attended my daughter's parent-teacher night. The teacher wanted to tell me about all the great things that they are doing, what my daughter can and cannot do. I said, "What I am really interested in is: What sort of person is she? What can she do? Can she care for other people? Does she have a sense of social justice? Does she participate in the arts, in the civic culture, in the history?" I do not want education to be narrowed down into literacy and numeracy. That is not what we judge an education system on. We judge an education system on the people it produces at the other end. There will always be bipartisan support for an education system that is strong, supports all students and is exceptionally well resourced. We must believe in our public education system because it speaks volumes about what we as a society want and value. I congratulate every person who has ever stood in front of a classroom, every parent who has ever helped and every community member who stood beside their public school. I wish everyone a happy Education Week and hopefully the theme "Today's schools—creating tomorrow's world" creates the best world possible.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (11:57): I am pleased to speak on this motion and I thank the member for Holsworthy for moving it. In the Cootamundra electorate there are 78 schools, 13 preschools and four mobile preschool services—so Education Week is something to celebrate. In our country towns and villages schools are so much more than places of learning. They are places of connection and community hubs. The theme of this year's week of recognition is "Today's schools—creating tomorrow's world". Having visited the public schools and preschools across my small communities, I think it is safe for me to say that we can all look forward to tomorrow.

I recently announced \$510,000 funding for the Gundagai Preschool Kindergarten for a vital expansion. The community preschool centre has struggled with long waiting lists but throughout this their team of educators and executive have maintained such an inspirational grassroots drive to deliver for these children and their community. This Education Week I thank Stacey Smith and her team for their service to Gundagai. I cannot wait

to see even more local children welcomed into the fold of this learning community following the completion of these capital works.

I have spoken in this Chamber before about the students and leaders at the Junee High School who, in partnership with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and the CSIRO, are assessing the energy consumption of local residents using blower-vac technology to try to help their town save on bills. I cannot think of a better embodiment of this year's theme. These students are responding to the cost of living challenges today, to educate their seniors and to create a better world for tomorrow. My husband, Keith, is the principal of Young High School, so I am never far from stories of the trials and tribulations of life in the thick of educating our younger generation. There are stories of incredible academic and sporting achievement, teamwork and innovation, but there is also hardship, loss and struggles with our identity. Our teachers have one of the hardest and most important jobs in the nation.

Across my smaller villages some schools have joined forces to deliver the best outcomes for their senior students, such as Ardlethan Central School, which is the hub school for the Riverina Access Program consisting of Ardlethan, Barellan, Aria Park and Hillston central schools. Senior secondary students study for their Higher School Certificate [HSC] by video conference across the four schools. This program is unique in schools in Australia, allowing year 11 and year 12 students to take subjects they could never access from their own remote and regional schools. In villages where a year 12 class might consist of only three students, how our schools innovate to allow students to stay in their home towns and access an exceptional level of resources and learning experiences is nothing short of awesome.

Of course, all of this important work needs infrastructure and investment to support it. I am thrilled, for example, that 63 schools in the Cootamundra electorate alone will receive new air-conditioning under the New South Wales Government's \$500 million upgrade announced in this year's budget. Taking care of our teachers and students is a priority of this Government, and I have been so pleased to see this commitment strengthened and delivered during my time as member. I thank all my schools and preschools for the work they do moulding the future of the Cootamundra electorate and regional New South Wales. I wish them a happy Education Week. While I may have spent it in Sydney and away from home, I cannot wait to see what they have all been up to when I get back.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (12:01): I, too, thank the member for Holsworthy for bringing this motion to the House. I love having the opportunity to celebrate public education and the theme of Education Week 2018 is "Today's school creating tomorrow's world." On Monday, before I came to Parliament, I had the opportunity to join in the thirtieth birthday celebrations of Kariong Public School. I congratulate that school because it symbolises what public education is all about. Visitors from Barnardo's attended the school to collect the more than 300 presents that the kids had donated as part of their celebrations.

I acknowledge the contribution of teachers and the opportunity they have to pass on ethics and morals to kids in our schools. Governments have 13 years to try to turn around the lives of some of those kids in the public education space. Teachers not only teach the curriculum but also go above and beyond what is required. Teachers organise discos, coach sporting teams, become involved in agriculture and the Sydney Royal Easter Show. They undertake mentoring programs—and I know that year advisers listen to the kids and work with them in a very different way—give welfare support and have school representative councils [SRCs]. I know that future leaders really benefit from the opportunities they have within schools. Teachers take the time to work on school plays and be involved in Daffodil Day, Red Nose Day and Legacy Day to encourage kids across New South Wales to engage with charities in the community, beyond education.

In Education Week I take this opportunity to thank the Teachers Federation for its fine work in supporting teachers across New South Wales. I thank also the parents and citizens associations and the Parents and Friends Federation for their continued support in fundraising, assistance, ideas and community building within schools and beyond. I commend the fabulous programs that teachers offer in schools not only in my electorate but across New South Wales, such as homework centres and opportunities to compete in State aerobics championships, intense mentoring programs, grandparents reading to kids, the Farm to the Table program, choir and dance. Teachers across New South Wales also contribute to Aboriginal education. It was fantastic to see Linda Burney visit one of the schools in my electorate to talk to Aboriginal students, a couple of whom are visiting the Parliament today to celebrate International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

Students have the opportunity to participate in Youth Parliament and also SRCs. These programs are amazing and take children above and beyond the curriculum. It is wonderful to hear so many of my colleagues who have been teachers reminiscing about the opportunity to build relationships with students beyond school; they have support structures that, as adults, become friendships. Tomorrow I am heading up to Taree to talk to students on the night that one of their heroes, Latrell Mitchell—who came through high school rugby and rugby league—will be playing for the Roosters in the semi-final against the Rabbitohs.

In closing, I reiterate the words of the shadow Minister for Education, Jihad Dib, about the importance of including everybody in public school education. I know that teachers across New South Wales work incredibly hard to include all students. It is great for kids to grow up having had the experience of sitting beside kids with disabilities in their classroom to prepare them for when they enter the workforce as employees, and perhaps later as employers. Schools are shaping the social, economic and cultural fabric of the future of Australia. May the campaign to support their funding continue as today's schools are definitely creating tomorrow's world.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:05): First, I acknowledge my colleague the member for Holsworthy for bringing this fantastic motion to the House. Only yesterday I had the pleasure to speak on a matter of public importance about Education Week. This week we celebrate Education Week 2018, with the theme being "Today's schools creating tomorrow's world." I am the proud son of a mother who is a retired teacher. My mum's sister is a teacher and both of my mum's parents were teachers, so I come from a family of educators—I am extremely proud to say that. My mother has been retired from teaching for more than a decade but she still receives phone calls from her students. She remembers clearly teaching a second generation of students who will often ring and say, "Mrs Crouch, you taught my mum or my father". That is very inspiring. The impact and influence my family have had on other young people's lives is truly an inspiration. Teachers have a significant impact on children and young adults.

Earlier this week the Premier and the Minister for Education, in kicking off Education Week, demonstrated the Government's commitment with a \$23 million package of digital learning resources. This will be available to every single public school student from term four of this year onwards. This will be a great benefit to the 15 schools and students in the electorate of Terrigal, all of whom I am incredibly proud. The Premier has said that we live in an increasingly digitised age. It is absolutely imperative that students obtain the new knowledge and skills to succeed in their studies, both for today and well into the future. That is why the program I spoke about yesterday will provide schools with access to robotics, developing technologies, 3D printing, coding, filmmaking, and virtual and augmented reality systems.

All members will agree that one of the greatest pleasures of being a member of Parliament is the chance to visit schools, meet school leavers, who are inspiring young people, and see programs such as robotics and coding being run in our schools. I had the privilege of providing funding to Copacabana Public School, which purchased OSBox to enable its students to have a dedicated coding class. Those programs are being emulated across the Central Coast, including at Woodport Public School, which is celebrating its 125th birthday this year. This fantastic school is ably led by Principal Judy Boland. The relationships between our primary schools and our high schools are extremely strong. Woodport Public School is located across the road from Erina High School. I have seen students transitioning from primary school to high school when we visit those fantastic educational facilities.

Pretty Beach Public School literally lives up to its name. It is set on the beach at Pretty Beach. Students are privileged to see dolphins swim past some mornings. It is one of the most beautiful schools, led by Principal Deb Calendar. It has a wonderful parents and citizens association, which I am looking to help by providing funding to establish a Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden in the school. I will be there this week and next week helping the school secure much-needed funds for that project. Schools engage with students and parents across the Central Coast to raise this grassroots funding. I am so proud to work one on one with all the principals of my 15 schools and the excellent parents and citizens associations that support those principals. Once again, I commend the member for Holsworthy for moving this outstanding motion.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (12:09): Education Week 2018 kicked off on Monday. This year's theme is "Today's schools creating tomorrow's world". In a rapidly changing world this highlights how New South Wales public schools are preparing our young people to flourish in the future. The key messages of this year's Education Week are: growth mindset, applied learning, evolution of the classroom, strong relationships, and system-wide commitment to innovation and excellence. Education Week is an important time to celebrate and recognise the contribution that public schools make in our community. This very morning, as part of Education Week, student leaders from Heathcote Public School met with the Minister for Education, Rob Stokes, and me to discuss student leadership at the school.

Heathcote Public School is a prime example of how local schools support students to learn and achieve their best. I recently met with a student from the school who has a disability and his mother. They were advocating for the Same Classroom, Same Opportunities campaign, which was recently launched by Family Advocacy. I support all-inclusive education to enable children with disabilities and additional needs to participate on the same basis as all other children in New South Wales schools. The New South Wales Government shares that belief, and supports teachers and children to ensure that individual students' educational needs are met to assist them to meet their full potential. I am proud to be part of a Government that supports all students in New South Wales public schools.

The NSW Department of Education established seven science, technology, engineering and mathematics action schools to mentor and share innovative STEM practices and programs within school communities. STEM action schools implement curriculum programs that are designed to develop students' fundamental knowledge and skills in STEM subjects, as well as skills in collaboration, critical and creative thinking, and problem solving. The schools have taken the opportunity to foster and nurture students' curiosity about STEM subjects and to develop deeper engagement and learning. They inspire students to take more challenging STEM subjects in senior years and to follow pathways for STEM-related careers. Each action school has staff with individual strengths and particular expertise. The program aims to facilitate experienced staff to lead a community of practice for teaching STEM subjects across New South Wales.

The Heathcote electorate has two of the seven STEM action schools: Scarborough Public School and Otford Public School. Two of the smaller schools in the area are creating some of the largest learning opportunities for their students. Recently, I was pleased to assist Scarborough Public School with a grant of \$11,000 for flexible classroom upgrades. It is great to see the students so proud of their new learning environment. I suggest that every member of the House look at flexible learning areas. It is fantastic to see students enjoying their classes. The New South Wales Government is delivering record funding in education, including \$13.8 billion for government primary and secondary schools in 2018-19. In addition, the New South Wales Government is delivering a \$6 billion school building program over the next four years, which will deliver more than 170 new and upgraded schools to support communities throughout New South Wales. It is the largest investment in public school infrastructure of any State government in Australia's history. I commend and thank the member for Holsworthy for bringing Education Week to our attention.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (12:13): By leave: I thank members for the opportunity to speak about Education Week. I worked in education for 23 years, which I enjoyed. Last night I spoke about teachers and students, so today I pay tribute to my former colleagues: the principals of schools. All the research shows that successful schools have good leaders. I have great respect for the leadership shown by principals of the schools in the electorate of Wyong, many of whom are former colleagues. Some of those schools are difficult and have challenging elements, but the principals not only include all children and families, but also help those children and families to thrive. I am always appreciative of the work that our secondary school principals do in preparing young people for brighter futures. Gorokan High School, Wadalba Community School, Wyong High School, MacKillop Catholic College, Lakes Grammar, St Peter's Catholic College and Wyong Christian Community School are often preparing young people who have never been in tertiary education to go to university, sometimes for the first time in their family.

When I visit the schools I can see that they are vibrant places because the teachers have the room and the support they need to teach young people. Even though I worked in the primary school sector for so long, it still amazes me to see young children in kindergarten and years 1 and 2 learn to read. I love the look on their faces when they read their first book and finally grasp a concept, which we call the "lightbulb moment". My wife is an assistant principal and teaches students from kindergarten to year 2. She has taught kindergarten for a long time, and bounces between there and year 3 and back again. She is now teaching the children of the first kindergarten children she taught. She often reflects on how those young people have grown. A teacher or principal cannot be prouder than when they see a young person whom they taught many years ago succeeding. I get the great opportunity to see lots of young people in our local area go on to do good things.

It is great that the Minister for Education is in the Chamber for this debate. It is important. It does not matter which party is in power, we all understand that education is one of our most important responsibilities. Sometimes we come at things in different ways, but, as I often say, we have different roadmaps to the same destination: We want young people to succeed. It is important that this is a high priority of government, given what it means to create the young leaders of tomorrow, including business people, people who support others through social services, young entrepreneurs or future politicians. We need to make sure that we nurture them well through a strong public education system and supportive independent and private education systems. We need all the components to work together. The Government cannot do it alone and it needs those other sectors. But we must have the strongest possible public education system.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (12:18): By leave: Previous speakers have talked about the importance of education and how it can turn a person's life around. Education can lift people out of the circumstances they were born into and lead them to a better way of life. That is certainly the case in my area, where I have two Connected Communities schools: Taree High School and Taree Public School. The Connected Communities program is for schools with a high population of Aboriginal students. The school headmasters are tasked with doing whatever it takes to improve outcomes for Aboriginal students and other students at their schools. On Friday 27 July, I had the pleasure of hosting two events. The first event was the annual high school leaders breakfast, at which 40 school captains and vice-captains from high schools throughout the electorate heard

about each other, got to talk with each other, listened to me talk about leadership and asked questions about leadership and service to the community.

This year's breakfast was enhanced because we also used it as one of our youth forums. As members know, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor from the other place is hosting youth forums throughout New South Wales through the Deputy Premier's office. The Government is engaging with youth in approximately 30 locations about what they believe is good in their communities, what they believe is inadequate, and, if they were in government, what two or three things they would like to see happen for youth in their communities. It was absolutely fantastic to listen to those groups and to go through that process. When that finished, I went to Taree High School, where 90 students went through the process. It is fantastic that the Government is developing this statewide youth strategy.

Education Week is an opportunity to reflect on what is happening in education. It is great that the Government has increased the recurrent budget for the education sector by almost 50 per cent. It has also provided about three times as many teachers as the Labor Government provided and \$6 billion for school infrastructure over four years. That is the same amount the Labor Government spent over 14 years—that is, this Government is doing over four years what members opposite did over 14 years. It will spend 2.5 times more on education this year than members opposite spent in their last three years in government.

The Government has also committed to a colossal school building program across the State, with 110 projects already under construction, an additional 40 commencing this year and another 22 in the pipeline. This Government has about 172 new schools in the pipeline in contrast to members opposite closing 92 schools when they were in government. Education Week is a good time to reflect on the Government's record in this area, and I congratulate the Minister for Education on what he is doing.

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (12:22): By leave: I acknowledge and express my gratitude to every classroom teacher in New South Wales. I acknowledge my former colleagues at Walgett Community High School, Kempsey High School, Northlakes High School, Kurri Kurri High School, and Tighes Hill TAFE, where I taught modern history. They do a wonderful and increasingly challenging job. I know how much work they do away from the classroom, and as a former teacher I recognise their hard work. Often they do not get the credit they deserve, especially those teaching in tough schools, and Education Week is a great opportunity to acknowledge them.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:23): In reply: I genuinely thank the members for Fairfield, Cootamundra, Gosford, Terrigal, Heathcote, Wyong, Myall Lakes and Wallsend for contributing to this debate. I also thank the Minister for Education for being in the Chamber to hear members discuss Education Week. He knows how important it is and he shares our sentiments. It was particularly good to hear about Education Week from so many former teachers in this place. They know how important our students are to the future of this State. I mention in particular the member for Terrigal, who talked about his mother—a former teacher—who still gets phone calls from former students thanking her for what she gave them.

That encouraged me to reminisce about my favourite teachers and their impact on me. They include Ms Smiles, Mr Arnold, Mrs Leece, Mr Whiffen, with whom I still keep in contact, Mr Fogden and Mr Brown. Mr Fogden inspired in me a love of history, and Mr Brown, who also shared a love of history, gave me a taste of politics. I was the only student in his class who intended to vote Liberal, which made me undertake research so that I could support my views. That situation encouraged me to stand up for myself, and Mr Brown supported me in doing that. I thank him for giving me my taste for and start in politics.

It is our parents and citizens associations that make each school unique. They prepare applications seeking extra support for playground equipment, their canteen or their library. They also provide funds and additional support for their local schools to make them extra special. Last week I attended the Combined Community of Schools Concert at Holsworthy High School, which involved all the local schools. The Moorebank High School concert has held last night, but unfortunately I was unable able to attend because the House was still sitting. I have heard that, like the Holsworthy concert, it was fabulous. I thank the teachers and parents who offer their support and encouragement to students to be the best they can be. The Department of Education strongly supports every student achieving the best they can.

While I have this opportunity, I thank the Minister for Education for the new classrooms being provided at Prestons Public School and the new public school and high school at Edmondson Park. They will make a huge difference. While Edmondson Park is not in my electorate, it will take students from my area and in so doing will relieve the pressure being created by our rapidly growing population.

As members said, the theme of Education Week this year is "Today's schools creating tomorrow's world". This approach will support the 800,000 students and 83,000 teachers, principals and support staff in a future that

we cannot imagine. Our education system is encouraging our students to become the great leaders we need for the future. I will meet today with students and teachers from Shire Christian School, who will watch question time. I wish them all the best and I am looking forward to meeting them during Education Week. I once again thank the members who contributed to this debate and who acknowledge the importance of education.

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

Motion agreed to.

WALLSEND ELECTORATE CRIME STATISTICS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (12:28): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that Wallsend central business district business operators have experienced an increase in crime in recent years.
- (2) Notes that local police are doing their best, but the Newcastle Local Area Command [LAC] remains under-resourced.
- (3) Urges the Minister for Police to take steps to properly resource Newcastle LAC to help reduce rising crime in Wallsend.

This summer's February heat saw Wallsend businesses being slammed by a tide of petty crime. One business owner told the *Newcastle Herald* that the situation has never been worse. My office took countless calls from businesses in the area complaining about damage, petty theft, nuisance crimes and a general feeling that the area was unsafe. A local business owner told the newspaper, "We know who they are. They are a gang that targets shop to shop, causing trouble wherever they go, but for whatever reason they are still out there." Another said, "I don't know what else we can do", after remarking that her business had spent a great deal of money on security measures, including a new fence, alarms and surveillance—all of which had no effect. Members would agree that the owner has done the right thing.

Has it come to the point of businesses now having to pay for private security patrols because of poor police resourcing? Thankfully, the local business community was able to organise, rally and get something done. I applaud the members of the Wallsend Town Business Association, including president Tiffanie Campbell, secretary Fee Madigan and the executive, for their efforts. We held a roundtable meeting with the commander of the local area command, which resulted in increasing police patrols and the crime rate reducing temporarily. Wallsend businesses were able to get on with serving the community and our local cops had a chance to demonstrate how hard they work, even though they remain understaffed and under-resourced.

Since being elected I have repeatedly called for more policing staff and for more resources in the Wallsend area. I have presented a petition, bearing more than 10,000 signatures, asking for the reinstatement of a Wallsend police station. I have tried to hold this Government to its election commitment to build a police station at Glendale. I have called for increased operating hours and staffing levels at Beresfield Police Station. But it has all been to no avail because of government inaction. This Government has refused to act upon the voices of 10,000 locals. The people of Wallsend are losing faith in the ability of the police to help them. When I advise those who complain to me of crime that they should contact the police assistance line, they insist that nothing will come of it. Their frustration is growing—and it should be, with the refusal of this Government to give hardworking police officers the resources they need.

Wallsend is a wonderful place in which to work and live. Indeed, the ability of business owners to band together and help one another through this crime wave is proof of that. In our area we have dedicated hardworking public servants, especially our police who take their jobs very seriously. We need a more permanent solution than temporarily increased patrols. Despite our success in combating petty crime in the area, problems still persist—for instance, in July, in broad daylight, my staffer's car was broken into right behind our office. That weekend a pair of teenagers was arrested for a series of similar crimes. New graffiti throughout our town defaces our buildings. I acknowledge that the causes of petty crime and the necessary solutions are complex. One constituent said to me:

It is not that I feel unsafe in Wallsend, it is just that there is a lack of civic pride. That does not really make any sense to me. I have lived in Wallsend for a number of years and it is a great place to live. I think the lack of resources and amenities for young people means that simple boredom and stupidity leads to stuff like this.

I agree. We need a comprehensive approach to dealing with the causes of petty crime. We need diversionary programs for local youth and a plan to bolster a sense of belonging for everyone in the Wallsend community. We also need more cops on the beat and resources. I call on the Minister for Police to work with local policing districts to see that they get their fair share of staff and resources because the people of Wallsend deserve it.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (12:34): I speak to the motion of the member for Wallsend. At the outset I place on record my appreciation for the dedication and the hard work of all police officers right across the State, particularly those in the Hunter. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Commissioner of Police, Michael

Fuller, APM, who started in the role last year and by all accounts is doing a tremendous job on behalf of the citizens of this great State. The Commissioner is making important changes to the NSW Police Force to improve the way our police serve the community and he deserves our full support. I also place on record that Commissioner Fuller and the NSW Police Force have the full support of members of this Government.

As members should be aware, soon after his appointment Commissioner Fuller commenced a process to "re-engineer" the NSW Police Force. That process is designed to bring additional focus to frontline policing and crime prevention in communities across the State. Re-engineering has provided the NSW Police Force with more flexibility to adapt policing techniques and resources to each community in response to their own policing needs and challenges, rather than the approach of one size fits all that is sometimes suggested. It is vital that a modern police force moves with shifting demographics and changing crime trends, including new local and global threats. The Re-engineering Task Force, which the Commissioner heads and includes the Police Association of NSW, undertook significant consultation with stakeholders, including the Public Service Association, regarding the changes. The work of the task force included looking at crime trends, population density and expected growth, as well as the unique needs of each community to develop a proposed new structure to take this organisation into the future.

The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR] has reported that over the two years to March 2018, 15 of the 17 major categories of crime either fell or remained stable across the State. Other major crimes that have experienced reductions across the State are break and enter non-dwelling, down 10 per cent; steal from motor vehicle, down 3.3 per cent; and fraud, down 3.5 per cent. BOCSAR also indicated that a number of drug offences have recorded a downward trend, including dealing, trafficking of narcotics, which has decreased significantly, by 59.7 per cent, and that dealing and/or use of amphetamines fell over the reporting period—the fourth consecutive quarter to record a decrease. Further, two categories of major crime were recorded as trending upwards: sexual assault, a 7.2 per cent increase; and indecent assault, act of indecency and other sexual offences, a 6.3 per cent increase. It is important to note that those increases could be attributed to a number of factors, including victims feeling more comfortable coming forward to speak with police and the reporting of historical sexual assaults. Indeed, the NSW Police Force has been actively encouraging the community to come forward and report sexual assaults no matter when they occurred, and a lot of work is being done in supporting victims of those events. The community can rest assured their safety remains the top priority of the NSW Police Force.

This Government and the NSW Police Force will also continue to work hard to meet the State priority to ensure local government areas have stable or falling reported violent crime rates by 2019, and from BOCSAR crime reports the trends publicly reported are positive towards meeting the target. Officers from the Newcastle City Police District and the Lake Macquarie Police District are listening to their communities and responding appropriately to matters raised, including break and enters in non-dwellings and thefts from stores. In the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie area BOCSAR has reported a 40.2 per cent drop in robbery without a weapon in the two years to March 2018. That significant drop should also be acknowledged by all members in this House. In the Hunter Valley area the offence of steal from motor vehicle has fallen by 17.3 per cent, and break and enter of dwellings and non-dwellings, as well as steal from retail store, robbery with a firearm and robbery with a weapon not a firearm, have all remained stable.

The NSW Police Force continues to work with industry and retailers to address break and enters and thefts, and it urges retailers to report all incidents of such crimes. Indeed, it would come as no surprise to members what sorts of items are being stolen—alcohol, batteries, cosmetics and clothes. Retailers are encouraged to report all incidents of shoplifting so police can put appropriate strategies in place such as operations, educational forums with retailers and working with retailers to make changes to their business premises to make it harder for criminals to steal from their stores. As I said earlier, the NSW Police Force is going through a process of re-engineering. On 23 November 2017 the Commissioner announced important changes to frontline services across the State and a number of commands underwent a process of consolidation in order to provide more agile, responsive policing on the front line of the communities they serve.

In regional New South Wales, 26 new police districts were created, replacing 34 local area commands, and in the Sydney metropolitan area police area commands were created, replacing the previous local area commands—terminology that had been in use for 20 years. I again acknowledge the great work of the men and women of the NSW Police Force, and I commend the work of Commissioner Fuller in his efforts to re-engineer the NSW Police Force to ensure it provides the greatest service it can with the resources available to it. I assure police that they have the support of this side of the House in everything they do on a day-to-day basis. I oppose the motion before the House.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (12:41): I commend the member for Wallsend for bringing this motion before the House and for noting the hardworking local police officers who give their all to protect their community. The residents of Wallsend have become increasingly frustrated with the lack of support and understanding shown

to their community under this Liberal-Nationals Government. Wallsend is a truly beautiful place with wonderful people; however, they are being let down by a government that simply does not care about their needs. The police officers on the beat are giving their all to meet the growing needs of the ever-expanding community, but the Government has failed to acknowledge their needs and concerns and they continue to go without. Everyone in Wallsend is being let down.

I commend the local police district for its unwavering commitment to the Wallsend community. It has stretched its numbers thin in an attempt to ensure it can support the community, which in turn supports the police. But the local police officers cannot do it alone and have yet to be given the resources they need to adequately service the community. This not only places an unfair burden on the police officers, it also is unfair for the Wallsend community who have to go without. The member for Wallsend has spoken today about the concerns she has heard firsthand from local residents and business owners about the issues affecting the electorate.

I have joined the member for Wallsend on a number of occasions to speak to concerned local residents and business owners in the Wallsend electorate. It is clear the community is at its wit's end. It has been left frustrated by a government that prides itself on inaction and inadequacy. Local residents understand their local police officers are doing the best they can with what they have, but it simply should not be that way. The NSW Police Force should not have to spread so thin that its members are unable to appropriately service their communities. It is about time the Minister for Police gave the NSW Police Force the resources it truly deserves.

The Productivity Commission's report this year into government services highlighted, alarmingly, that New South Wales has the lowest spend per capita on police resources than any other jurisdiction in Australia. That report, which has come from Canberra, is telling it like it is. We know that many commands, one of which is in the Wallsend electorate, are basically having to go without. Policing is a tough gig. Whilst other people are running out, the police are running in. Our police officers need to be supported. The member for Wallsend has spoken about this issue on many occasions in this House. The Labor Opposition fully supports her and her community in calling on the Government to give police the resources they need in order to keep the community safe and, in turn, keep themselves safe. I support the motion put forward by the member for Wallsend.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:44): I speak against the motion moved by the member for Wallsend. I do not know about those opposite, but I am incredibly proud of the work our police do across the State, whether it is in my electorate of Terrigal or in the Hunter or Newcastle city police districts. I take this opportunity to note the great work of Superintendent Tony Joyce in my area. Tony recently replaced Danny Sullivan, whom the member for Wallsend would know very well—I believe she met with him on 25 July—as he is now superintendent of the Wallsend command.

The member for Wallsend's motion notes that "local police are doing their best" and she seeks to put the spotlight on a local issue. I am more than a little disappointed that the member has failed to properly acknowledge the efforts of the police in the police districts servicing her electorate. Since the member for Wallsend has neglected to do so, I will inform the House about the achievements of police in the diverse communities of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and the Hunter. As the member for Seven Hills mentioned, crime rates across the State are at some of the lowest level in 20 years, and it is a similar good news story for the communities of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and the Hunter.

The latest report of the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR], which covers the two years up to March this year, reports a largely stable or declining trend in violent offences in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie region. The member for Seven Hills also referred to this fact. This is a fantastic result and a true reflection of the hard work that the men and women in blue are doing in the Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Hunter areas. The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research report shows also that for the 24 months to March 2018 two of the 17 major offences were increasing in New South Wales, three were trending downward and the remaining 13 offences were stable. For Newcastle and Lake Macquarie specifically, the report shows that all but one of the crimes remained stable, the exception, unfortunately, being sexual assault. This was also outlined by the member for Seven Hills.

The community can be assured that the NSW Police Force is working hard to reduce crime across all categories, including through innovations in crime prevention. I commend the Commissioner of Police, Michael Fuller, for his re-engineering of the NSW Police Force, which has the full support of Government members. The police of both the Newcastle City and Lake Macquarie police districts use proactive crime prevention measures to deter and detect antisocial behaviour in our communities. Danny Sullivan is an outstanding police commander; he is never afraid to take a proactive approach to a new idea. When he was commander at Brisbane Water his proactive approach extended to social media and interaction with the public. He also has a willingness to interact with local business communities across our region, including in my electorate of Terrigal. I encourage the member for Wallsend to get involved with that proactive policing.

I met with Danny on regular occasions and ensured that he had contact with business communities. He would target specific issues that were raised with him by those local business communities. It is important for us as members of Parliament to act as a conduit between our local communities and our local police districts. I believe that Danny Sullivan is one of the best commanders in regard to police and community interaction. In my area, we saw a dramatic improvement in behaviour around local businesses as a result of a member of Parliament actively helping the local area command to engage with those who were concerned about antisocial issues. Rather than bringing this motion to the House, the member for Wallsend should sit down with Danny and her local business community and talk about what needs to be done. Putting police on the beat has a fantastic impact, and Danny has never been afraid to do that. He is one of the best managers of resources I have ever seen. For those reasons, I oppose the motion of the member for Wallsend.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:49): Today I speak on and in support of the motion moved by the member for Wallsend. I start my contribution by saying that each and every day I am grateful for the work of my local police officers in Lake Illawarra. In recent years crime rates have increased in the Shellharbour local government area and, sadly, the same can be said for Wollongong but this trend is not seen equally across different types or categories of crime. The frequency of crimes of malicious damage to property has increased by nearly 10 per cent over the past 12 months in Shellharbour. Similarly, the rate of domestic violence-related assault and sexual assault is stagnating or worsening. Across the broader Illawarra, robberies involving a weapon other than a firearm have doubled over a period of just two years.

In Wollongong, non-domestic-violence-related assault, sexual assault, indecent assault, robbery and motor vehicle theft have become all too frequent within a period of 12 months. Across the State we are seeing staffing shortages on our front line, police response times slowing down and our population growing exponentially, while the hiring of police officers is far too slow. For this reason, I stand in support of my colleague and I echo her calls for additional resourcing for my region and for every region in New South Wales. We need additional resources for frontline staff and we need additional investment in the resources these staff depend upon.

Just three months ago it was being reported that our State's Police Force is at breaking point. When we look at the number of police officers in our State versus the population of New South Wales, it is the lowest ratio in the country. Every other State is ahead of us. This State also has the lowest dollar per capita spent on its police force. According to figures on the NSW Police website, between January 2015 and September 2017, nearly a three-year period, my local area command did not hire a single new officer. In the broader Illawarra and southern region of New South Wales there was an overall loss of 34 police officers. The demands of our Police Force are changing. The population is growing and we need to prepare for the State's future. I thank the member for Wallsend for moving this motion and for her incredible efforts to support and ensure the safety of her community. I call on those opposite to prioritise our Police Force and the safety of our State and support this motion.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (12:52): I support the comments made by the two previous Government speakers. This motion is another example of what is becoming a theme of the Opposition: showing a total lack of understanding of policing in their electorates. I am more than happy to repeat for the benefit of the member for Wallsend the very valid point which was also made by previous speakers on this side of the House. The point is that operational decisions about operational resources are made by the Commissioner of Police. That is entirely appropriate. Decisions about the operational resourcing and structure of the NSW Police Force are for Commissioner Fuller and his team, who I am sure even the member for Wallsend would concede are infinitely more qualified in this area than members of this House.

The Government does not make the decision to close police stations, just as the Government does not make decisions about the allocation of police officers. What the Government does is provide the NSW Police Force with record funding so that it can get on with the job of keeping the community safe from harm. Under this Government, the NSW Police Force has been allocated record total expenses and capital works budgets. Those budgets are being used to fund record numbers of police officers across our great State and to provide officers with the latest facilities and technology.

Perhaps I am wrong about the Opposition being clueless and this is simply a case of the usual Labor scaremongering. I say that because Commissioner Fuller himself—again, the appropriate person to make operational decisions such as the allocation of resources—provided an update late last year on the re-engineering of the NSW Police Force. That update said that apart from "local area commands" being renamed as "police districts", the structure of the 14 regional local area commands, including Newcastle City and Lake Macquarie, will remain unchanged. It does not get any clearer than that.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (12:54): By leave: I had not intended to speak in this debate but I felt moved to do so when I heard the criticisms made of the member for Wallsend. I am dumbfounded that the three Government members who have spoken in debate have criticised the member for Wallsend for doing what every good member of Parliament does, that is, fight for resources for their electorate. The Government can mount

arguments against the motion and I am not one to criticise the police Minister, who is doing a great job, or Commissioner Mick Fuller. I know well the two local area commanders who cover the electorate of Wallsend: Brett Greentree, whose command covers the electorate of Newcastle, and Danny Sullivan, whose command covers the electorate of Lake Macquarie. The member for Terrigal referred extensively to Danny Sullivan, and I do not disagree with his remarks. The member for Wallsend has a good relationship with those district commanders, as do I.

I would be dumbfounded if the Government offered additional resources based on demographic or geographic problems in an area and the Commissioner of Police refused that money. The member for Wallsend is doing no more than requesting further resources from the Government. I do not understand why the Government does not, on occasion, suck it up and be a little generous in spirit in its approach to a proposition put by a member such as the member for Wallsend. This motion does not need a slap down. The Government can say that it believes it is doing the right thing by resourcing one of the biggest police forces in the world and it has provided extra funding. But this motion is specific to an area, the Wallsend central business district in particular. It may well be if the Government stopped and looked at the situation it would discover that the member for Wallsend is correct.

If the Government asked Superintendent Brett Greentree whether he required more resources, I am sure that the district commander would say, "Of course I do". I am sure any commander in New South Wales would say that, including the district commander for Lake Macquarie. Over the years I have gone in to bat for more resources for Lake Macquarie. The member for Wallsend has put forward a reasonable proposition. It is the same argument that every member of this House should put forward from time to time in order to look after the interests of their community. Each and every one of us would have members in our community who have concerns about policing. We should be able to come into this House and ask the Government to look at the issue. I fully support the member for Wallsend for putting the proposition and I ask the Government to give proper consideration to her motion.

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (12:58): In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Seven Hills, Fairfield, Terrigal, Shellharbour, Drummoyne and Lake Macquarie for contributing to the debate. I am worried that the bureaucrats in the police Minister's office gave the member for Seven Hills the incorrect speech because he spent the first five minutes speaking about general issues of policing and re-engineering. I am uncomfortable with the term "re-engineering"; it feels heartless. He did not mention Wallsend or the issues I raised. I believe he had the wrong speech. I will give him the benefit of the doubt.

I thank the member for Fairfield for his support. The member has visited Wallsend a number of times to talk to people about their issues and concerns, particularly in relation to Beresfield where the police station is operational for only four hours per week. That is an area that could be improved. The member for Terrigal did not listen to my speech, otherwise he would know that I am proud of our police. I am disappointed that he did not pay attention to that fact. He spent a lot of time talking about the term "re-engineering" but did not mention the issues relating to Wallsend, which is disappointing. He said that police on the beat have a big impact, and I totally agree. That is why I and the community want to see more police on the beat in Wallsend. The member for Shellharbour spoke of similar concerns in her electorate and acknowledged the hard work of police. The member for Shellharbour requires additional resources in her electorate, as do I.

The member for Drummoyne said there was a theme—a lack of understanding. The member for Drummoyne does not understand what my motion is all about. It acknowledges the hard work of police, that they have a stressful job and that we need more of them. I am happy for Commissioner Fuller to visit Wallsend at any time. If he decides to visit I will make him a cup of tea. Operational resourcing is a matter for the commissioner. I do not agree with the member for Drummoyne who said that people in Wallsend are clueless. Local businesses had a big increase in the number of break-ins in January and female business operators were scared to go to their cars at night because they were being hassled and threatened by a group of young thugs and bullies. They are not clueless; they just want a solution to the problem of rising crime rates in Wallsend. It is insulting to use the term "clueless" when referring to members of my community. The member for Lake Macquarie understands my motion.

I acknowledge all our local commanders—I have three in my electorate—in Central Hunter, Newcastle and Lake Macquarie. They do a wonderful job under the circumstances but they know that they are under resourced. They would all love more police officers. They will not say that publicly but, as the member for Lake Macquarie said, none of them would knock back more police cars or more police officers on the beat. The member for Lake Macquarie said that I was just doing my job, which is what we all try to do. That job is to stick up for my local community and to put the community first. That is what a member of Parliament does. There was a spike in crime in Wallsend in January and my constituents and members of the business community were worried about it. I organised a roundtable and invited a local area commander and he was great. We need to fight for our

communities. I will continue to fight every day for members of my community. I urge members to support this motion.

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

The House divided.

Ayes34
Noes44
Majority..... 10

AYES

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McKay, Ms J
Minns, Mr C
Piper, Mr G
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Washington, Ms K

Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J (teller)
Hornery, Ms S
McDermott, Dr H
Mihailuk, Ms T
Parker, Mr J
Tesch, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr L.J.
Gibbons, Ms M
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Lee, Dr G
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

Ayres, Mr S
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Fraser, Mr A
Goward, Ms P
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Wilson, Ms F

Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Evans, Mr A.W.
George, Mr T
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G

PAIRS

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

Barilaro, Mr J
Berejiklian, Ms G
Elliott, Mr D
Grant, Mr T

Motion negatived.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE SPORTS CLUBS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:08): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges and congratulates Brooke Losco at the recent Bjelke-Petersen Physical Culture Senior National Finals for winning the national title of Second Year Senior Champion Girl.
- (2) Congratulates Brooke's physie teacher, Heidi Turner of Mosman Physie, and notes her work and dedication.

- (3) Notes and congratulates Brooke's fellow finalists Mikayla Antoniadis, Ella Burke, Amy Duchemin-Nichols, Laura Ganley, Hayley Kerin, Sarah Ryan and Lara Sloggett. The sporting community in my electorate of North Shore has truly gone from strength to strength over the past few years, with clubs reporting increased membership, and their members continuing to achieve the extraordinary. These achievements have been added to by the Berejiklian Government's introduction of the Active Kids rebate, which is accessible for all types of sporting activities, including physie—physical culture. I try to support as many of my clubs and teams as possible, and I am always proud of the achievements that they make in our local community and on a national and global scale. While many sporting clubs across the North Shore compete, others are social clubs that play games for fun and enjoyment. Our community is ever conscious of the importance of a healthy and active lifestyle. I commend each of the local clubs and sporting leaders who encourage many of us to engage with sport as players and spectators, and particularly the volunteers who deliver the sports at those organisations.

The motion before the House mentions the contribution and success of one individual in particular from Mosman Physie—Brooke Losco. Mosman Physie is a community-based not-for-profit organisation that invests in developing people from the age of three to adults. It is a mix of aerobics, jazz ballet, and a number of different physical activities and components in which young girls are particularly interested in participating. At the recent Bjelke-Petersen Physical Culture Senior National Finals, Brooke took out the national title of Second Year Senior Champion Girl. I commend Brooke for this fantastic result as well as her physie teacher, Heidi Turner, from Mosman Physie. I acknowledge Heidi's significant work and dedication, which undoubtedly helped Brooke across the line. I commend and congratulate Brooke's fellow finalists—Mikayla Antoniadis, Ella Burke, Amy Duchemin-Nichols, Laura Ganley, Hayley Kerin, Sarah Ryan and Lara Sloggett.

I will now mention some of the achievements of the clubs and organisations in my community. I have been fortunate to visit the Mosman Croquet Club on a number of occasions. Its contribution to our local community supports people who might otherwise be isolated or who do not have the same level of family support. A lot of single seniors participate in games and events at the croquet club. Those who give of their time to run the Mosman Croquet Club include Marjorie Lehmann, Gordon Scott, Maria Gibson, Janet Bickett, Robert Gibson, Ron Humpherson, Kay Bergin, Fidy Westgarth, Monique Ginell, and Lynn Snedden. Last week I joined the Mosman Junior Rugby Club to celebrate its sixtieth anniversary end of season event.

Those organisations could not operate without significant volunteer support, particularly from parents. This was an exciting event for the parents, which was held at Sergeants Mess in Mosman. I thank club president John Mutton, secretary Sarah Allsopp, minis registrar Mark Whittingham, juniors registrar Erika Von Armin, minis coordinator Andrew Brown, representative coordinator Matthew Ball, sponsorship coordinator Luke Harman, events coordinator Emma Seutter and facilities manager Henry Bateman for their work and contribution to the club.

This weekend I will join the Northern Suburbs Rugby Football Club for its final home game of the season at North Sydney Oval. This club has made significant contributions to our local community. The club was formed in 1900 as a result of a merger of two other clubs, the Pirates and Wallaroos, and has produced 42 Wallabies. I recently presented the club with a grant to purchase uniforms for the Women's Seven team as they expand and develop the women's program at Norths. I congratulate its board, led by president Grahame O'Donnell, rugby director Chris Hall, and directors Anthony Crawford, Bradley Leahy, Michael Callanan, Justin Tamsett, Peter Stewart, Cameron Shepherd, Samantha Shepherd and Patrick Nakkan. The club is also supported by a number of sponsors that enable our citizens to stay healthy and engaged. I acknowledge the introduction of the club's high-quality player development program for women under the stewardship of Caitlin Aquilina.

We have a lot of wonderful water-based sports in Mosman because it is bounded on three sides by Sydney Harbour and Middle Harbour. The Mosman Rowing Club is not only an elite rowing club but also a community club. At the recent 2018 National Rowing Championships, which were held on the Lake Barrington International Rowing Course in Tasmania, the Mosman Rowing Club proved resilient, finishing the regatta in sixth place on champion club points, scoring 95 against competing clubs. It was the most successful New South Wales club.

Coach Steve "Rocky" Gordon recently coached the New South Wales Men's State Eight, consisting entirely of Mosman Rowing Club members, which was coxed by the club's very own Wendy. They finished in a close second spot, gaining a silver medal. Mark Connaghan co-coached the New South Wales Women's State Eight, which included club members Jane and Liz, with Claire coxing them to an exciting bronze medal. Mosman Master Jenny had a seat in the New South Wales Women's State Four, finishing sixth in tough conditions. These are but a few of the sporting community and elite clubs in my local area. It is important to acknowledge, recognise and congratulate the achievements of our local clubs as well as their members. I congratulate Brooke Losco and other individuals and organisations.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (13:16): I commend the member for North Shore for moving this motion. I am a father of four extremely active children. Each evening and weekend our family is often at three or four different places, depending on who is playing where. We all have a responsibility to do everything we can to ensure that our younger generation are active. Things were different when we grew up—not necessarily for the

member for North Shore, but for me and Minister Williams, who is present in the Chamber. In my younger days, we played tennis on Atari, but it kept our attention for only a short time. Being outside was the way to go. Today, children are competing with many computer games. I commend Minister Ayres for implementing the \$100 Active Kids rebate. Although the Premier is ensuring that the Government addresses childhood obesity, it is the responsibility of us all.

When people ask me what my hobbies are, I tell them I enjoy nothing more than watching my kids play sport. I am extremely proud of them. My youngest, Matthew, has just turned 10 and plays for the Camden Tigers during the soccer season. We do not count the score in under-10s, but they went through the season undefeated. I acknowledge that they had one draw in a local derby against Bellgenny Camden Falcons. We played that team in the last week of the season. Again, we do not count the score, but our team went from 3-3 in the first round to 7-0 in the last game. Matt then moves to cricket. He will be in the under-11 team this year for the Camden Cricket Club. He is a very good batsman. Last year he averaged 35 runs. Matt also took a number of dismissals behind the stumps. Like his older brother, Tom, he is also a wicketkeeper. In all good families there is a competitive family spirit and younger siblings want to outdo their older siblings. When they play in the backyard I can see that the 10-year-old wants to beat the 15-year-old.

One of my twins, 15-year-old Sophie, has finished her season for the Macarthur Rams, which is a top division ladies soccer team and the highest division in which she can play. They had a hard season this year because 11 of the 15 girls came from park football. Although it was hard work, they finished in a different position to where they started. The first game of the season was against Manly, which was one of the top sides. They won last year's premiership and ran us all over the park.

In their last game of the season, they had improved so much. I am proud of every one of those young ladies because they have come from their comfort zone in park football to "Welcome to 1st grade", as the old saying goes. I hope the club sticks with the girls and I hope the girls stick with the club, because they will be so much better for the run next year. Speaking of the younger brother wanting to outdo the older brother, Sophie has a nice, friendly rivalry with her twin brother, Tom. Tom's sport is cricket and I am very proud that he is a Campbelltown Camden Ghost. Last year, as a 14-year-old, he debuted in the 4th Grade of Sydney grade cricket, which is a tremendous achievement. He is training the house down this year. He will be playing his third year of Green Shield, which itself is a huge achievement. He loves his sport and does a great job. I will not leave out Amelia, my eldest. She is probably the least into sport but, that said, she is currently doing her Higher School Certificate. Today she has her maths exam.

Mr John Sidoti: What school?

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: Macarthur Anglican School. She is doing her trials and I must say, after a late start of about 11 or 12 years, she has really kicked in this year. We are very proud of her achievements. She has realised at the tail end that a bit of hard work helps. She is doing a fantastic job and I am extremely proud of her. Anything that we can do for kids' sport is something that I would encourage. With the indulgence of the House, I acknowledge Ollie Pope—the under-19 England wicketkeeper—who came to Australia last year and was the 1st grade keeper at the Ghosts. Ollie scored 994 runs and took 38 dismissals during the season. I am extremely proud of him. Ollie went back to England and is now playing 1st grade for Surrey. He then made the emerging Lions. Tonight, I encourage everybody to watch Test 2, England versus India, live on Fox Sports at 8.00 p.m. with Ollie Pope, last year's Campbelltown Camden Ghost wicketkeeper, making his debut for England. We wish him all the best.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services) (13:23): I am disappointed that the member for Camden did not mention his uncles, aunties, his three cousins and their extended family. He has just about mentioned everyone in his close-knit family and his children, as we all have. I commend the member for North Shore for bringing this motion to the House to discuss the importance not only of sports in terms of health, but also of sporting associations in general across our electorates. In an area such as The Hills, we have a predominance of every imaginable code with a high participation rate in all sports. I reflect back to a couple of Saturdays ago when my favourite Rouse Hill Rhinos rugby league club, which has no fewer than 600 members, held its annual Pink Day, raising money for women with breast cancer, which it has done successfully for eight years consecutively. The community gets behind it, as we all do. Full credit goes to the Rouse Hill Rhinos and all their members.

I mention, of course, my beloved Hills Football Association, about which I have spoken many times in this House. It is a hard-fought association that, in this current season, has some 11,500 to 12,000 members from The Hills. Full credit goes to current chief executive officer Kurt Johnson, president Craig Gough and all the executive team and board members who have worked tirelessly to build an outstanding soccer association in our area. The numbers are testament to that. The Hills is predominantly one of the fastest-growing areas in the north-west sector, with those wonderful suburbs such as Kellyville, Castle Hill, Rouse Hill, Beaumont Hills, Glenhaven

et al, which have a high predominance of families with children who love to get out on the sports field for the sake of their health.

As the previous member said, one of the Premier's priorities is childhood obesity. There is no better way to address that than to ensure that the Government is doing everything it can to keep young people happy and out on the sports field for the sake of their health. The Minister for Sport introduced what is known as the Active Kids rebate, which provides a \$100 rebate to every family for every child who plays one sport in a year. It has been incredibly successful and families in my area greatly appreciate that rebate. It minimises the cost of living for hardworking families, as have other measures the Government has introduced, such as reducing the cost of third party green slips and electricity bills. It all goes a long way to helping out families.

I recognise the importance of this motion, especially for the health of our young people. I mention our wonderful Baulkham Hills Shire Netball Association at Rouse Hill, which is just around the corner from my place. I always know it is netball season when I hear the sirens go off. Many thousands of young ladies are out there every Saturday morning participating in a wonderful sport, one in which my daughter, Kylie, participated for so long. I congratulate the member for North Shore and our wonderful sporting associations, which provide great healthy opportunities for young people.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:27): In reply: I thank the members who contributed to the debate on this motion today. The member for Camden spoke significantly about his local community, his family and their involvement in sports. I understand he has spoken a lot about the Campbelltown Camden Ghosts in this place—he is a big supporter and fan. I also thank the member for Castle Hill for his contribution. He is an avid supporter of his local sporting clubs as well, having spoken about them regularly. He knows how important it is to support kids through his own family by ensuring they have access to high-quality sports and physical activity, and the difference it makes to those individuals and our communities more broadly. I am sure that both of those members have been dragged out on weekends to take their kids to sporting activities but also volunteered on the pitch or the court—families and parents are, in many ways, the unsung heroes of these sporting associations. They are the ones who make sure sporting activities are delivered. We would not have the capacity to field a workforce to deliver everything they do as individuals.

In wrapping up the debate on the motion, I acknowledge in particular Mosman Physie Club, its students and its success. Further to my previous comments about Mosman Physie Club's national champion Brooke Losco, recently she was named as the *Mosman Daily's* first Local Sports Star Junior Sports Star nominee for 2018. She is considered a physie veteran at the age of 17 because she started the sport when she was two years old. This is her second consecutive Australian title; she previously won as a first-year senior in the 16-year-old division and she was a runner-up when she was 15. I know that she has contributed also to Mosman Physie Club's strength. Earlier this year Brooke attended a trip to Disneyland and Universal Studios with the club. I can only imagine that the younger girls really look up to her. Since that point just last month, a number of the Mosman Physie dancers have also been nominated for Local Sports Star awards. Last year, a team of girls aged five to six won the national title at Sydney Olympic Park. Their huge achievement has been lauded with their nomination by the *Mosman Daily* for a Local Sports Star award for the whole team.

They have a significant commitment to their sport, spending two classes every week training. I acknowledge some of the teachers at Mosman Physie, in particular Chelsea Quinn. I acknowledge their contribution in supporting them; I know their work will be so significant in empowering these young girls by building their confidence and skills. By keeping physically active they are able to excel in high-stake competitions. As I said earlier when I was speaking about some of the broad range of sporting clubs in my community, we really do have a mix of all of the elite athletes and performers. We have people who are winning local, State, national and international championships and then we have community clubs that are about being active, participating, reducing isolation and just getting involved. I praise Brooke at Mosman Physie, and congratulate all of our other sporting clubs on everything they do. I also congratulate the athletes, their supporters, parents and volunteers.

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

Motion agreed to.

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

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to the members of the Mortdale Probus Club, guests of the member for Oatley, and Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Infrastructure. I welcome students and

teachers from the Shire Christian School, guests of the member for Holsworthy, and Deputy Government Whip. I welcome Leanne and Richard Port, guests of the member for Coogee. I welcome members of the North Shore SEC, guests of the member for North Shore. I welcome Elle Griffin, who is the sister of the member for Manly. I recognise in the gallery Ms Jill Hall, Federal member for Shortland and former member for Swansea, who is accompanied by her U3A Politics Group, guests of the member for Charlestown. I also welcome Tim James, the former Chief of Staff to Minister Roberts, guest of the member for North Shore.

Question Time

TRANSPORT FOR NSW CONTRACT DISCLOSURES

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:20): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Will the Minister confirm that Transport for NSW has for years failed to comply with its disclosure obligations and that since his Government came to office more than 1,000 contracts, totalling over \$1 billion, have not been published as required by law?

The SPEAKER: The member for Maroubra will come to order. Members will be removed from the Chamber if they continue to interject. I call the member for The Entrance to order for the first time.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (14:21): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for asking about documents because I happen to have some undisclosed documents from when Labor was last in office. Which project do they relate to? The metro. It turns out that the former Labor Government did not follow protocols and release documents publicly as well.

The SPEAKER: If the member for Strathfield interjects again she will be placed on a call to order or will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: What is telling about the documents is that \$17.3 million was spent by the Labor Party on the metro when it was last in office, yet how much track did it lay and how many trains did it buy? Zero. What is interesting about Labor documents that have not been disclosed is an absolute purler in relation to west metro.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Bankstown that I do not want a repeat of yesterday.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It is called the Shadow Operator Management Document. What that says to me is that the dear old friends of the Leader of the Opposition down at the Rail, Tram and Bus Union [RTBU] need to be aware that the Labor Party had a secret plan to privatise the railway, otherwise they would not have been using this consultant to devise a benchmark between a shadow operator and the project, which is called Sydney Metro.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Those opposite spent \$17.3 million and failed to build an ounce of metro. However, we now have to go through this humiliating approach from Opposition members, who think that they will somehow build the metro quicker than the Government.

Mr David Mehan: Point of order: The question was about current contracts and the current Government, not the past.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: This Government is building an infrastructure program that is transforming the State after 16 years when members opposite did not build a thing. It includes 12 rail lines.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! I have ruled on relevance. Does the member have a different point of order?

Ms Jodi McKay: Yes. It is under Standing Order 129. The question relates to the failure of the Government to disclose 1,000 contracts.

The SPEAKER: That is not a different point of order. I said I had ruled on relevance. The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. The Minister remains relevant to the question.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I do not think the member for Strathfield should be talking about disclosure given the Parliament Ethics Adviser's ruling on her failing to disclose property assets and coming in here and asking questions about them.

Ms Jodi McKay: You are kidding.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Taking a lecture from you about disclosure is a bit like—I don't know. It's a bit like herpes.

Ms Jodi McKay: As the Minister knows, I sought that advice.

Mr Brad Hazzard: You can dance to that.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Strathfield to order for the first time. That was not a point of order. If the member behaves in that manner again she will be placed on three calls to order and removed from the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I am not going to do the cha-cha like the health Minister, but seriously? The member for Strathfield wants to talk about disclosure.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: On that score, the member for Strathfield is the last person to be talking about disclosure. The documents to which the Leader of the Opposition referred go back to 2007. Guess who was in government then? Labor.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. I advise members that they may take points of order but they will not come to the microphone and argue with a Minister. I again ask members to follow the instructions of the Chair when they are called to order. Some members did not do that yesterday and that is why they were removed from Chamber. I invite members to look at the relevant standing orders.

COST OF LIVING

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (14:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government helping to ease cost of living pressures for households across the State?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:27): I thank the member for Riverstone for that question. I know that his constituents are especially interested in the response. Notwithstanding how well our State is doing and that we have the lowest unemployment rate, the highest jobs growth, a budget in the black and strong economic growth, we know that families and—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I would have thought the member for Cessnock's constituents would care about cost of living pressures as well.

Mr Clayton Barr: They do.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Then you should listen. Notwithstanding the success of our State and the Treasurer's outstanding work in making sure that New South Wales stays on top, we are concerned about the cost of living pressures for individuals in our communities and families in particular. That is why across government we have 40 programs designed to reduce cost of living pressures, including the price of green slips. I am pleased to say that, because of the hard work of the Minister for Finance, Services and Property, our reforms are now resulting in savings of about \$120 a year on average for every green slip purchased. In Sydney it is around \$272 for a green slip. In the bush it is slightly less, but this is a huge win. More than 1.6 million individual policyholders have claimed the refund so far, which is really positive. In addition to the green slip fee reduction, people are also receiving refunds.

I am pleased to provide an update on our car registration plan. We know that nobody likes to pay tolls—I do not like to pay to tolls. Anybody who pays \$25 a week on average on tolls will now get free car registration. Depending on the type of vehicle they have, that can amount to \$729 in savings per account. That is very substantial. It is another cost of living pressure that we are reducing. I am also pleased to hear through Service NSW and the Minister for Finance, Services and Property that the FuelCheck app is really popular. About 280,000 motorists have already downloaded it. It gives people a good indication about the least expensive places to buy their fuel. We estimate that motorists can save up to \$500 a year by using the app. That is another cost of living pressure reduction. The Active Kids program is a wonderful initiative announced by the Treasurer and the Minister for Sport through which all parents benefit from the \$100 voucher for activities for school-age children conducted outside of school. This is for every child, so if you are the Treasurer and have five children that could be extra savings into the future.

[Interruption]

It is a secret plan. I add for the record that the Treasurer's children are not all school age. We are also very pleased to provide energy bill relief. We are delivering a special program whereby people, instead of having

to call the retailers, can use a special switch program through Service NSW. That will potentially save hundreds of dollars every single year. We are also pleased to have reduced cost of living pressures for small businesses by reducing the payroll taxes that they have to pay. I must confess that I have been vigilant in asking every member in this place to tell their constituents about these measures. I have announced only some of them; there are 40 in all. I have asked every member to be active and to make sure that they tell their community, because we do not want anyone to miss out. Our fear is that because people might not necessarily know about them, they might miss out.

Some members have been better than others in promoting the measures. One member wrote a fantastic letter to his constituents. He said, "One of the main issues people raise, particularly when I am out and about in our community, is cost of living pressures. I want to share with you some information which could put extra money back in your pocket." He lists the cashback on the M5, which we continue. He lists the compulsory third party green slip refunds. He talks about the Active Kids program and about energy rebates. It is a fantastic letter and I only wish all of my members would do it as well. But this letter is from the member for Heffron.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The member for Rockdale will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say this in all sincerity: The member for Heffron has done the right thing. I mean that genuinely, because we want people to benefit from this. The only issue I take exception to is that his party claims to be there for the most vulnerable and for the workers, but it takes a Liberal-Nationals Government to deliver these cost of living measures. I am incredibly proud of that. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the second time. If he continues to interject, he will be removed from the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I encourage all members to promote these initiatives because in the budget the Treasurer identified and set aside pots of money for them. The Government wants to make sure that people take advantage of that. The initiatives are on top of all the existing rebates that we already have, which are in excess of \$1 billion. These additional measures make sure that families and individuals are able to ensure that, no matter what their circumstances, there is a saving to be had—whether it is through the cost of running a car, energy bills or public transport fares, which we have managed to keep low. There is a whole range of issues.

The Government is not only confident but also compassionate, and in a strong enough budget position to be able to return this to the community. I thank the member for Heffron and urge every member of Parliament to promote the initiatives in their community. We want to see more members ensure that their constituents are benefiting from the 40 programs across government. I also take this opportunity to thank and congratulate Service NSW staff out there who are making sure that our citizens are aware of these initiatives and are processing them with record speed. I am very pleased with feedback that we have been getting from Service NSW about the speed with which people are being dealt with. I encourage all citizens to take advantage of these wonderful measures.

TRANSPORT FOR NSW CONTRACT DISCLOSURES

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:34): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure.

[*Interruption*]

I know—he is in a bit of trouble today.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield should ask her question.

Ms JODI McKAY: Why was a \$14.9 million contract for IT consultants, which Transport for NSW entered into in 2014 when the Premier was Transport Minister, not disclosed until last month?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (14:34): I think I adequately answered that question in the last answer, but the point I would make is that Labor spent \$17.3 million on a project that was not built—a bit like the Northwest Metro, which was not built, despite those opposite committing to it three times.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: We should reflect on who might have been the Deputy Director-General of Transport at the time.

Mr Ryan Park: Who was he? Stand up.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I thought you were standing up.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the third time. The member for Keira will be removed from the Chamber if he continues to interject.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 126. The question was about an IT contract.

The SPEAKER: At the moment, the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure is being relevant. It is very early in his answer, but he has been relevant so far.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The question was about the exposure of contracts, which those opposite failed to do with a \$17.3 million Sydney Metro contract, which they did not build. I say to the people in the gallery and the people of this State: Go and have a look at what is happening in this State in terms of the delivery of contracts—\$87 billion worth of infrastructure over the next four years.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order: Here is \$1 billion of Government contracts. The Government should put them out or I will put them out every day until budget estimates.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat.

Mr Jihad Dib: I am sure I heard a word that was unparliamentary.

The SPEAKER: I did not hear it.

Mr Jihad Dib: A lot of people seem to have heard it.

The SPEAKER: Order! I did not.

WESTERN SYDNEY WORKER PROTECTION

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:37): My question is addressed to the Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations. How is the New South Wales Government better protecting workers in Western Sydney, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:37): I thank the member for Holsworthy for her question and support of workers across the State of New South Wales. The Berejiklian-Barilaro Government always works in the best interests of employees across New South Wales. When Labor was in office, the workers compensation scheme, like the rest of the State, was on the verge of bankruptcy. It was \$4 billion in deficit, premiums were due to increase by 28 per cent and 12,000 jobs were at risk. Labor opposed our Insurance and Care NSW reforms, but now the member for Cessnock backs them.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much noise in the Chamber. The member for Cessnock and the member for Londonderry will cease interjecting.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: As a result of the Government's reforms, the scheme is now back in good financial health and is providing workers with the protections they need, especially the workers of Western Sydney. Yesterday was a great day for the workers of Western Sydney not only because we have the best workers compensation scheme in the country and the lowest unemployment rate since records began in Western Sydney, but also because Emma Husar decided to stand down. This has been a David and Goliath battle, but this time the workers fought back against the NSW Labor Party machine and won. But the fight is not over: Emma Husar is still there, still a member of the Labor Party and still collecting a \$200,000 taxpayer-funded salary.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira is on his final warning.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: There are only three people in this country who think this state of affairs is acceptable.

Mr David Harris: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer is being relevant to the question he was asked. Does the member for Wyong wish to raise another point of order?

Mr David Harris: Is he not the Treasurer of New South Wales? My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Treasurer is talking about Federal issues.

The SPEAKER: Order! I said that the Treasurer is being relevant. He is talking about workers. There is no point of order. The member for Wyong will resume his seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The only people who think this is an acceptable state of affairs are Emma Husar, Bill Shorten and Luke Foley, who is a senior member of the New South Wales Labor Party. All of this has unfolded under his watch and he has done absolutely nothing to stand up for the workers.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am talking about State issues. The Leader of the Opposition supported the shadow Minister for Industrial Relations in giving legal advice to Emma Husar in her case against the workers he is meant to represent. These incidents are par for the course for the New South Wales Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: Order! I just called the member for Port Stephens to order for the third time and she is interjecting again!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Former Labor Party Secretary, and now adviser to the Leader of the Opposition, Jamie Clements, was accused of bullying. The member for Prospect was accused of bullying. Now Emma Husar has been accused of bullying. There is clearly something rotten at the core of the Labor Party. Clearly something so bad happened in 2016 that the New South Wales Labor Party decided to adopt a code of conduct. I have a copy of it with me—all one page of it. The second paragraph states:

Party Unit Officials are to act in a manner so as to advance the interests of the Party and its membership.

There it is! The Labor Party puts everyone else, including workers, last.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Bankstown not to screech like that again. It is unbecoming.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. The Treasurer's response is inconsistent with the question.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer is being relevant.

Mr Greg Warren: If he wants to have a debate about conduct, we will have it that any day of the week, but let us do it before the Wagga Wagga by-election.

The SPEAKER: Order! That was simply an opportunity for the member for Campbelltown to say what he was yelling from the backbench. Given that, I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: This is not a code of conduct; this is a code of silence. Importantly, who wrote this code? The Labor Party's 2016 State Conference report states:

NSW Labor ... has contracted... John Whelan to provide recommendations to improve the Party Office.

Mr Fixit is everywhere. John Whelan is paid to write the rules and again to clear Labor Party members who break them. [*Extension of time*]

This is not a new issue. In 2006, Labor staffer Gillian Sneddon bravely risked everything to expose Labor Minister and child sex offender Milton Orkopoulos. How did the New South Wales Labor Party treat her? She said, "I was treated like I was the scum of the earth"—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: That was in 2006, and it was not in Western Sydney.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is still relevant.

Ms Jodi McKay: No, it was in Toronto.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Members opposite do not like this. Gillian Sneddon said she was treated like the scum of the earth for being a traitor to the Labor Party and that even today Labor members of Parliament turn their backs on her wherever she goes. Because the Labor Party did nothing, she had to go all the way to the Supreme Court to get justice. Members opposite turned a blind eye. As the code of conduct states, they will always put their party interests first and the people last.

It is time for the New South Wales Labor Party and the Leader of the Opposition to take action, to rewrite the code of conduct, to make public the findings of the investigation when it is released tomorrow and to apologise formally to the bullied workers on behalf of the Labor Party. The shadow Minister for Industrial Relations should join in making that apology. Members opposite should ensure that Emma Husar is expelled from the New South Wales Labor Party, effective immediately. I remind the Labor Party and the Leader of the Opposition that the standard they walk by is the standard they accept. Every day that Emma Husar remains a member of the Labor

Party a message is sent to employers in this State that bullying their employees is acceptable. We on this side are the party of the workers. We will always stand up for workers across the State.

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order before I call the member for Prospect. The member for Maroubra will remain silent.

TRANSPORT FOR NSW CONTRACT DISCLOSURES

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (14:45): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Minister, why was the \$16.4 million contract for management and business consultants that Transport for NSW entered into in 2015 only disclosed last month?

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (14:45): Of all people to ask a question after the Treasurer's last answer, who would they get up? The member for Prospect, John Whelan's best mate, the bloke who covered up everything about the member for Prospect—"Of course, we had an independent Labor inquiry into the member for Prospect."

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The bottom line is—just to help out those opposite—I am being asked about the disclosure of documents.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira will come to order or he will remove himself from the Chamber.

The SPEAKER: Order! The secretary of the department goes to the Information Commissioner and makes disclosures. The problem is that these documents go back to 2007, when those opposite were last in office. Therein lies the point. Point made. Rather than a question on disclosure, the member for Prospect and the member for Strathfield should ask sensible questions on transport issues. Those opposite are really in touch with the issues that matter to the people of this State! They ask a question about an IT contract going back to 2014. Well done; another good day at the office.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Has the Minister completed his answer?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Yes.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale will resume his seat. The Minister has completed his answer.

Mr Stephen Kamper: He has been tricky all afternoon.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockdale should watch and learn what goes on in question time. He has been a member of this House for 3½ years.

COUNTERTERRORISM LEGISLATION

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (14:47): My question is addressed to the Attorney General. What is the NSW Government doing in the courts to ensure that the people of New South Wales remain safe from high-risk terrorist offenders?

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. The member for Cessnock, the member for Kogarah and the member for Strathfield will cease interjecting.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (14:48): I thank the member for Ku-ring-gai for his question on this extremely important topic, which I am sure is of interest to all members. I thank the member for Ku-ring-gai also for his very significant legal policy contributions to this Parliament. In New South Wales the threat of terrorism is complex and continues to evolve. New South Wales remains on the front foot with the toughest anti-terror laws in the country. Last December we introduced the Terrorism (High Risk Offenders) Act, which does two things: it complements the Commonwealth high-risk offender legislation and it builds on our own structures in relation to sex and violent high-risk offenders.

The scheme under this Act allows the Supreme Court when satisfied to a standard of high probability that there is an unacceptable risk of a terrorism act being committed to impose either a continuing detention order or an extended supervision order for up to three years and in the meantime to impose interim supervision and detention orders for up to three months. The legislation closed a loophole in Commonwealth and New South Wales legislation. The Commonwealth legislation dealt with Commonwealth terrorist offences and our legislation

dealt with sex and violence offences. But there was a gap in relation to those who had committed New South Wales' terrorism offences or had been convicted of terrorism-related offences, such as a firearms offence, or who may have been radicalised in prison.

Very recently, yesterday and last month, the New South Wales Government successfully obtained the first two extended supervision orders under this new Act. The first such order related to Gregory Ceissman. His head sentence was for three years and six months with a non-parole period of two years and four months. He had been imprisoned for car theft—nothing to do with terrorism, and that is the gap that this legislation fills. The State alleged that, among other things, he had told people that he was planning to attack Marrickville police station, to use explosives, to behead a police officer and to shoot as many police as possible during the attack.

When he was released from prison on the car theft charge he was subject to an interim supervision order. He was arrested for failing to comply with that order and placed back into custody and the State applied for an extended supervision order. On 18 July the Supreme Court ordered that he be supervised for two years, including by electronic monitoring. Fifty-four orders were made, including electronic monitoring and that he provide a list of the places he proposed to visit, seek approval if he wanted to go somewhere else, not live anywhere other than his approved address, not leave New South Wales without approval, surrender his passport, not possess weapons, not hire or drive a vehicle without approval and be subject to search and seizure at any time that the authorities thought reasonable.

The second successful order was obtained yesterday in relation to Ahmed Elomar, whose head sentence was four years and eight months with a non-parole period of two years and six months. He had been imprisoned for reckless wounding of a police officer in the execution of his duty during a public disorder—the Hyde Park riots a few years ago. The State's case was that he had subsequently engaged in violent episodes and threats outside prison, that his behaviour in prison was consistent with supporting terrorist activity and that he had family associations. Yesterday the State successfully obtained an extended supervision order for two years. All conditions that the State sought were ordered—conditions very similar to those imposed on Ceissman, including electronic monitoring, a requirement to provide a list of approved places, restrictions on travel outside New South Wales and on association, and so on.

It is important to note that these are not orders that the State, I as Attorney General, the police commissioner, the police Minister or the Premier are imposing. These are very serious and extraordinary orders that deal with very serious and extraordinary times where, with judicial oversight, the court is satisfied to a high degree of probability that there is an unacceptable risk of terrorist offences. This is a government that has its priorities straight. Our first priority always has to be community safety. We have made public safety the number one criteria in parole applications. Our sentencing reforms have community safety at the core of any orders that are made. To protect against the terrorist threat that we all face in Australia, particularly in New South Wales, we have tightened bail and parole laws and enhanced police investigative powers and police powers where there is a siege, such as the one at the Lindt Cafe. All those are unfortunate steps that we have had to take. They are all steps we have taken with appropriate checks and balances and they are all steps designed to fulfil our number one obligation as a government: to protect the people of New South Wales and to uphold community safety.

WAGGA WAGGA WATERWAYS CONTAMINATION

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (14:53): My question is directed to the Minister for the Environment. Given that per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances [PFAS] contamination has already entered the creeks and rivers around Wagga Wagga, what steps is the Minister taking to ensure the safety of local residents?

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (14:53): This is a new low from Labor.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members who are already on one or two calls to order are now placed on three calls to order.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: This is a new low for the member for Port Stephens. We all know that contamination from per- and poly-fluoroalkyl [PFAS] substances is a serious issue. In Wagga Wagga that contamination—the member should know but it appears as though she does not—is being investigated by Defence. Defence is the polluter, it is monitoring and it is taking steps. It is the polluter. For the benefit of members, the Environment Protection Authority is assisting Defence and is monitoring as well. That is the proper process. I think it is shameful that the member for Port Stephens seeks to politicise this serious matter.

The SPEAKER: I remind members that at least six of them are on three calls to order.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: The member is causing unnecessary distress and should be condemned in this House. The New South Wales Government will continue to assist communities across New South Wales. The

member for Port Stephens should begin to focus on and serve her community. This Government will focus on the State and continue to support communities in every way it can in addressing PFAS contamination.

FREIGHT RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr AUSTIN EVANS (Murray) (14:56): I address a question to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. Will the Minister inform the House what the New South Wales Government is doing to deliver a better freight network across New South Wales and are there any alternatives?

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. If members wish to converse they can leave the Chamber.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight) (14:56): I thank the member for Murray for his question—a brand spanking new member of Parliament who is working for his electorate. Despite the mirth of those opposite, this issue is important to regional communities. A productive freight sector is good for the economy for farmers and for consumers. Recently I joined the member for Murray and the member for Cootamundra in Junee. It was a fabulous day where we announced a \$60 million contribution to transform freight productivity in the Riverina. It is not a matter of mirth for those in southern New South Wales and the Riverina. One hundred and seventy-four kilometres of rail line will be improved to lift and carry 25 tonne axle loads—up from 18 tonnes. In a practical sense that means containers can be filled with cotton from the Riverina and taken to market in the most efficient way. It is currently moved at 50 kilometres an hour which will be increased to up to 80 kilometres an hour.

The SPEAKER: There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: We will get trucks off the roads and product onto trains. This Government puts productivity and freight movements front and centre during decision making as it is important. Since it has taken office this Government has lifted the rate of transport on trains from 15 per cent under Labor to 20 per cent now. There is more to come in the delivery of rail efficiency. The Government has signed a bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth to support inland rail which will influence the amount of product that will be moved off the roads and onto the rail system.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Strathfield that she is on three calls to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: As part of that bilateral agreement the Government, with the support of the transport Minister, has been able to secure a \$400 million investment in the Port Botany rail duplication. That is as important for Sydney as it is for regional New South Wales because it will ensure that we are able to get freight moving efficiently and properly through our ports and from markets. This is the type of activity that our Government is focused on because we understand that a strong economy is reliant on creating jobs. Members of this Government are job creators. We are leading the Australian economy. We are doing the right thing by the people of New South Wales by investing in these types of freight points.

I think it is important to compare and contrast the Government's activities and work with that of those opposite. It is important to highlight that two months ago the Leader of the Opposition gave his budget reply speech. He put the brakes on privatisation. He does not want business involved in delivering better outcomes for the taxpayers of New South Wales. He said, "No more!" to privatisation. That is what he said but on the same day—I notice the member for Maroubra is walking out of the Chamber—the member for Keira, the shadow Treasurer and Tom Cruise's understudy—

Mr Guy Zangari: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. The Minister is trying to impugn the reputation of the member for Keira—a fine, upstanding member in this place.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The House will come to order. I remind the member for Keira that he is on three calls to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: As the member for Londonderry pointed out, the member for Keira is too short to be Tom Cruise's understudy! [*Extension of time*]

Mr Stephen Kamper: Point of order: The shadow Treasurer fancies himself as Justin Bieber.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Keira will come to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: On the same day that the Leader of the Opposition, in his budget reply speech, made the point that he does not want any more privatisation in New South Wales—he does not want us to explore any other ways of recycling capital so we can ensure that the taxpayers of New South Wales get the best value for money—the member for Keira and shadow Treasurer was directly at odds with his leader. He was talking about privatising a transport link in New South Wales. Luke Foley, the member for Auburn, is on one side

of the argument and the member for Keira is on the other side. The member for Keira has his head in his phone because that is where his calculator is. He cannot do any work unless he is on his—

Mr Ryan Park: What happened to that zebra?

The SPEAKER: The member for Keira should not make personal comments about people and their clothing.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: Ultimately, he is the best that the Opposition has. He is the comedian-in-waiting—the understudy. He has no ability to manage the economy; he is in conflict with the Leader of the Opposition. The Government was able to call him out on the day the budget reply speech was delivered. The Leader of the Opposition said no to privatisation and the member for Keira supported it.

HOMELESSNESS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (15:05): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that nearly 40,000 people in New South Wales are homeless, and homelessness has increased 37 per cent since 2011, will the Government make homelessness a State emergency? Building on the work of the Minister for Family and Community Services will it also commit to ending homelessness by 2030?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:05): I thank the member for Sydney for his question. I acknowledge he has been a vocal spokesperson on this issue. He cares strongly about homelessness, especially given his electorate and the likelihood that many people around the State congregate in Sydney when they seek shelter. I acknowledge his contribution to this debate and thank him for his passion on the issue. It is Homelessness Week and I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Family and Community Services for her efforts on behalf of the Government in addressing this serious and chronic issue. I stress that the figures used by the member for Sydney include people who have a roof over their head, but they might be couch-surfing, living in a boarding house or staying with friends. Those people may have received temporary emergency accommodation from us, but they do not have long-term secure accommodation. We accept that, but I wanted to stress that not all of them are exposed to the elements.

I agree with the member for Sydney and with the Minister, who does great work on behalf of the Government, that we must be vigilant and keep working to reduce the rate of homelessness. The target that the member for Sydney outlined in his question is accurate. We want to end homelessness by 2030 and we must ensure that we address that as much as possible. The Minister for Family and Community Services has managed to secure \$1 billion over the next four years to address this issue. This week I was pleased to receive reports about workers from the Department of Family and Community Services who are proactively riding the train network and approaching people who are exposed to the elements, especially during winter. They are not taking no for an answer and are drilling down to find out why a person is in the circumstances that they are.

It goes without saying that, unfortunately, a high proportion of people who are exposed to the elements and are without shelter have other challenges in their lives such as mental health issues, addiction, a family breakdown or other issues. It is important that we provide them not only with permanent and secure accommodation but also with wraparound services that prevent them from slipping into homelessness again. I am proud of the financial commitment that we have made to this strategy. I commend the Minister for the five-year strategy that she recently released. It generated a lot of discussion among government ranks because we feel strongly about it. Due credit goes to the Minister for getting the money from the Treasurer, but also for the approach that we have adopted. I am incredibly proud to state in Homelessness Week that we are the only State Government in the nation that has a Social and Affordable Housing Fund. We have dedicated more than \$1.1 billion to a fund that will recycle money into building new places to support those who need social housing.

The new communities we are establishing will not only put a roof over somebody's head but will also support the community services that are necessary for that person. We know that homelessness is associated with other vulnerabilities and things that are going on in people's lives. The member for Sydney might be aware of this, but for the benefit of all members, recently the Government issued a social impact investment opportunity to enable community organisations and the private sector to give the Government advice on anything it has overlooked. If there are additional incentives that the Government can provide to reduce the rate of homelessness, we are inviting non-government, community and private sector organisations that have expertise in this area to provide advice about incentives through the social impact investment opportunity to ensure we are not missing anything. The Government is confident about its strategy, but appreciates it is not the expert on everything: it wants input from other sections of the community.

I sincerely thank the member for Sydney for raising this issue during Homelessness Week. It gives the Government an opportunity to reiterate its commitment to supporting the most vulnerable. As I always say to my colleagues, being a competent Government with a strong budget and economy is only half of the equation. The

other half of the equation is giving back to the community and especially supporting the most vulnerable. All of us in this place know, because of the examples we see of people coming through our electorate offices, that nobody is immune from being subjected to homelessness. We do not know what is around the corner. We do not know what circumstances life will bring to any one of us or our loved ones. We have to have that in mind and approach people who are homeless with that empathy and sense of compassion but also the ability, through our strategy and the funds we have, to get them a roof over their heads. I thank the member for his question.

SYDNEY METRO INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (15:10): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Will the Minister update the House on the progress of the Sydney Metro program and advise if the New South Wales Labor Opposition is a risk to its delivery?

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: It is Standing Order 128. That question is clearly intended to incite debate. It is designed to create argument.

The SPEAKER: I would say most of the questions in this Chamber are intended to incite debate.

Mr Greg Warren: I ask you to rule it out of order and have the member asking the question to reword the question and ask it again.

The SPEAKER: I will allow the question. It is a question, not a statement. It does not contain an imputation. It is in order and is no different from any other question that is asked every day in the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (15:11): That was a stunning point of order. I was sitting down there before with the Treasurer, talking about the Labor Opposition and whether it is a risk. The Treasurer drew my attention to some breaking news that a Labor staffer has been sentenced to 450 hours of community service and fined \$2,000 for electoral fraud. Does anyone remember when that independent investigation happened involving the Australian Federal Police and the member for Wollongong? Well, the chickens come home to roost, because the Leader of the Opposition did not make Noreen Hay sit on the crossbench, did he?

Mr Luke Foley: I kicked her out.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Hang on, I hope that was recorded. He got her kicked out of the Parliament. What happened to Emma Husar? He did not kick her out. What an extraordinary thing for the Leader of the Opposition to say. So he let Noreen sit as a member in the Government. And, of course, we had the member for East Hills—an honourable, decent human being—sit on the crossbench while his staffer was before a court.

The SPEAKER: The member for Bankstown is on her last chance.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: There is one rule for those opposite and another rule for everybody else. That goes to the culture of Labor, which goes to the heart of this question because it has no ability whatsoever to deliver the Metro. I have revealed \$17.3 million of undisclosed contracts on the Labor side when it was in government, during which time it failed to build a line—and it promised 12—and failed to deliver the Metro. Of course, Metro Northwest will open in the first half of 2019. We are now testing the train. It is being built at an incredible pace and will deliver an incredible outcome to the people of the north-west. There is no doubt that in terms of Metro City and Southwest, the Government is getting on with the job. What is telling about the Metro City and Southwest project is why Labor is opposing? The member for Keira—he has disappeared; he knew this was coming—has been running around the Illawarra saying, "Give me more trains, give me more trains." One of the key bottlenecks between the Illawarra and the city happens to be Sydenham junction. He is opposed, with his fellow party members—

The SPEAKER: Does the member for Bankstown want an early exit?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Were you looking in the mirror?

Mr Ryan Park: I wouldn't have come back if it was just you.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: He was busily doing his hair in the bathroom thinking he was Tom Cruise—more like Justin Bieber, as the member for Rockdale said.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Keira to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of 30 minutes.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Keira left the Chamber at 15:13.]

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: He has gone? He just came back.

The SPEAKER: Yes, he was removed under Standing Order 249A. He has been called to order three times and has had about seven warnings.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The member for Keira can watch it on the television. In relation to Sydenham junction, I will help him out with some important departmental advice. The benefit of taking the Bankstown line out of the City Circle, which is what Metro does, assists the East Hills, Illawarra and Bankstown lines.

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield will come to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The shadow Treasurer quite often relies—

Mr Michael Daley: Bring back Roberts. Get Roberts up on his box. At least he is funny.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I will get to you. I have got you on tape, actually.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: There are six lines into Sydenham from places such as the Illawarra and then four lines into the city. It is a bottle neck because obviously the trains get caught at Sydenham. What did the Labor Party do? It whinged that there are not enough trains for the Illawarra and then opposed the upgrade at Sydenham junction to deliver more Metro trains into the city. That is the Labor way: cancel the project.

[Interruption]

What was that? Let's talk about the Labor Party. Metro is at risk because of the Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: If the member for member for Cessnock does not cease interjecting he will be removed from the Chamber. He has had several warnings. The member for Londonderry may join the member for Keira shortly.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It is because of the quality of the people in the Labor Party. I have worked out why the Leader of the Opposition is opposed to Metro City. It is because we have to bring down a few buildings in the city. Martin Place Bar had to go. There is no doubt about it: those opposite who just want to come in here— [Extension of time]

The bottom line is that the people of this State going into an election need to know that the whole Metro project is at risk because those opposite do not support it. The member for Maroubra thinks it is uneconomical. The Leader of the Opposition opposes it. I do not think the member for Strathfield has the skillset to deliver it because she was part of a Cabinet that cancelled Metro West, which Labor is now claiming it can build quicker than the Liberals and The Nationals.

[Interruption]

Is the member for Londonderry okay?

Ms Prue Car: You're boring us.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Are you planning a trip to Lindsay? When are you running? That is the big question. When are you going to announce your candidacy for Lindsay? Whilst we are at it, what were you doing last time Labor was in office? You were an advisor to Bob Carr.

The SPEAKER: The member for Londonderry and the Minister will cease arguing across the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: We will continue to build Metro. We will build it quickly. We are getting on with the \$3 billion spend for Metro West. We have geotechnical drills in the ground. The money from Canberra, which the former Government had when it was in office, had to be returned because it did not do the work. We will continue to deliver Metro for the people of New South Wales. I assure the House that the Liberals and The Nationals are the only parties that can deliver Metro for the people of New South Wales, unlike those opposite. [Time expired.]

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

South-western Sydney Koala Conservation Strategy

Petition calling for the appropriate rezoning of Allen's Creek land in the Wilton South East Precinct to protect primary koala habitat and rejecting further rezoning until a comprehensive south-western Sydney koala conservation strategy is finalised and approved, received from **Mr Jai Rowell**.

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

The CLERK: I announce that the following 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**.

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

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS

Report: Review of the Code of Conduct for Members

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

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:19): As Chair of the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics it is my pleasure to speak to the committee's report entitled "Review of the Code of Conduct for Members". I tabled the report in this House at the end of June, following on from a discussion paper which the committee published in March 2018. The new code that the committee is now proposing is the outcome of extensive and careful consultations that have taken place over a number of years. I begin by acknowledging the former Chair of the committee, Mr Mark Coure, for his substantial input into this review before taking up the role of Parliamentary Secretary, and all of the committee's members past and present for their determination to work together to deliver the best in ethical standards.

Over the course of our review we have heard from members and former members, as well as the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser, the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] and the Audit Office of New South Wales. Whilst the committee has not been able to accommodate every perspective, we believe that the report represents a good balance of principle, prescription and practicality. I will speak to each of these themes in turn and provide an example of how the new code works. I begin with principles. In the current code there is a long preamble, which, in the committee's view, should be shortened and then followed by a clause that clearly sets out the purpose of the code. This clause will make clear that the code is there to help members avoid conflicts between their personal interests and their duties as a member of Parliament, be those real, perceived or potential conflicts.

I turn to prescription, or how we go about putting our principles into practice. For example, there is now a revised clause that prohibits a member from seeking to improperly influence a decision by a public official. Preventing the promotion of matters to public officials outside of Parliament for private gain was an issue first raised by ICAC in 2013 and recommended by the privileges committees of both Houses in the last Parliament. There is another example of the prescriptive elements of the code in a new clause entitled "Upholding the Code", which makes it clear that substantive breaches of the code may constitute corrupt conduct for the purposes of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act. This is important information for members and it reflects a very similar provision already in the Ministerial Code of Conduct at paragraph 9. I now address practicality. The new code has a much improved structure that brings relevant clauses together under explanatory headings. This helps to send a clearer message about how the code works at both a preventative and an enforcement level.

Particular clauses also have commentary sections that provide useful guidance by referencing the relevant sources for rules and advice. For example, the clause on gifts references the relevant sections in the Disclosures by Members regulation. It also notes that the respective guides for members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council explain the requirements of the pecuniary interest disclosure regime in plain language, with examples where possible, and that members can seek advice on these matters from the Clerks of the House or the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser. They are some examples of what the committee is proposing and I would encourage members to read the report in full if they have not already had the opportunity to do so. I will share some feedback on the proposed new code from key stakeholders. Firstly, I refer to Dr Robert Waldersee, who was the Executive Director of Corruption Prevention at ICAC from June 2008 until October 2016. The doctor said:

I commend the Committee on the significant effort that has gone into the revision of the Code of Conduct. The result is a dramatically improved document that meets the goals of any code. It is simple to follow and remember yet comprehensive, and aspirational yet with clear rules that may lead to sanctions.

Secondly, Ms Ronda Miller, a former Clerk of this House, said:

The proposed amendments and restructure of the elements of the Code are welcome improvements, which will strengthen the application of the Code and facilitate members' understanding of the separate provisions and how the Code operates in practice. The insertion of brief but practical commentary will also strengthen the Code and is strongly recommended.

It is with these authoritative endorsements and with the unanimous support of a cross-party committee that I commend the report to the House.

Report noted.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 58/56

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:24): As Chair: I thank the House for the opportunity to speak on the Legislation Review Committee's fifty-eighth digest of the Fifty-sixth Parliament. In this week's digest, tabled on 7 August 2018, the committee examined nine bills introduced in the last parliamentary sitting week of June. The committee identified issues with one bill and reported on one regulation subject to disallowance. I draw Parliament's attention to some of the key issues raised in the digest. The Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018 makes amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 and the Housing Act 2001. In her second reading speech, the Minister for Family and Community Services, and Minister for Social Housing noted that the Act implements changes in accordance with the Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW strategy.

The bill introduces a risk-based bond scheme, which permits the Land and Housing Corporation and the Aboriginal Housing Office to require a social housing tenant to pay a rental bond if they belong to a class of tenant specified in the rental bond guidelines. In her second reading speech the Minister outlined that this provision was only intended to be applied to those tenants who cause damage to rental properties. The committee recognises that the Government should have the means to take appropriate actions against tenants who do not respect the properties they are tenancing. However, the committee identified that, as the bill applies to tenants in social housing, there is a risk that some people will be unable to pay the bond and thus be unable to remain in social housing. The committee referred to Parliament whether the requirement for some social housing tenants to pay a rental bond unduly trespasses on a person's right to housing.

The committee also identified that the bill defers matters to the rental bond guidelines, including the definition of class of tenant and the amount of the rental bond. The bill specifies that the guidelines are to be determined by the Minister and made publicly available. The committee generally prefers that substantive matters are dealt with in the principal legislation, and referred this issue to the attention of Parliament. The Local Government (General) Amendment (Regional Joint Organisations) Regulation 2018 outlines the regulations under the principal Act, introduced in November 2017, relating to the establishment of regional joint organisations. The regulation modifies the application of certain public notice provisions in the Local Government Act 1993.

For example, joint organisations will not be required to give public notice of their first meeting. The draft code of meeting practice will also not need to be publicly exhibited. The committee notes that this may restrict access to government information. Given that joint organisations are different from councils, modifying the application of provisions that usually apply to councils may be warranted in some circumstances. However, the committee notes that there appears to be no publically available information regarding the rationale for these particular modifications and, as such, draws this matter to the attention of Parliament. That concludes my remarks on the fifty-eighth digest of the Parliament. I encourage everyone to read the full digest, which is available on the Parliament's website. I thank my fellow committee members for their contributions and commend the digest to the House.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (15:29): On behalf of the Opposition, I make a few remarks on the Legislation Review Digest 58/56, dated 7 August 2018. The Legislation Review Committee examined nine bills and commented on the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018. In addition, the committee examined one regulation subject to disallowance and commented on it. The committee noted that the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Social Housing) Bill 2018 trespasses on personal rights and liberties. The committee commented as follows:

The Bill permits the Land and Housing Corporation and the Aboriginal Housing Office to require a social housing tenant to pay a rental bond if they belong to a class of tenant specified in the rental bond guidelines. The Committee recognises that the Government should have the means to take appropriate actions against tenants who do not respect the properties they are tenancing. However,

given the Bill applies to tenants in social housing there is a real risk that there will be some people who will be unable to obtain or remain in social housing as they cannot afford to pay a bond.

The Committee also notes that there are aspects of the risk-based scheme that remain unclear. For example, it is unclear how a class of tenant will be determined or how long a person will remain classified in this class of tenants. The Minister outlined that this section will be applied where the tenant has caused significant damage to the property. However, how this is to be determined is not detailed in the Bill and may lead to an inconsistent application of the scheme.

The Committee notes Article 11 (1) of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* which recognises the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their family, which includes adequate food, clothing and housing. Given the above circumstances, the Committee refers to Parliament whether the requirement for some social housing tenants to pay a rental bond unduly trespasses on their right to housing.

The committee also noted that the bill insufficiently subjects the exercise of legislative power to parliamentary scrutiny. It commented as follows:

The Bill outlines that a tenant may be required to pay a rental bond under section 156D if the tenant belongs to a class of tenant specified in the rental bond guidelines, and the amount of the rental bond is determined in accordance with the rental bond guidelines. The Bill specifies that the guidelines are to be determined by the Minister and made publicly available.

The Committee generally prefers that substantive matters are dealt with in principal legislation. Given that the matters deferred to the rental guidelines include the definition of 'class of tenant' and the amount of the rental bond, the Committee considers these are matters more appropriately addressed in principal legislation and subject to parliamentary scrutiny. The Committee refers this issue to the attention of Parliament.

The committee referred two matters to the attention of Parliament. As a member of the committee, I was delighted that so many members referred to the digest in debate on the bill this week. A number of members criticised the bill, but the member for Charlestown, the member for Heffron and I referred specifically to the digest. It would have been good to hear the Minister respond in a direct fashion to the criticisms outlined in it, but she did not address any of the criticisms relating specifically to new section 156D. In her speech in reply she used these words:

We all know that the ultimate target of The Greens is the destruction of western democratic institutions, which includes features such as ministerial guidelines. I wish to reassure the Parliament that those guidelines, as referred to in my second reading speech in accordance with the tradition, absolutely reflect the intent of this legislation and the undertakings I have given this Parliament.

Those undertakings were not at all clear and they did not address the digest. I hope in future that the Minister will refer to the digest if it is brought to her attention.

Report noted.

Matter of Public Importance

INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (15:33): Indian Independence Day is an annual commemoration of India's independence from the United Kingdom on 15 August 1947, when the first Prime Minister of India raised the Indian national flag above the Lahori Gate of the Red Fort in Delhi. India attained independence following a largely nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience led by the Indian National Congress. Australia is a fantastic multicultural country. We recognise that people should not, and must not, forget their heritage but must bring the best of their culture and mix it into the Australian context to create a model of social harmony that the world can be proud of. The Indian community can proudly say that it has contributed successfully to the beauty and fabulous enhancement of our society. According to Australian Bureau of Statistics census data, an estimated 468,000 people in Australia were born in India and about 25,000—or one in 20—live in the city of Blacktown.

I mention some of the fantastic contributions of our Indian community in the Blacktown, Riverstone and Mount Druitt electorates. First, I acknowledge Mr Sajana Nand as the Blacktown City Citizen of the Year in 2015. Sajana has a Fijian-Indian background and has served his community with the establishment of the Australian Hindu Multicultural Association in 1993 and building the Sanatan Cultural Centre and Temple in Marsden Park. Sajana has served as a director of SydWest Multicultural Services and has been a member of many council committees. The Gurdwara Sahib Sikh temple in Glenwood, in the Riverstone electorate, is one of the largest Sikh temples in the Southern Hemisphere. The Australian Sikh Association also aims to contribute to the wider Australian society by providing charitable services, from assisting the elderly, providing wonderful free meals and financially assisting many worthwhile causes, as well as conducting many great community and religious festivals. I thank it for its assistance in raising money towards the CEO sleepout I was involved with.

Sant Nirankari Satsang Bhavan in Glendenning, in the Mount Druitt electorate, is a spiritual movement and a genuine effort to unite mankind for the good of humanity. It has been involved in many great works in the local area, including holding cross-cultural symposiums on important topics, raising money to assist the homeless and assisting council in many local activities. His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji, the world spiritual leader for Sant Nirankari Mission, visited the Glendenning Temple in 2015. I thank the mission giving me the honour of meeting His Holiness. He was knowledgeable and his spiritual wisdom was phenomenal. I was sad to hear of his

recent passing. The Shri Swaminarayan Temple in Bessemer Street, Blacktown, in the Blacktown electorate, also welcomed its international leader—Acharya Shree Koshalendraprasadji Maharaj—in June this year. The temple is involved in spiritual development, language and cultural teaching, providing great community activities as well as raising money to support the homeless or health care initiatives.

The Indian Diaspora Council of Australia held its conference at Doonside, in the Blacktown electorate. The diaspora is an important part of Indian history, where many young people were falsely enticed to leave their families and homeland and head across the world to undertake menial and difficult work in slave-like conditions and were not allowed to return home. The Harman Foundation provides valuable support services with a particular focus on domestic violence in the subcontinental community. I thank it for its support in holding a vigil to commemorate the life of Harjit Kaur who was, tragically, killed in an act of domestic violence.

The Indian community is involved in not only serious activities but also a lot of fun activities to raise money in sport and festivals. My thanks to the Maharaja's Haveli restaurant, which sponsors the annual Mr and Mrs India competition, complete with Bollywood celebrities flying in from India. Many of my parliamentary colleagues participate in it. I also acknowledge that Blacktown City Council has two councillors of Indian heritage. Both Councillor Susai Benjamin and Councillor Moninder Singh have been extremely active in the community. I finish with a quote from Mahatma Gandhi: "Freedom is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life. What would a man not pay for living?" I thank the New South Wales Parliament in allowing discussion of this matter, and I wish the people with an Indian heritage a happy Indian Independence Day.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:38): I thank the member for Blacktown for bringing this matter of public importance before this Chamber today—what an important matter it is. Indian Independence Day, 15 August, is a very important day on the Indian calendar. It is a national holiday commemorating India's independence from the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom Parliament passed the Indian Independence Act in 1947, thereby transferring legislative control to India. The holiday is observed within India with flag-hoisting ceremonies, parades and many cultural events.

Seven Hills is home to a multitude of cultures and heritages. Today I recognise the Indian Australian community, which is supported in the Seven Hills area by many organisations, including the Council of Indian Australians [CIA]. The Council of Indian Australians was established in 2011 and aims to work as a representative body for the community at local, State and Federal levels. The council works to promote Indian Australian cultural relations across our community. It assists many Indian Australians with employment, education and justice issues. Furthermore, the council regularly hosts community events, bringing together leaders and government to promote various causes. The council believes in the integration and participation of Indian Australians in the general community and advocates for a more open and inclusive multicultural Australia.

I acknowledge the CIA's executive team, particularly President Mohit Kumar, Vice President Nitin Shukla, Secretary Sanjay Deshwal and Joint Secretary Sreeni Pillamarri. I look forward to CIA's annual dinner this Saturday evening in Blacktown, which I am sure the member for Blacktown and the Minister for Multiculturalism will attend as well. Last Sunday afternoon, I was delighted to be a part of the United Indian Associations' [UIA] Mateship Fair along the riverside at Parramatta with many of my parliamentary colleagues and the Premier. The event was fun and displayed a fantastic parade. The event also allowed many community members to network and raise money for charity—in fact, a donation was made to Buy a Bale. The UIA is another organisation that supports India-Australia relations in New South Wales. Specifically, the group represent various linguistic and regional associations to promote harmonious relationships amongst Australians and the flourishing Indian Australian community.

The organisation does this through sporting ventures, social interactions, recreation and voluntary activities. The friendship fair was a great success and demonstrated the group's values in action. The annual fair aims to increase social interaction and engagement with the general community. The United Indian Associations is one of the channels of communication between the Indian Australian community and the Commonwealth and New South Wales governments. It advocates on welfare, social and economic matters affecting the community. Its other aims are to celebrate cultural events and activities. Additionally, it hopes to develop and maintain a community sports and recreation centre in New South Wales for the use and benefit of its members and the wider community. I acknowledge the UIA President Sreeni Pillamarri and Vice President Babu Varughese.

I mention also the Federation of Indian Associations for its fair this coming Saturday, which I am confident many members will be attending. The event will take place at Parramatta Park, and I thank Dr Yadu Singh and his team for all their work. It will be a fantastic afternoon. This is an important time of year for the Indian Australian community and, as most members are aware, Deepavali is fast approaching. Festivals will be held throughout October in Western Sydney in particular. Deepavali, which means "row of lights", is the festival of lights and is the most widely celebrated Indian event in Australia and around the world. Its history dates back to ancient India and symbolises the victory of "good over evil, light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance".

In closing, I acknowledge the Minister for Multiculturalism, Mr Ray Williams, for his ongoing support of various communities in the Seven Hills community. The Minister has deep connections with the different cultural groups in Seven Hills and regularly visits the area. I always receive positive feedback from groups following his visits. I commend the valuable work the Minister is doing in his portfolio in my electorate of Seven Hills, and I commend the member for Blacktown for bringing this very important matter before us today.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (15:43): I support the matter of public importance raised by the member for Blacktown and supported by the member for Seven Hills and other members from Western Sydney, who will also be talking about the fantastic Indian Independence Day. On 15 August each year, we celebrate and recognise India's independence from British rule. After hundreds of years of colonial oppression, the Raj was finally gone. The day commemorates the birth of a free and democratic nation, which is now regarded as one of the greatest democracies of modern times.

On 15 August 1947 the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, raised the Indian flag over the Red Fort in Delhi for the first time. It was a symbol of freedom, hope and truth and an example to those in the world who were still living under the yoke of the British Empire. India was the second major colony to gain independence, after Ireland in the 1920s. What a difference independence made to India. Until 1947, independence movements were led by many freedom fighters, who have gone down in the annals of history. However, the most notable was Mahatma Gandhi, who led a non-violent protest against the British Empire.

Although many Indian lives were lost, they achieved their independence. The civil and non-violent protests in India were in stark contrast to the terror experienced in Ireland. The people of Sydney and Western Sydney will celebrate that wonderful achievement this week and next week. The Federation of Indian Associations of NSW will hold its India Day fair at Parramatta Park this weekend, the Council of Indian Australians will hold a dinner at Blacktown this Saturday night, and the United Indian Association had a Mateship Fair at Parramatta last weekend. They were fantastic events.

I am very proud to represent Western Sydney in this place, and that includes the huge Indian community in my electorate of Prospect. Tamils from Tamil Nadu and other areas of Sri Lanka live in Pendle Hill and Toongabbie, and Telugu people have made their home at Pemulwuy and in other parts of Greystanes. I am proud to live in such a harmonious, strong and culturally diverse community. The strength of the ties in Western Sydney are demonstrated when so many nationalities from different backgrounds live in such harmony. No matter what stories members hear about cultural division in other places around Australia, they can be assured that Western Sydney has no such problems. We have our neighbourhoods and our friendships; we have mates and friends.

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (15:46): By leave: I appreciate the opportunity to make a contribution to debate on this matter of public importance dealing with Indian Independence Day. My brief contribution is based on my personal experience. Like the member for Prospect, the member for Blacktown and the member for Seven Hills, I am fortunate and proud to represent a large population of Indian immigrants. In fact, my family is one of many families that migrated from India. My grandmother and grandfather came to Australia with their four children, including my father, in the early 1960s from Durgapur, which is about 300 kilometres west of Calcutta. They raised their children in Homebush before moving to Western Sydney, which many people of Indian heritage have done.

Members of my family speak very fondly of their time in Durgapur and of the opportunities that this country has afforded them, and I must acknowledge the contributions they have made to this country. That is why I am doubly proud to represent so many members of the Indian community. My electorate has seen the formation of many Indian associations which have gone from strength to strength. I acknowledge in particular the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia, which is located in Shanes Park in the northern part of my electorate. I recently attended a world symposium on spiritual development and enhancing the community that was organised by the group. It was very interesting and I learnt a lot.

Indeed, I think we could all probably learn a lot from them about spiritual development. They are very active in the community, they do a great job and I am very proud to support them. My colleagues went through the history of the day and the importance of those great Indian leaders in the move for independence. Indian Independence Day means a lot to the Indian community, as well as to my family. I wish everyone in the Indian community in New South Wales a very happy Indian Independence Day.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (15:49): In reply: I thank the members for the electorates of Prospect, Seven Hills and Londonderry for their contributions to this matter of public importance. I have no doubt that every member in this House has attended an Indian event in the course of their parliamentary career. The Indian community contributes so much to our society through their knowledge, language, dance and cultural ties. It is important to instil into future generations the Indian heritage and what the Indians have done for society. It was great to hear the member for Londonderry's personal story about the importance of Indian Independence Day

to her and her family, as well as to the Indian community. The member for Prospect talked about living in harmony. We should not be concealing the past or telling people not to embrace their past. People should be allowed to develop their character and to merge their cultures into the Australian way of life.

The Indian people in this State have made huge contributions to education, business and sport—and we all know of their love for cricket. Indeed, when one looks at the general contributions of people from India, because of their religious grounding and the principles they have acquired from their background, they give so much to charities. Many have held symposiums and invited their world leaders to this great country. As I said earlier, the city of Blacktown has hosted symposiums and we appreciate their involvement. In fact, the vast majority of the Indian population in this State lives in Western Sydney.

The member for Seven Hills talked about Diwali. In November each year the Blacktown City Council holds a Diwali lights competition, which then flows into the Christmas lights competition. So multiculturalism works really well in Blacktown. In conclusion, I thank His Excellency Dr Ajay Gondane, India High Commissioner to Australia, and Mr Vanlalvawna, Consul General of India in Sydney, for their assistance and support of the local Indian community, which is very much appreciated by the community and the Blacktown City Council. For the information of members, Blacktown City Council will be holding its flag-raising ceremony to celebrate Indian Independence Day on Wednesday 15 August at 12 noon at the Village Green. Everyone is welcome. I wish everyone a happy Indian Independence Day.

Community Recognition Statements

IVY RAVELL 104TH BIRTHDAY

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (15:53): Recently I had the pleasure of visiting one of my constituents, Mrs Ivy Ravell, to celebrate her 104 birthday with a large group of friends. I was pleased to present Mrs Ravell with a bouquet of flowers at a special afternoon tea that had been arranged for her. Ivy was born and raised in Forster and is believed to be the oldest living resident in the area. Ivy remains in the House that she and her husband, George, built in 1958. When Ivy was asked what her secret was to a long and health life, she smiled and said, "It is pure good luck." Ivy is on a low salt and sugar diet and has always had a big fruit and vegetable garden. Ivy played tennis until the age of 70 and lawn bowls until the age of 101. She then continued to exercise by taking daily walks to the shops from her home until she reached the ripe old age of 102. Today Ivy is less mobile; however, she is tech savvy. She listens to a lot of talking books and loves a good cowboy story. I am sure that it is the wonderful clean air and water in the Myall Lakes electorate that allows such longevity amongst my constituents. I wish Ivy the very best.

CLUB TOUKLEY CHEF'S TABLE AWARD WINNERS

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (15:54): Today I would like to brag a little as I recognise Alex Patterson and Kurt Sonneman, chefs from Ziva at Club Toukley in my electorate, who have taken out gold at the New South Wales Chef's Table awards for the second year running. This is no mean feat as the competition is both challenging and well contested. Anyone who has eaten at Ziva knows all too well how fantastic the food is, and I am not surprised to learn that these great chefs have been recognised for the second year in a row. This is a testament to the outstanding effort they put into their work and the fantastic quality of the meals they produce. I am immensely proud to live in a community that produces such great talent and it brings me great joy to see that talent being recognised in a statewide competition. Congratulations go to Alex and Kurt and to the whole team at Ziva and Club Toukley. Chief Executive Officer Trevor Haynes and the Club Toukley board are doing a wonderful job in providing a first-class service to our local community.

MS WORLD ROBYN CANNER

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (15:55): Today I acknowledge Robyn Canner of Sylvania who was crowned Ms World 2018 shortly after her sixtieth birthday. The Ms World pageant was held in Seattle this year, where Robyn competed against contestants aged 26 and over from 22 participating countries. Her achievement proves that age is just a number, and we are incredibly proud that Robyn is the first 60-years-young Ms World champion. She believes that age is a state of mind rather than a representation of what can be achieved.

The Ms World pageant has become a platform for Robyn to continue her charity work in raising community awareness about cancer research. Her passion for charity work began seven years ago when her son, aged 22, died of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Robyn has since been an active campaigner and advocate for greater cancer research and funding. When Robyn is not busy trying to save the world and winning beauty pageants, she is managing her massage therapy business, which she has been running for 33 years. I congratulate Robyn on her achievement and extend my best wishes for the future.

GOSFORD RSL INAUGURAL COMMUNITY AWARDS

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (15:56): The goal was to bring everyone together and to thank them for what they do. The outcome was brilliant, innovative, uplifting and inspiring. Congratulations to the team behind the Gosford RSL Inaugural Community Awards, and the 32 community organisations that were invited onto the stage in July to receive a certificate of appreciation and recognition for their contribution to our fabulous community. Gosford RSL considers that the objectives and spirit of our community organisations are aligned with their own—living in the same place and having attitudes and ambitions in common—and hosted the inaugural awards to give us all a chance to get to know each other, to network, and to join together for future opportunities. To the Central Coast Waves, the Indoor Bowls group, the Friendship Group, the Gosford RSL Fishing Club, Gosford RSL President Gary Young, Chief Executive Officer Russell Cooper, all the board, the community team, the events team and the fabulous chefs and kitchen team: Cheers to the inaugural and bring on an even greater future for the Gosford community!

NEW SOUTH WALES PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:57): Given it is Education Week, I recognise and congratulate young students in the Seven Hills electorate who recently competed in debating and public speaking competitions. Big congratulations go to the Kuber Thaker, Jashan Singh, Om Patel and Neil Sarkar, who have now proceeded to the second round of the years 7 and 8 Premier's Debating Challenge. I believe all four students debated flawlessly in their win over Model Farms High School.

Many Darcy Road Public School students recently participated in the New South Wales Public Speaking Competition. Students spoke on a wide range of topics and six students from Darcy Road Public made it to the semifinals. I congratulate from stage one, Ashwin Muralitharan and Siddarth Praveen; from stage two, Charlotte Abu and Naman Adhikari; and from stage three, Ashta Desai and Ishanhi Rao. Debating and public speaking are great extra-curricular activities for any student to take up, and it was good to see so many Seven Hills electorate students proudly representing their school in competition.

MATES IN CONSTRUCTION

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (15:58): Today I recognise the organisation Mates in Construction. This organisation tries to grapple with the issue of the high number of suicides in the construction industry. I had the opportunity of observing the organisation's General Awareness Training [GAT] at the Kane Constructions site at the Liverpool Catholic Club recently. The sessions typically take about 45 minutes and are held onsite with the consent of the employer. Kane Constructions has been positive about an important program. Mates in Construction was established as a charity in 2008 to improve the mental health and wellbeing of construction workers and to reduce suicide. It is based on the principle that this cannot be left to mental health professionals, but that suicide is everyone's business. The precise spark for the establishment of the organisation was a major report on suicide in the Queensland industry which showed, among other things, that youth suicide in the industry could be as much as 2.38 times more common than amongst other young Australian men. Every year, 191 construction workers take their own lives, one every second day. This important organisation is doing good work.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (15:59): I congratulate Wingecarribee Council Mayor Ken Halstead, who successfully led his council to help our farmers. When the chips are down our community comes together whether it be fire, flood or drought and we have suffered through all three in Wollondilly in the Southern Highlands. The House knows the great support the Government is delivering to our farmers. I continue to call for even more to be done as the drought worsens. I have spoken previously of great organisations and community members who have come together to help our farmers, including the Dilly Drought Drive and the Southern Highlands Drought Appeal, to name only a couple among many heroes.

I was pleased to receive a phone call from Mayor Ken Halstead today who informed me that at a council level he wanted to support our farmers and that he led council to pass a resolution to defer rates for local farmers. This is a huge help, particularly when farmers are struggling with cash flow problems as well as a lack of rain and fodder. Mayor Halstead and his councillors have shown the way for local government to help our farmers. I encourage all councils across New South Wales to follow Mayor Halstead and the council's lead in this important fight.

WORLD'S GREATEST SHAVE

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:00): For the past 20 years Joe Alves of Berkeley has been taking part in the Leukaemia Foundation's World's Greatest Shave. Over that time he has raised more than \$200,000 for the foundation, including \$17,520 for the 2018 event alone. This made him the third highest

individual fundraiser in New South Wales. Of course the World's Greatest Shave is not the only fundraising activity in which Joe is involved. He also takes part in the 40 Hour Famine, Movember, Dry July and is the vice chair of the Multicultural Communities Council of the Illawarra. Joe is also the president of the South Coast Portuguese Association and is a strong advocate for the Portuguese community of the Illawarra. As Joe has said, "I used to visit the kids in hospital [with leukaemia] and they always manage to have a beautiful smile and if there's something you can do to make it better, why not?" Thanks Joe for years of effort in support of charitable causes and the Portuguese community in the Illawarra. Joe has been unwell recently and our thoughts are with him at this difficult time.

STILLBIRTH FOUNDATION FUNDRAISING

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:01): Today I recognise Stillbirth Foundation ambassador Jacqueline Hoy and her husband, Jonathon, for their admirable work in raising awareness of the heartache associated with stillbirth and opening dialogue for parents and families to discuss this difficult subject. Jacqueline and Jonathon both shared in the sadness of losing identical twins at birth, an experience no parent should ever have to endure. For the past year this brave couple has worked hard to open the conversation for other families that have experienced a similar situation in losing a baby at birth. Last year these passionate Port Macquarie locals coordinated a team to participate in the City to Surf and raised an astounding \$35,000 for the Stillbirth Foundation.

The Stillbirth Foundation is the only charity that dedicates its resources to searching for an answer to stillbirths in Australia. To date \$1 billion has been donated to research to examine the medical evidence to determine the cause for stillbirths in mothers. Jacqueline and Jonathon are strong advocates for better research and educational awareness on stillbirths in Australia and are hopeful that the Stillbirth Foundation's recent submission to the Senate inquiry will generate a national action plan that highlights potential risk factors and birth research to prevent future cases of stillbirth.

DIABETES AWARENESS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:02): On 26 July 2018 I had the pleasure of officially opening the Let's Talk Diabetes event at our local Chemistworks pharmacy in the Wetherill Park Stockland Shopping Centre in the Prospect electorate. The event was well attended with discussion and advice provided about the importance of managing type II diabetes and a diabetes management seminar and activities in-store. Chemistworks has been providing quality pharmacy health care 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to patients for more than 30 years. The owners and dedicated staff have built a reputation of excellent service and are committed to meeting the changing needs of our Western Sydney community. I congratulate Chemistworks Wetherill Park owners John and Catherine Bronger, diabetes program facilitators Tony Golshani, a diabetes educator, and Kurt Fittler, exercise physiologist, on such a successful event and thank them for caring for our families and loved ones.

KIAMA NETBALL ASSOCIATION NSW STATE AGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:03): Recently, the Kiama Netball Association competed at the 2018 NSW State Age Championships, which were contested throughout Greater Sydney between 7 and 9 July. First, I congratulate all the teams that competed, especially those in Kiama and throughout the Illawarra. However, one team in particular did incredibly well. I am ecstatic to announce to the Chamber that the 12-year girls Kiama representative team placed runners up in their division at the championships. Despite winning 16 out of a possible 17 games, they just fell short to an undefeated Macleay team 11-13. The team consisted of: Keeley Beasley, Demi Bennett, Chelsea Blanch, Gabrielle Deen, Florence Gawith, Bridie Giles, Zali Guy, Maddelyn James, Lexi McEvoy and Mia Ryan. Special thanks must also go to coach Michelle Blanch, assistant coach Georgia Deen, manager Adam Giles and assistant manager Kellie Livesley. Once again I congratulate the team and wish them all the best for what I am sure will be a bright and promising future.

TRIBUTE TO LIZ BUTTERWORTH

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:04): I draw the attention of the House to the late Liz Butterworth, a key community campaigner and former teacher at Newtown High School of the Performing Arts. Liz was a generous, courageous and committed community member whom I had the pleasure of knowing through the campaign against WestConnex. Liz was one of the founding members of No WestConnex Annandale, back in 2014. She was a key organiser and campaigner, planning meetings, producing campaign materials, rostering and recruiting volunteers, organising speakers and berating communication spin doctors at public consultations held by the Sydney Motorway Corporation. Liz worked closely with many councillors from the former Leichhardt, Marrickville and Ashfield councils as an advocate for her community against the severe impact of WestConnex.

In her career as a teacher of English literature she was highly respected and sought after, even in her retirement. She taught a number of people whom I know—people who remember her as a standout teacher and someone who made a significant impact on their lives. On behalf of the Parliament I offer my condolences to her partner, Wayne, and son, Sonny Butterworth, for their great loss. I acknowledge Liz's great contributions to the inner west, to education and to our community.

PRESTONS CONTAINER DEPOSIT CENTRE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (16:05): Recently I had the pleasure of opening a new automated depot, a Return and Earn point in Prestons. This new centre offers 10¢ refunds on eligible drink containers. The centre includes car parking and is the perfect location if it is raining, or if you have lots of cans or bottles to process. I also highlight that the Prestons Container Deposit Centre is offering schools and community organisations a chance to use the Return and Earn scheme as a fundraising tool. Mr Anthony Morrissey, the hardworking and passionate Director of Prestons Container Deposit Centre, is providing schools with orange bins for students and teachers to use when they recycle their containers. The centre will then pick them up. This means the school will directly earn 10 ¢ per container collected. I understand that Prestons Public School has already signed up for this incredible program and I cannot wait to hear about the results. I am happy to see this new return point open. I cannot wait to see the fundraising benefits for our local community and for our schools.

HUNTER BRANCH SURF LIFE SAVING AWARD RECIPIENTS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:06): I am very lucky to have the beautiful Redhead Beach in my electorate of Charlestown. But with a beautiful beach comes the need for surf lifesavers. So, today I recognise the following recipients of the 2017-18 Hunter Branch Surf Life Saving Awards of Excellence from Redhead Surf Life Saving Club in the following categories: young female athlete, Nicola Owen; senior male athlete, Dan Collins; masters male athlete, Ethan Whiteman; facilitator of the year, Shauna Abrahamson; youth team of the year, the under-17 female team of Nicola Owen, Amelia Ross and Claudia Yates; young lifesaver of the year, Lachlan Steffner; and volunteer of the year, Gail Evans. The president's award was presented to Danielle Polson. Overall, Redhead Surf Life Saving Club was very well represented at the awards. I want to thank them for keeping our beaches safe.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH SCIENCE FORUM PARTICIPANT MICHAEL CURRINGTON

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:07): While many year 12 students—although not all—no doubt devoted a substantial portion of their recent school holidays preparing for their upcoming trial exams, Michael Currington of South Turramurra travelled to England for a different kind of academic pursuit, the London International Youth Science Forum. The forum is a two-week residential event held at Imperial College, London, with lectures and demonstrations from leading scientists and visits to industrial sites, research centres, scientific institutions and organisations, including world-class laboratories.

This was the trip of a lifetime for Michael, who is currently studying physics, chemistry and biology at St Pius X College at Chatswood and had never visited the United Kingdom. He plans to undertake a double degree in science and engineering at a university in Sydney next year. The London International Youth Science Forum annually attracts 500 of the world's leading young scientists aged between 16 and 21 years from more than 75 countries. There was time for Michael to be a tourist as well, with trips to Stonehenge, the Buckingham Palace state rooms and an unforgettable ride on the London Eye. For Michael, it meant missing the first week of his Higher School Certificate trial examinations but, not surprisingly, he was entirely unconcerned about that.

ZIG ZAG RAILWAY COMMITTEE

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:08): I acknowledge the Zig Zag Railway committee on the edge of the Blue Mountains. I met with the committee in mid-July this year at the Springwood Sports Club. Many of the committee members come from my electorate and from the neighbouring electorate of Bathurst. I met with them to hear about their huge volunteer efforts in restoring the visitor facilities at the Zigzag Railway after the horrendous 2013 fires and the subsequent vandalism. I was updated on the locomotive, the rolling stock repairs and the plans of the committee to reopen and recommence passenger journeys in late 2019. I pay tribute to Lee Wiggins, the energetic chairperson; Ben, the engineer and deputy chair of the committee; Wayne, the operations manager; and board members James, Thomas, Les, Malcolm and John. Congratulations.

TERRIGAL ELECTORATE COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS FUNDING

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:09): I thank Minister Tanya Davies for her recent visit to the Central Coast. She was able to visit three locations in my electorate, one of them being the Erina Community Men's Shed. Minister Davies provided funding of \$2,500 to the men's shed to enable its members to purchase a brand-new alarm system after a recent break-in. The members were pleased to meet the Minister and receive

funding for the upgrade. Minister Davies provided \$25,000 to the Rotary Club of Gosford North for its Save Our Kids program, which is an amazing initiative being rolled out across schools on the Central Coast. Minister Davies also announced \$21,800 funding for the Copacabana Community Men's Shed, which is being led by the Copacabana Community Association. It is fitting that the Minister was able to provide the funds for the association to lay those important foundations. I am pleased that I was able to work with those organisations to help deliver those funds for their projects.

ISKA WORLD MARTIAL ARTS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:10): Last Friday I was delighted to join the students and parents of Our Lady Queen of Peace Primary School in Greystanes for a very special school assembly presentation to their world karate champion Eva Attard. During the recent school holidays, Eva, aged 8, and her brother, Zain, aged 6, travelled to Orlando, Florida, for the US Open ISKA World Martial Arts Championships. Zain did well, achieving second place in clash sparring, second place in points sparring, third place in traditional weapons and third place in traditional forms. Eva's performance was phenomenal. She achieved first place in traditional forms, third place in clash sparring, and first place in creative forms, earning her the title of world champion. Eva is known for her good sportsmanship, as is Zain. It is an incredible feat and one of which the entire school community is proud. Congratulations to the Attard family, especially Eva.

MEDAL OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA RECIPIENT JOHN MILLER, OAM

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (16:11): I commemorate a champion of the Hawkesbury Community, Mr John Miller, who has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to the Hawkesbury. It was a great honour to nominate John for this award because he has contributed much to the Hawkesbury community for nearly nine decades. John's experience as an advocate and farmer of mushrooms deepened his interest in the management of floods across the Hawkesbury and Nepean Valley. Living through disastrous floods and feeling the impact on his own life fuelled John's desire to improve and serve his community.

In 1965, John and his wife, Beryl, joined the local State Emergency Service branch as volunteers and worked as communications officers during the floods, keeping the community up to date and answering questions about the flood. John then spent 10 years as chief warden for the Hawkesbury State Emergency Services and is a constant advocate for the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall. While time does not allow me to describe all of John's service to the Hawkesbury community, I pay tribute to the love and affection he holds for his wife, Beryl. John and Beryl celebrated their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary this year. There is no-one more deserving of a Medal of the Order of Australia. John is a tireless advocate for the Hawkesbury and is an icon worthy of all praise.

CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN HARMONY GROUP

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (16:12): I congratulate the Canterbury Bankstown Harmony Group on its 12 years of service to the local community. It was formed and is still led by Mr Khodr Saleh. Last night I attended a gathering that included representatives of various community groups, different faiths, government and non-government agencies, as well as Federal member the Hon. Tony Burke and local mayor Mr Khal Asfour. Principal of Belmore Boys High School, Ms Hala Ramadam, was an exceptional master of ceremonies. The population in this nation has ticked over to 25 million people. Our great nation is made up of individual stories from its people, be they from first nations, migrants who arrived on the First Fleet or just yesterday. Our country is better when we value each other's unique individual stories within an Australian context. I extend my deepest thanks to the many volunteers of the Canterbury Bankstown Harmony Group for their regular work to ensure that our community and all of Australia does as much harmonious work as possible.

VETERANS COMMUNITY AWARDS

Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (16:13): I congratulate three outstanding members of the South Coast community on receiving ministerial commendations for their services to the veterans community. During a recent visit, the Minister for Veteran Affairs, David Elliott, recognised their continued efforts over many years to support veterans and their families and to commemorate their service. The three who received commendations were Alice Burns, the widow of a Korean War veteran, who has served the veterans community through her work as the Secretary of the South Coast Korean War Veterans Association and Recognition Committee of New South Wales for many years.

The second was Bob Morris, OAM, who has fought for the rights of South Coast veterans and, in fact, veterans everywhere as the president of the Korean War Veterans Association and, along with Alice, was heavily involved in the campaign to gain recognition for all Korean War veterans throughout New South Wales and indeed Australia. The third was Ray Pearson, who has been a member of Nowra Legacy since 2002, during which time he has gone above and beyond to support widows, veteran descendants and those with disabilities or special needs.

Well done to those three recipients of Ministerial Commendations. We thank them for the work they do supporting veterans.

INGLEBURN LEGACY WIDOWS CLUB MEMBER ANITA WEST

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (16:14): I acknowledge the extraordinary volunteering effort of Mrs Anita West. Mrs West has been an outstanding member of the executive of the Ingleburn Legacy Widows Club for 40 years. During those years, she has held the positions of president, secretary, treasurer and social secretary. Mrs West was also a member of Torchbearers, the fundraising arm of Legacy, for 36 years, helping to raise money to assist the organisation in its duty of care to widows and children. On top of her dedication to Legacy, Mrs West has been a committed member of the Ingleburn Returned Services League sub-branch for 25 years. Her voluntary contributions to community and service are significant and deserve recognition in Parliament. She has given her time, leadership, organisational skills and energy generously and without hesitation. Mrs West's commitment is remarkable and her devotion to service and the needs of others is worthy of our recognition, respect and thanks.

COROWA FEDERATION CONFERENCE 125TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (16:15): Last Saturday night, I attended the 125th Anniversary Dinner of the Corowa Federation Conference. Corowa is known as the birthplace of Federation because the 1893 conference held in the Oddfellows Hall saw the birth of the push by the people for the federation of the six Australian colonies. The dinner was organised by the Corowa District Historical Society. I recognise the work of the committee and especially that of the president, Alan New, who was the master of ceremonies for the night. Committee member Lesley New introduced the two guest speakers for the significant anniversary, historians Dr James Warden and Dr Jeff Brownrigg. Former shire president and mayor Keith Barber offered the vote of thanks. The member for Farrer, Sussan Ley, read a message from the Prime Minister, as was fitting for this well attended celebration of a most remarkable event which led to the formation of our nation.

DIPLOMACY TRAINING PROGRAM AND BOOK LAUNCH

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:16): I recognise the Diplomacy Training Program, known as the DTP, and those who established it. The DTP was established by his Excellency José Ramos-Horta, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and president of Timor-Leste, together with Emeritus Professor Garth Nettheim in 1989. It is an independent Australian non-governmental organisation [NGO] associated with the University of New South Wales, committed to advocating for human rights and empowering civil society in the Asia-Pacific region. DTP does that by training and education. It aims to build skills and capacity in individuals, community advocates and NGOs. Since 1990, training has been provided to more than 3,000 human rights defenders in 30 countries.

On 31 July this year, an event was held to celebrate the work of the DTP and to launch the new book by José Ramos-Horta, entitled *Words of Hope in Troubled Times*. This draws together his most significant writings and speeches from 1992 to 2017. The event also acknowledged the significant contributions of Professor Garth Nettheim, co-founder of the DTP, who passed away earlier this year. Also acknowledged on the night was Professor Paul Redmond, who has recently stood down as chair of the DTP. Contributions were also made on the night by Patrick Earle; Michael do Rozario, deputy chair and host of the event at Corrs Chambers Westgarth; and Professor David Dixon.

MANLY BUSINESS CHAMBER

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:18): I congratulate the Manly Business Chamber on its work in developing the Manly Local Retail Vision. I was fortunate enough to attend the presentation of the vision last month, alongside chamber members and the Northern Beaches Council. I congratulate the chamber on this vision—in particular its subcommittee, which is reviewing the recommendations set out in the vision, as well as the Northern Beaches Council and local property owners and tenants, who will play a vital role in seeing that vision come to fruition.

I also update the House on the success of the chamber's second annual Chamber Made Fashion Parade, which last year supported Community Northern Beaches and this year supported the vital work being undertaken by the Fragile X Association of Australia. Showcasing the uniqueness of Manly's boutique shops and businesses while supporting important community organisations and charities is standard operating procedure for the chamber and I congratulate it for this work. I look forward to meeting with the chamber soon to discuss its Manly Local Retail Vision and I will continue to be its champion and voice in the New South Wales Parliament.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:19): I pay tribute to Heartwood Recovery which provides an innovative guitar building program in my electorate to assist sufferers of post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD].

The program is built on the clinical experience of two mental health practitioners, Dr Greg Peck and psychologist Frank van de Mortel. The program provides practical learning opportunities for participants to focus on decreasing levels of PTSD symptoms, increasing mindfulness and creating a vision and goals for the future.

The 12-week program consists of 40 hours of guitar building lessons in purpose-built guitar schools. Participants enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of working with timber while experiencing the benefits of doing one thing, at one time. Participants also attend interactive workshops where experts share the latest research on managing PTSD and participants can discuss what they have learnt through the process of guitar building. I thank Heartwood Recovery for bringing this program to Charlestown and helping my constituents gain better mental health through guitar building.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (16:20): I again acknowledge the enormous contribution of the Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury team operating out of my electorate at Gordon. I am pleased that Lifeline has received a State Government grant of \$25,200 to fund a new support program in Gordon for adult survivors of attempted suicide. The eight-week course provides a non-judgemental space for participants to confidentially share their experiences and to learn skills and strategies that may help them stay safe in future. While the vast majority of people survive an attempt to end their lives, approximately 3,000 people still tragically die by suicide each year in Australia. The crisis line for Lifeline is 13 11 14.

HEFFRON ELECTORATE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS AWARD RECIPIENTS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:20): I congratulate the recipients of this year's Queens Birthday honours in my electorate of Heffron. Ms Clara Hicks of Mascot was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for her nearly 50 years of service to netball, through the Mascot Netball Club, and the Randwick Netball Association. Ms Samantha Meers of Centennial Park was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for distinguished service to the community through philanthropic support for a verity of arts programs, cultural institutions and charitable causes. Mr Peter Schick of Kingsford was also awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to local government as a former Deputy Mayor of Randwick Council, and to the business community of Kingsford as the President of the Kingsford Chamber of Commerce. I congratulate those three fine citizens for their contribution to our community and to our nation.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE BUSINESS CHAMBER

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (16:21): The new Sutherland Shire Business Chamber was successfully launched last week at Highfield in Caringbah, attended by more than 80 shire business owners. The business chamber is the result of a formal merger into a new company of the Miranda and Districts, Engadine and Menai and Sutherland business chambers. They previously operated under a memorandum of understanding as a peak body. They have now been registered as a new entity that will offer membership to businesses wishing to join a chamber that represents the entire local government area.

This solidifies and expands the local presence into a strengthened local business representation. The chamber engages in professional assistance to help develop strategies to highlight businesses in the shire area. In particular, it is focusing on the Caringbah medical precinct, tourism and local jobs as drivers of economic growth. I congratulate the executive of the new chamber, in particular its inaugural president Joanne Ryan, on all that has been done to better market the shire as a place to do business.

BIRTH OF CHASE PATRICK GEORGE ROWELL

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:22): I inform the House of the birth of our third son, Chase Patrick George Rowell, in March 2018. He is a blessing on my beautiful wife Belinda and I. Just five months old, his personality is shining and bursting through. He is always smiling, laughing and bringing joy to everyone that he encounters. His older brothers, Will and Menzies, love playing with him and are great sons by helping to look after him. Of course, Chase loves his two older brothers too. I can only imagine the adventures they will get up to as they get older. I thank my wonderful wife for giving birth to our treasure—she too is amazing. I say to our little cowboy Chase that daddy, mummy and brothers Will and Menzies love you very, very much.

INGLEBURN TENNIS CLUB

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (16:23): I acknowledge the hard-working committee of the Ingleburn Tennis Club. This group of five volunteers has been at the helm over the past six years. The committee ensures its 54 members and the local community has access to a well-maintained tennis venue at an affordable cost. Ann-Marie Green has been president of the club for eight years and a member for more than three decades. Robert Goodall has spent six out of seven years with the club as secretary. Richard Paine has been a member for 15 years, acting on the committee and as treasurer for 11 years. Peter Buckmaster has been

a committee member for six years in his current term, having played with the club for 35 years. Richard Pok has been a member for 20 years, serving on the committee for six years. Incredibly, it appears there has been a tennis club in Ingleburn since 1899. I congratulate the committee members on their dedication to continuing this tradition and a great community facility for our people.

Private Members' Statements

COST OF LIVING

Mr THOMAS GEORGE (Lismore) (16:24): Like the Premier today in question time, I take the opportunity to speak about what the New South Wales Government is doing to ease cost of living pressures for residents across the State, especially in my electorate of Lismore. Last week I had the pleasure of launching the New South Wales Government's new Cost of Living service at Service NSW in Lismore, which has been selected as one of the trial areas. The service is about making it easier for people to access in one place a suite of more than 40 New South Wales Government cost savings and rebates from more than 12 agencies. Research has shown there are many Government rebates and initiatives that New South Wales citizens either are not aware of or find it difficult to access. That is why our Government is making it easier for customers to access rebates and savings, such as the Active Kids \$100 voucher per child; the compulsory third party [CTP] green slip refund and savings; the Fair Go for Safe Drivers scheme, which offers 50 per cent off licence renewal; the First Home Buyers Assistance scheme; Return and Earn; and Revenue NSW unclaimed money.

During the launch last week I had the opportunity to speak to local people who had already had the opportunity to experience the benefits of this new program. Thirty-year-old Aimee Austin has three children and told me she was extremely happy with the new service. She went to Service NSW to renew her licence and was asked to sit down and go through the rebates and savings she might be able to access. Aimee was able to save \$1,269 through implementing some of the measures. Some of the strategies Aimee was able to take advantage of that led to this reduction in cost of living pressures included the Family Energy Rebate, pensioner licence and registration, FuelCheck, Active Kids vouchers, recreational fishing licence exemptions, a national parks exemption card and NSW Ambulance fee exemptions. Seventy-nine-year-old Geoffrey Smith also attended the launch and saved himself \$838 through using FuelCheck and getting a recreational fishing fee exemption, a national parks exemption card and a compulsory third party green slip refund. The Cost of Living specialist also told Geoff that he could save a further \$845 by implementing further strategies on offer.

The aim of this service is to help customers discover the ways in which they can earn and save. The Cost of Living appointment service is being introduced to about 50 service centres, with more locations being gradually rolled out across New South Wales. Luckily, Lismore has been picked as the first pilot site. I encourage people in Lismore and throughout the State to book their appointment with the Cost Of Living specialist at Service NSW. When I was speaking to Aimee she told me that she was not aware of the Active Kids \$100 voucher. That surprised me, and I indicated my surprise to her.

Aimee has four children so she would be able to save \$400, and she did not know about it. Members on both sides of the House have been promoting the Active Kids \$100 voucher, yet parents are still not aware of it and a number of other savings they could take advantage of. Following on from what the Premier said in question time, I encourage people to attend Service NSW in their area and to make an appointment to help them lower their cost of living in New South. I also encourage all members of Parliament to make an appointment at Service NSW.

COST OF LIVING

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (16:29): Late last year my colleague the member for Canterbury, Sophie Cotsis, and I had a conversation in the Chamber about organising an event where residents could bring their bills, speak directly with service providers, and receive information and advice about their bills to ensure that they are getting the best deals to help relieve cost of living pressures. The member for Canterbury and her office are driving the event. However, as members know, she has been unwell so I commend my colleague the member for Rockdale, Steve Kamper, for stepping into the breach to help out, while ensuring that the Canterbury electorate office remains involved.

Last week, on 1 August, the Bring Your Bills Day and Community Expo was held, with the assistance of the Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW, Metro Assist and Canterbury Bankstown Council. Overall, in the course of the day more than 600 people walked through the doors of the Orion Theatre in Campsie. Many people had hundreds of dollars wiped from their bills, while many more found out that they were eligible for pensioner rebates and payment plans. The previous speaker, the member for Lismore, talked about similar matters—which were also referred to earlier today. The one thing on which we all agree is that people are struggling. The cost of living discussion is not about who is doing what or the amount of money involved; it is about what we can do to support communities.

The member for Lismore made an excellent point about communication. There are many initiatives—some driven by government and some by companies, particularly energy and water companies—that can assist. It is a great concern that many of the people who came through the expo doors were unaware of what was available to them. It begs the question: What are we not doing right? How can we communicate these messages better? How do we ensure that people know what is available to them? How do we let people know that energy companies will reduce their bills if they pay on time? For example, Mr Hendie, a constituent of mine, managed to have his power bill reduced by 28 per cent because he always pays his bills on time. He did not know that was available to him. The onus must be on companies to start letting people know what they can do.

Government organisations such as the Australian Taxation Office, Centrelink, Legal Aid NSW, Sydney Water and local organisations like the Muslim Women's Association, the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW and the Bankstown Canterbury Community Transport team were on hand to provide information and offer advice and assistance to people directly. Many people, especially older residents, spoke about cost of living pressures and the sacrifices they have to make—namely, deciding whether to turn on the heater or to eat. In a wealthy society in 2018 people should not have to make such decisions. Also, people are often too proud to ask for help. We directed people to places where we knew they would receive assistance, but they were too proud to go. They said, "Look, I don't know; others are doing it worse than me." That demonstrates the great Australian spirit: No matter how tough things are, we always think someone is doing it tougher. We must focus on communication. Different initiatives have been introduced—whether government or non-government—but the question is: How can they be implemented?

I will put the cost of living into perspective. The median weekly household income in the electorate of Lakemba is \$1,107, which is just over \$50,000 a year. Personal weekly income is about \$439. Both those figures are lower than the national average. People are paying rent of between \$500 and \$600, so it does not leave much money for them to live on. We have talked about Labor's commitments to address the rising cost of electricity and other costs; we must take action. I conclude by asking: What do people do if they do not have Service NSW in their area or they do not have the confidence or language skills to use a website? Many of the initiatives require the use of a website but lots of people do not know how to access a website—many do not even have a computer—or their English may not be good. What are we doing to ensure that these initiatives, however fantastic, are accessible to everyone? That is an important point to consider. We must assist people, but we must ensure that all initiatives are accessible.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for Lakemba to pass on the Parliament's wishes to the member for Canterbury and the member for Cabramatta.

ROTARY CLUBS OF MACARTHUR POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (16:34): Last night I represented the Minister for Police, the Hon. Troy Grant, at the annual Rotary Clubs of Macarthur Police Officer of the Year Awards. I thank the Minister for his time today in launching Lisa McAdams' book about surviving and triumphing over domestic violence. It was much appreciated. Each year the Police Officer of the Year Awards recognise the amazing work of our police officers in making our communities safe. We all take for granted that our police will be there when we need them. Awards nights give us an opportunity to say thank you to them for their unwavering support no matter the situation and for going beyond the call of duty. Our police need to know that they are not taken for granted.

Nominees for Detective of the Year were Detective Senior Sergeant Rod Cutler from Macquarie Fields, Detective Senior Constable Ashley Kable from Campbelltown and Detective Senior Constable Jason Darley from Camden. Detective Darley was awarded as the winner. Nominees for the crime management unit award were Senior Constable David Blom from Macquarie Fields, Senior Constable Ellen Sutherland from Campbelltown and Constable Kathryn Moss from Camden. Senior Constable Blom was named the winner. Nominees for the probationary constable award were Probationary Constable Michael Humphreys from Macquarie Fields, Probationary Constable Jessica Neill from Campbelltown and Probationary Constable Laura Pennington from Camden. Probationary Constable Humphreys was awarded as the winner.

Nominees for the general duties officer award were Sergeant Jaime Gooch from Macquarie Fields, Leading Senior Constable Cameron Allan from Campbelltown and Sergeant Dale Abbott from Camden. Sergeant Abbott was named the winner. Nominees for the unsworn officers award were Karen Fox from Campbelltown, Megan Thomson from Macquarie Fields and Sarah Doel from Camden. It was wonderful to see Karen Fox win the award. If my memory serves me correctly, she won the same award only a few years ago. The Police Officer of the Year award—the big one that we were all there to see—went to Senior Constable David Blom from Macquarie Fields.

I congratulate and thank all of the officers in the three commands recognised last night. Their job is not easy but they choose to take it on because they know that they can make a difference. It is a challenging job but

it is often rewarding. We know that there are situations our police officers would prefer not to have to deal with but they accept that they come with the territory. Earlier this year the NSW Police Force made the decision to reopen 500 cold cases to try to give families the closure they have sought for many years. That is evidence that, no matter what, our police never give up. Modern technology will assist our police in their work, but I am sure that the pursuit of justice will always come down to good old-fashioned detective work. I once again thank all serving police officers across New South Wales. We understand why they take on their role and thank them for their continuing dedication to our communities. They are greatly appreciated.

At the event last night I had the privilege of sitting next to Camden Local Area Commander Ward Hanson and his lovely wife, Felicity. Ward Hanson and every member of his local area command does a wonderful job. We thank them for their efforts to keep our community safe and to keep our citizens free from the fear of crime. I also thank the Macarthur Rotary clubs that put on the awards night event year in, year out. They have been tremendous supporters of our police for many decades.

I thank the chairwoman, Cathie Richardson—a great friend—and her wonderful committee, who worked tirelessly to ensure that last night was the success it was and that our Macarthur officers got the acknowledgement they rightly deserve. Rotary's motto is "Service above self" and, just like the Rotarians of Macarthur are selfless in their duties, so too are the police men and women and unsworn officers. They all do a wonderful job and put duty before themselves. We thank them very much.

BULAHDELAH LIONS CLUB

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:40): I pay tribute to the Lions Club of Bulahdelah. On Saturday 28 July 2018, I had the pleasure of attending the club's changeover dinner. Earlier that day, I attended a meeting at Taree and then went out to the Jacaranda Estate winery for a long lunch. More than 100 people were at the winery, enjoying the entertainment and fantastic food amongst the vines. Jacaranda Estate is getting the reputation of being the premium winery in the area. After that, I went down to Bulahdelah for the changeover dinner. It was great to hear about the achievements of the club over the past year. I congratulate the incoming Board of Directors for 2018-19: President Arthur Baker, Past President Roger Dixon, First Vice President Judy Dixon, Secretary Ruth Butler, Treasurer Ian Mason, First Year Director Helen Amendolia, Second Year Director Roger Dixon, Tail Twister Pat Baker, Lion Tamer Phil Gardiner, Membership Roger Dixon, Public Officer Rodney Lansdowne, Parks Arthur Baker and Events Judy Dixon.

The achievements of the club over the past year are fantastic. The club donated approximately \$30,000 to local causes, including \$2,400 for the hospital auxiliary palliative care beds, money to the men's shed and \$2,000 to Bulahdelah Central School for its breakfast club. It also provided a \$5,000 donation to Need for Feed for drought relief. That is absolutely fantastic for a small club in a little town. The club also performs the Driver Reviver program on the highway and looks after the Bulahdelah Lions Park, a recreational vehicle park on the other side of the river from the town and hotel. With the help of the Roads and Maritime Services, the club put that park in. It has been part of the answer to the survival of Bulahdelah since the introduction of the bypass. Bulahdelah is a great example of what a community can do to ensure that it survives after it is bypassed by the highway.

The club made donations to motor neurone disease. It looks after another park at Alum Mountain that was put in because of the bypass. It is great the club does this work. It intends to put in a \$250,000 skateboard park at Alum Mountain and is working with the MidCoast Council to achieve that. The majority of the money for the park will come from funds the club has raised. That is an unbelievable achievement. During the night, a Lions award was presented to Graham Powell and a Melvin Jones Fellowship, which is the highest Lions award, was awarded to Phillip Mason. I know the Deputy Speaker is a recipient of that award also. I was pleased that along with all the work the club does in the parks and the like, a Government grant of \$10,600 was put towards a new mower, which is used to look after the two parks.

Club members cut, sell and deliver firewood, help with the Red Cross breakfast at Bulahdelah Central School, collect for the Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal, assist at the Bulahdelah Show by managing the gate, cater for local sports club functions, assist the local dressage club and assist the local police with Blue Light discos. That community would not be able to survive and do what it does without the Lions Club volunteers. They are the foundation of so many things that happen in the area. I pay tribute to the wonderful job they have done over the years and I look forward to the future with them.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Myall Lakes is a humble man. He is a Melvin Jones Fellowship Award recipient and the President of the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club. He is doing a fantastic job. It is a wonder he did not push for the Lions Club Gala Dinner to be held on 29 October.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INNOVATION CHALLENGE

Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (16:45): Young people in New South Wales are the future of our State. It is today's youth who will be tomorrow's leaders, innovators and achievers. They have a contribution only they can make to their local communities and to the State, and it should not be disregarded. I am proud of the measures the Berejiklian Government is taking to incorporate and to accommodate the views, voices and opinions of those young people across our State, and on the South Coast.

The New South Wales Government offers a wide range of services to young people, from helping them find employment to helping them with their mental health, early childhood services and homelessness services. From July, 100,000 fee-free apprenticeships were made available to young people to help those who need it most to train for and to realise their vocations. In 2014, the Government also established the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People, with the goal of making New South Wales a better place for them. Record funding has been dedicated to supporting not only young people but also youth-focused programs, initiatives and organisations.

The Government's Youth Employment Innovation Challenge is funding \$10 million of innovative programs in regional areas like the South Coast to assist young people to find employment. As part of the challenge, already two innovative local projects involving Campbell Page of Nowra and Green Connect Illawarra have been awarded \$100,000 each in funding, in addition to training and mentoring to develop their ideas into workable business models. There is no doubt that young people in regional areas face unique and difficult challenges. I am proud that this Government is working hard to deliver for them and to provide the same opportunities that are offered to their city cousins.

In February this year, the South Coast welcomed a visit from the Minister for Multiculturalism and Disability Services, Ray Williams, to announce the almost \$50,000 secured to undertake the local Youthmoves—Inspire, Create, Lead project. The project is now allowing local youth to get a taste for event management in a supportive environment. I have visited the group and it is inspirational. Young people from across the South Coast are learning how to manage events, to create key networks and to work in a team environment. The local community will also benefit from a series of free community events.

The Government is also in the process of considering new policy options to support youth in our regions. There are opportunities to improve outcomes for young people in regional New South Wales—especially when it comes to getting a job, wellbeing, recreation and moving around—and we are working hard to achieve just that. To develop appropriate and effective policies, it is important that we work with and listen to young people who will be impacted by any new policy options. Only recently I welcomed the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young people to Shoalhaven High School to host a youth forum and to hear directly from students in year 9 to year 12 about their priorities and what improvements they thought could be made in their communities. I was thoroughly impressed with how the young adults conducted themselves and the thought and seriousness with which they approached the day's topics and tasks.

I commend each of them for their contributions and invaluable insight into the challenges they face in their community. Each of the forum's groups raised issues such as future employment, transport, shopping, recreational facilities, education, infrastructure and sport, and talked about whether or not they were being done well. It was great to hear those insights. It was also no surprise to learn that, like me, their priorities included ensuring the South Coast saw the investment it needed to meet the needs of its growing population. I have spoken many times before in this Chamber about the fast-growing region that is the South Coast. Every year we welcome more and more families to the area who are attracted by the lifestyle and community spirit only the South Coast can offer. I want to reassure them and the entire South Coast community that I will continue to work very hard to deliver the investment, infrastructure and services they need.

SOUTH COAST TRAIN SERVICES

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:49): Earlier today in question time references were made by the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to South Coast train services and commuters from the Illawarra. I contend from what we heard that the Minister has either a fundamental lack of understanding of the issues affecting South Coast commuters or a wilful disregard for the concerns of those commuters. For months, if not longer, the member for Keira and I have been seeking to meet with the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to discuss our concerns about overcrowding on South Coast train services. The Minister may have pointed to South Coast train services where the overcrowding rates do not appear to be as high as they are in other parts, but he has not pointed to the two four-car services from Central at 3.24 p.m. and 3.45 p.m. The Minister, either deliberately or through a lack of understanding of the issues, appears to have overlooked the fact that they are four-car services. He has clearly not read our correspondence about this issue and he has obviously not read the *Hansard* because the member for Keira and I have raised this issue on multiple occasions.

The 3.24 p.m. and 3.54 p.m. services from Central to the South Coast are chronically overcrowded but that is not reflected in the statistics because, somewhat bizarrely, the statistics do not count services before 4.00 p.m. or thereabouts. In fact, at the same time as the Minister was dismissing the concerns of South Coast rail commuters in question time today, people had already begun to line up to catch the 3.24 p.m. service. Why? Because in order to have a chance of getting a seat on that service—not a guarantee of a seat—people are lining up 45 minutes early. They stand on the platform for 45 minutes and then board a train where they are unlikely to find a seat because it is only a four-car service. They then have to stand, not for 10, 15 or 20 minutes like other commuters in suburban Sydney, for another 45 minutes to an hour—some even up to one and a half hours. It has also been reported to me that passengers are often being forced to stand between Central and North Wollongong station—an 80 kilometre journey. That is not good enough.

In an attempt to dismiss our concerns the Minister said, "They just want more trains." The member for Keira and I would love more trains to the South Coast and the Illawarra. Even the Speaker, in her private member's statement, spoke about how popular the region is and how quickly it is growing. We have one of the largest commuter bases in all of New South Wales, if not the country; up to 30,000 commuters a day leave the area for work. The member for Keira and I are seeking for four more carriages on those services. Surely that is not too much to ask. I note that the member for Blue Mountains is in the Chamber. She has her own frustrations with the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. But instead of giving us a reasonable response to our request, the Minister tends to hide behind Transport for NSW standard responses. The commuters, the member for Keira and I consistently get responses from the Minister—probably the member for Blue Mountains receives similar responses—that it will be fine because the new Inner City Fleet will fix it.

When will the new Inner City Fleet come to the South Coast service? Recently we ascertained that they will go to Newcastle and the Central Coast first, then to the Blue Mountains, and the South Coast line services are the last on the list. A Transport for NSW spokesman may have slipped up when he confirmed to the *Illawarra Mercury* that the Inner City Fleet carriages will not be seen on the South Coast line until at least 2021. I asked the Minister on notice whether he would be able to confirm that and he said no. It is either 2021 or later; it is not before because they have prioritised Newcastle, the Central Coast and the Blue Mountains before us. We are simply seeking four additional carriages on two services in the afternoon to seriously address the overcrowding. We want more seats on South Coast trains, not Sydney stadiums.

MIRANDA ELECTORATE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (16:54): Today I acknowledge some of the wonderful schools in the Miranda electorate during this important Education Week. The theme for this year's Education Week is "Today's schools—creating tomorrow's world". It highlights the important role that public schools and educators play in future-proofing our students to succeed in the twenty-first century. As a staunch supporter of local schools in my electorate, I congratulate the following schools on being awarded grants for community infrastructure projects as part of the Community Building Partnership program.

Two weeks ago, we celebrated the opening of Illawong Public School's new uniform shop, which was made possible by a grant of more than \$25,000 from the New South Wales Government. This innovative building has been converted from a shipping container into a fully functional hub. The uniform shop is run by dedicated volunteers to help maintain low operating costs and return profits back to the school. I am incredibly thrilled that we were able to help realise the parents and citizens association's vision and create an open and accessible shopfront for volunteers, parents and students.

This project would not have been possible without the support of Principal Jennifer Birch and the hard work of all the dedicated members of the parents and citizens association [P&C] including President Melissa Elkin, Vice-President Julie Patterson, Treasurer Stuart Bowyer, fundraising officer Sara Collins, uniform shop officer Allison McInerney and outgoing Secretary Amanda Borg. A big thank you goes to Brad Elkin for converting a shipping container into this amazing facility, and special mention goes to Nancy Feltaous for her ongoing contribution to this project.

Recently I also visited Tharawal Public School to launch its new outdoor learning and performance area, which was completed with \$30,000 from the Community Building Partnership program. This project is the final part of a large playground upgrade to create an inclusive and innovative learning area that takes students out of their classrooms and into the great outdoors. The performance area will also be highly utilised by drama, dance and band students, and the versatility of the area gives the school greater adaptability to hold various types of events, including special assemblies on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, fundraising events, as well as night markets and movie nights. I acknowledge Principal Gerry O'Brien and the fantastic P&C, who made this project possible, including President David Linguist, Vice Presidents Anne Simpson and Jenny Walters, Secretary Nicole Fuller and Treasurer Megan Murdoch.

Jannali Public School also has much to celebrate, having recently been awarded \$30,000 to go towards a new playground for the school. Its current playground is more than 20 years old and was second-hand when it was initially installed. The new playground will not only be utilised by students at the school; students at the Jannali Before and After School Care and Jannali Vacation Care will also have access to the equipment outside of school hours and during school holidays. Therefore, this upgrade has wideranging and diverse benefits for children of all ages and backgrounds, and I look forward to seeing them on the new playground once it has been completed.

With the support of Principal Karen Andrews, the P&C has been instrumental in securing this funding, and I acknowledge President Julie Robinson, Vice-Presidents Val Cullen and Jemima Cody, Secretary Liz Delfs, Treasurer Kaylene Pring, fundraising officer Sarah Oxley and the rest of the hardworking committee members. But wait there is more. Kareela Public School also received \$30,000 in funding, which is going towards replacing the cracked asphalt on its basketball court and handball courts with a synthetic surface. Currently, the school uses this area to hold band and dance performances. The resurfacing of this area will not only enhance the playground appearance but also make it a safer and more functional environment for the wider community. The upgrade will benefit both current and future students, who will have access to first-rate sporting facilities.

I thank Principal Nicole Arnold for her excellent leadership and I acknowledge the efforts of the incredibly dedicated P&C, including President Caterina Zannino, Vice-Presidents Maria Popova and Theresa Franco, Treasurer Lorraine Murphy and Secretary Ainslie McLean. I am honoured to be able to acknowledge the hardworking staff and parents at the many schools within the Miranda electorate and to recognise their contributions to children. I congratulate all the schools who have received grants under the Community Building Partnership program and I look forward to seeing these projects come to life.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:58): Appropriately, during Education Week I acknowledge the tremendous work that the member for Miranda does for public schools in her electorate. The Illawong, Tharawal, Jannali and Kareela public schools could not have a better advocate for education than the member for Miranda. It is no surprise that the member for Miranda is such a supporter of education. As a young woman of great academic accomplishment, and a tax lawyer, she is aware of the importance of public schools in her community. How lucky the citizens of Miranda are to have her as their member.

WYONG ELECTORATE DEVELOPMENT

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (17:00): Tonight I will update the Parliament on the development occurring in the Warnervale area of my electorate. There has been huge residential development with thousands of new houses. Following the global financial crisis private investment is now starting to catch up with the growth in population. Local residents have long been concerned that the number of houses has not been matched by private investment. On 1 August last week students from the Wadalba Community School and I attended the opening of the new Woolworths store at Wadalba. The young school captain cut the ribbon and opened the Woolworths store. It was an exciting time. It will generate more than 100 local jobs which will add to the local economy. That store has been planned for a long time. It is great it has now eventuated.

I asked Woolworths to look at accelerating planning for its next store in Warnervale town centre. The number of people moving into that area would provide Woolworths with plenty of business. At the same time a brand new Bunnings is being built at Lakehaven. There is already a Bunnings at Lakehaven but a bigger store is being built which will generate jobs, provide a trade service and add to the local economy. The Tuggerah Lakes Private Hospital, which will be built at Kanwal, will generate an additional 50 jobs and complement the planned upgrade of Wyong Hospital. The community fought hard, and won, to stop the privatisation of that hospital.

The \$200 million upgrade of Wyong Hospital will be complemented by the private hospital and improve health services in the area. I thank the health Minister for his intervention. This Minister is far easier to deal with than the previous health Minister. On that hospital site there will be a new ambulance station. As it is in a residential area local residents were concerned about sirens in the middle of the night. They have been reassured that ambulance officers will behave and not put on their sirens in the middle of the night. That ambulance station is welcomed.

The North Wyong industrial estate is growing at a rate of knots with new industry, small businesses and a large businesses, which is positive news. A new school is planned for the Warnervale area. I warned the Government that the site was environmentally constrained. When Labor was in government it looked at building a school on that site but chose not to for that reason. This Government has been confronted with the same issues. The education Minister has been doing a good job talking to the community and listening to their feedback. We are attempting to convince the Minister that a new senior campus is required at Wadalba Community School. Private investment is important to complement residential development and public investment.

I know that we can be quite adversarial in this place at times, particularly during question time, but the job of governments of either persuasion is to deliver to growing communities. If the Government does good things I will congratulate it. I am very pleased to think that my great advocacy helps too. Behind the scenes I have a good relationship with ministers. I know that they have difficult jobs and I am more than happy to work with them to get the best outcomes for my community. I appreciate the way that they interact with me and the way that they respond when I make requests or helpful comments to make sure that we get the best for growing communities. It is great that this is happening, but there is always more to do. We still need a couple of new railway stations and a new road, but I will be happy with what we are getting at the moment.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (17:05): I will talk a little about the drought that New South Wales, particularly the Upper Hunter, is experiencing at the moment. I will offer a couple of ideas that may bring to the fore some practical solutions, and some understanding of the plight of farmers and rural communities in the Upper Hunter and throughout regional New South Wales. In the past 24 hours or so 100 per cent of New South Wales has been declared to be in drought. While I recognise that media outlets that are based in Sydney and metropolitan communities are rallying to support farmers, farming families and farming communities, I will suggest something that may be of significant practical benefit.

Given that 100 per cent of the State is in drought, and about one-third of it is in severe drought, water restrictions—say, level 5 restrictions—could be put in place in Sydney and metropolitan areas to give people a significant practical understanding of the impact that a lack of water has on our farming and rural communities. It would also have the practical benefit of conserving as much water as possible for as long as possible. We do not know when we will receive sufficient rain in our catchments to fill the dams and replenish the water stocks that we rely upon, not only in Sydney and metropolitan areas but throughout New South Wales. One of the things that has been brought to the public's attention is that because of the lack of rain it has been impossible to grow feed for stock—cattle, sheep and other grazing animals. There is simply very little or nothing for them to graze upon.

The community has rallied to source as much fodder as possible. Most of it is being brought in from other States and some organisations are looking at the potential for importing fodder from other countries so that the core breeding stock can be fed. It is very important to hold onto that breeding stock if recovery from the drought is to be quick. If New South Wales loses that breeding stock it will take between four and five years for farmers and farming communities to see sufficient levels of activity to be able to generate an income and start to recover. It is very important that we do everything we can to maintain our core breeding stock. The Government has put some measures in place. Indeed, people can access genetic storage, but that will add to the time for recovery. This week I wrote to the Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage, Gabrielle Upton, to ask the Government to consider giving farmers access to national parks for grazing purposes.

It would not necessarily be suitable everywhere, but in my electorate of Upper Hunter I am fortunate to have the Barrington Tops National Park, which is about 124,000 hectares. If only 20,000 hectares of that park was suitable for nearby farmers to put their breeding stock on to keep them alive, fat and healthy, I would think that would have the support of people across New South Wales. It may not have the support of The Greens, but I am okay with that because it is a fight worth having. We must stand up for our farmers, think about the long term, and think about how we can put measures in place now to protect our breeding stock for a quicker recovery in future. Let us face it, fat cattle in national parks are better than big fires.

ALBURY ELECTORATE VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (17:10): It was wonderful to get out into the community in recent weeks to visit four organisations where I was able to join with members in celebrating lengthy periods of service by key volunteers. It is a record of outstanding service and value within these groups, highlighting how individuals have committed their time and talents for the benefit of others. The awards being presented were the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Certificate for long-term volunteering of 25 years or more of service, and the Lifelong Certificate, which represents 40 years or more of service.

This year the recipients in the Albury electorate were scout leader Phillip Smith; judo instructor Hilibrandt "Hilly" Westra; rescue squad members Peter Adams, John Boyd, Stuart Dye and David Gibbs; and pony club leaders Marylou, or Sandra, Hodges and Kimball "Kim" Felton. Each of those people has made a significant impact on their organisations and their influence extends in positive channels throughout the community. We see this in the way that mentorship and leadership help establish positive role models and patterns of behaviour that not only promote caring but also engage communities.

I will take a few minutes to acknowledge the work of those volunteers whose service across the Albury electorate we celebrate this year. Phillip Smith has been a stalwart of the 1st Albury Scout Group for approximately 25 years, helping young people to follow the best of scouting traditions. Phillip is a dedicated volunteer and mentor. He served as a scout leader, rover adviser, regional commissioner, past executive team member and, throughout 25 years or more, as a mentor to others. Hilibrandt "Hilly" Westra has spent the past 27 years helping young people get fit and active, and qualified in the art and discipline of judo. Hilly is part of this message, steering young people towards acquiring skills, developing confidence when once there was insecurity, and recognising what it means to be fit, active and, dare I say it, self-disciplined.

Four members of the Albury and Border Rescue Squad have between them piled on the years of service. David Gibbs has volunteered for approximately 25 years, while Peter Adams, John Boyd and Stuart Dye have each been with the rescue service for 40-plus years. That is a remarkable effort. Together, those four have been helping people to get trained so as to be ready to serve in the times of need that we face in regional New South Wales and the Albury electorate. In our rescue services, people develop the necessary skills to take part in rescue operations and learn how to act in an emergency. This is not a job for everyone, yet many roles and opportunities exist within the organisation. Different talents and attributes can find a place, indeed a home, within a supportive organisation dedicated to the testing and sometimes terrifying task of protecting our community. They take on roles in training and leadership, running or assisting with the weekly training sessions and helping volunteers to reach the required standard.

Finally, I mention Kimball Felton and Marylou, known as Sandra, Hodges. Kim has worked with border equestrian organisations for more than 25 years and Sandra for 40 years. Their roles include working with the Wirlinga & District Pony Club, Zone 20 and the Pony Club Association. Their roles include volunteering at a local level with the Wirlinga & District Pony Club to zone and State representation. Albury is most proud of its vast network of volunteers, of unsung heroes who get on with the job of helping those in need, or by passing on their knowledge and expertise to upcoming generations. Their work and simple presence has been important in helping build the culture and atmosphere of their organisations as safe places, and as places of learning and social inclusion.

Many in our community have been born into social disadvantage of one kind or another. Others may have had a more privileged start to life, only to find that security snatched away through the impact of retrenchment, substance abuse or family breakdown. In their clubhouses and facilities, disadvantage is not a barrier to participation, to inclusion, to joy. Children and indeed adults of all ages are welcomed in a host of varied roles and participate in a fantastic range of activities that stretch their minds and boost their self-esteem. The benefits are not just for the young, although it can make a tremendous difference to a young person starting out on their life journey. As the great Kanō Jigorō—the founder of judo—once said:

Judo teaches us to look for the best possible course of action, whatever the individual circumstances.

I feel that community organisations such as pony clubs, the Police and Community Youth Clubs, scouting groups and our emergency services do much the same thing. For this important work and their lengthy volunteering records—an embodiment of the volunteering ethic and can-do culture, values and standards of excellence—I thank Scout leader Phillip Smith, judo instructor Hilly Westra, rescue squad members Peter Adams, John Boyd, Stuart Dye and David Gibbs, and Pony Club leaders Marylou (Sandra) Hodges and Kimball Felton. Long may our border community continue to be graced by their presence and outstanding commitment.

BLUE MOUNTAINS HEALTH SERVICES

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:15): Today I raise the issue of health services in the Blue Mountains. I particularly draw upon some of the critical points I raised in my submission to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry into the management of health care delivery in New South Wales last year. On a daily basis, my office is contacted by Blue Mountains residents who hold concerns about the capacity of our health system to respond to their health needs. Whether it be surgery waiting times, capacity of our hospital emergency departments or the mental health system, my constituents highlight a health system which is struggling to find the capacity to respond with timely and appropriate care and treatment. It is likely that these problems will only worsen at both of my local hospitals with the increasing population in this region. With the ageing of the population and the effects of socioeconomic disadvantage, presentations and health issues are becoming increasingly complex, frequently accompanied by increased acuity.

The health system is reliant on the goodwill of its workforce. I acknowledge the professional and dedicated healthcare workforce who staff our hospitals and community health facilities. Staff must be acknowledged and supported and their perspective valued to ensure a system that is sustainable and willing to reflect on what it does well but also where it can do better. There is no doubt that we have a world-class public health system. Nevertheless, without adequate funding and resourcing, the health system will be ill-prepared to

meet the challenges of coming decades, especially with regards to the ageing of the population and, with this, growing chronic and complex disease.

Today I focus on the continuing growth in mental disorders and distress facing many within our community and the serious challenges facing the health system in providing a timely, comprehensive and compassionate response—especially being able to provide such a response given current funding cuts and constraints. The delivery of mental health services and related issues in my area is troubling, but I am sure this is not a Blue Mountains problem alone. After a recent conversation with some of the dedicated and skilled workers in the mental health sector and hospital system and police from our local area command, we really need to acknowledge such problems in this place—that there is a crisis and we need to find practical solutions to address it. I acknowledge my constituents who have come forward and raised their concerns and complaints with me. This is no easy task but the system cannot learn unless it is made aware of its gaps and shortcomings. I also honour the doctors, nurses, allied health and support staff who provide ongoing care under very challenging circumstances.

One of the major issues I hear about is capacity issues within the system, known as bed-block. With regard to inpatient mental healthcare, there remains an ongoing pressure on bed availability. Whether it be beds in the Psychiatric Emergency Care Centre [PECC], the Nepean or Blue Mountains Mental Health Unit or access to Community Mental Health Teams, the system is struggling to meet demand. In response to bed-block, staff on a regular basis are forced to make decisions to discharge or admit patients on the basis of bed availability. We need a whole-of-government approach to deal with this crisis—and it is a crisis.

This was highlighted very recently in a traumatic and public way when a man in my electorate on the verge of homelessness, faced with eviction, became absolutely desperate and his subsequent distress escalated, resulting in troubled behaviour. Streets went into lockdown, a siege was discussed on social media and, finally, days later there was a failed attempt to admit the unwell man to hospital. There has been a worrying and unnecessary increase in suicides in the Blue Mountains recently, residents and non-residents alike, after people have been prematurely discharged from mental health units in hospitals to free up beds. This has caused considerable concern for my community.

Our local police force is the frontline in the emergency response to people suffering mental illness or severe distress. Experienced police have shared with me their frustration when they take a person to our local mental health facility, often under traumatic circumstances, and where the person potentially poses a risk of harm to themselves or others, only to discover that the person is released back into the community without a plan to deal with their illness or keep them safe. I am not describing a one-off situation. We have a memorandum of understanding between health services, the police and the ambulance service which clearly states that health is the lead agency in mental health. However, unless our hospital emergency departments and mental health services have sufficient resources and beds, people who are suffering will continue to be discharged with inadequate care plans and support to keep them safe and well.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:20): This Government prides itself on its record spend in health not only in Sydney but also throughout New South Wales. For example, Nepean Hospital, in the electorate adjourning the Blue Mountains, has undergone a major and extensive upgrade costing more than \$1 billion. In my electorate the Government is getting on with the job of redeveloping St George Hospital. The upgrade is up to stage 2.5 and hopefully in the next few years money will be provided to fund stage 3. In the electorate of Blue Mountains \$4.7 million has been allocated for the renal dialysis centre at the Blue Mountains District Anzac Memorial Hospital. Final designs for the dialysis centre are said to have been completed earlier this year following extensive planning and consultation. It does not matter whether it is Sydney or regional and rural New South Wales, this Government is getting on with the rebuild of many of our local hospitals. In the past eight years there has been a record spending in health from this Government.

MANNING BASE HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:21): I inform the House of the progress of the redevelopment of Manning Base Hospital. I thank the nurses, doctors and ancillary staff who do such a fantastic job at that hospital. The number of people attending that hospital continues to rise year in, year out. My office receives an enormous number of compliments about its staff. I am fighting for the funding of stage 2 of the hospital upgrade, which includes a new ward building and more beds. We have a real need for wards and an increased number of beds. I call on the Government and the Minister for Health to provide funding for stage 2. In May 2018 I was pleased that when the Cabinet came to the Manning Valley and Forster an announcement was made of a further \$20 million for stage 1 redevelopment of the hospital.

A couple of years ago \$20 million was provided for the stage 1 redevelopment for a new oncology unit, a new renal dialysis unit, a new multi-storey car park and a further underground car park. The additional \$20 million will provide a new level above the oncology renal dialysis. The hospital intends to move the medical

imaging and pharmacy on to that floor. Recently I spoke with the nurses at the nurses' award ceremony who said they are very happy with what is happening at the hospital. There is more to a hospital than bricks and mortar. We can have the greatest building in the world but it is about the services provided inside. Some of the greatest medical services have been performed in tents in battle zones. I am pleased to say that this Government has increased recurring funding at the hospital by 28 per cent. The hospital has 26 more staff than it had when we came into Government and, adding casuals, that increases it to 60 additional staff.

A few weeks ago I was pleased to meet six new staff appointments to the Manning Hospital: two new intensive care specialists, a rehabilitation specialist, a psychiatrist, a new director of emergency and an anaesthetist. That is fantastic and shows that we are not only redeveloping the hospital but also employing more staff and improving service provision. Dr Rob Hislop is an intensive care staff specialist. He is a Fellow of the College of Intensive Care Medicine and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians. He is a man with significant experience and qualifications. Dr Brij Verma is also an intensive care specialist. He originally came to the Manning Hospital as a locum for 18 months after completing his medical degree in 1996. Dr Ganashan has been appointed to Wingham Hospital as the rehabilitation specialist. The Wingham Hospital performs a unique rehabilitation service. Patients from Hastings, Macleay and areas north of my electorate travel to the Wingham Hospital for specialist rehabilitation treatment.

Dr Charles Estibiero has been appointed as a staff specialist psychiatrist working full-time with Manning Mental Health Services. He is working towards a fellowship of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. Dr Omar has been appointed Director of Emergency at Manning Hospital while Dr Jim Wills is on long service leave. I pay tribute to Dr Jim Wills, who is a great doctor. Dr Stefan Lang has been appointed as a staff specialist anaesthetist at Manning Hospital. Those appointments show the Government's commitment to health in this State and to the Manning Great Lakes area.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:26): I thank the member for Myall Lakes for his tireless efforts in pursuit of funding on behalf of his community to improve the facilities and services offered at the Manning Hospital and across his electorate, fast-tracking the \$40 million redevelopment of the Manning Hospital. He has stood in this Chamber at every parliamentary session—and I have sat at the table and listened to him—and championed his local community, seeking \$40 million for redevelopment of the hospital, which will deliver for the communities of the Manning Valley and Taree. The member for Myall Lakes should be very happy with the redevelopment of the hospital. From the beach to the bush, from regional to rural, from Sydney to right across New South Wales—it does not matter where—the Government is rebuilding many of our local hospitals, including my own St George Hospital, which has seen extensive redevelopment since this Government was elected in 2011.

GUN CONTROL

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (17:27): Nearly a month has passed since the community of West Pennant Hills was shocked by the tragic news of a father taking the life of his two teenage children before also taking his own life. These events took place in my electorate of Epping in a street I know very well that is not far from my home. Members of this place will appreciate that it is difficult to stay silent in circumstances where such an unspeakable event takes place so close to home for many in the local community. This was a frightening and cowardly act. It was premeditated by someone intent on causing harm to those he was meant to protect and care for. This is without question a distressing time for Olga Edwards and her mother, and we ought be mindful of their need to have their privacy respected so that they might grieve in peace, away from the public eye.

In raising this matter today, I do not want to impose on that privacy but I do want to highlight the very serious matters for discussion that arise from this tragedy. We must not let that incident just pass into history. It is quite impossible for me, as a father, to rationalise or understand how any father could even contemplate the callous and vindictive actions of Mr Edwards. On behalf of the Government, I extend our sincerest sympathies to the family, friends, teachers and peers of Jack and Jennifer. This is a tragedy we cannot ignore. All elected members of this place, and also our Federal colleagues, should be having a conversation about the circumstances surrounding these events, particularly access to firearms. I will not presume to pre-empt the Government's response to these issues because they are so serious and the appropriate due diligence needs to be done so that we can respond in the most appropriate and effective way.

We are fortunate in New South Wales to have a very competent and experienced Minister for Police, who is himself a former police officer. I thank him for reaching out to me when this incident occurred and for his sincere concern and care for the local community that I represent. We are led also by a Premier who is always reasoned and measured in her decision-making, and I am sure they both will be giving these matters the necessary consideration. My own view, as I mentioned previously, is that we need to talk about appropriate access to firearms. I grew up in the country so I am well aware of the utilitarian role that firearms play in rural life. But metropolitan Sydney is a long way from the country and we ought to be asking ourselves what sort of person

needs to have access to a gun, because clearly Mr Edwards was not one of them. My deepest sympathies are with all those affected by this horrific and unnecessary loss of life, particularly the family and the students at the schools that Jack and Jennifer attended.

However, there are certain court incidents—and I include Family Court matters among them—that attract a greater risk for domestic violence and self-harm. I make the suggestion that it might be appropriate to suspend the gun licences of those who are involved in Family Court proceedings. Alternatively, no-one involved in custody proceedings should ever be given a gun licence. It is not easy for anyone to process and make sense of such things, but it can be particularly difficult for young people. I have every confidence that their schools are looking out for them at this time and making sure they have the support they need. People never think something like this will happen in their community, especially a quiet suburb like West Pennant Hills. I hope none of us in this place forget these horrific events and the circumstances that led to them. I hope it is something we all continue to talk about and learn from so that we do better to prevent something like this from happening again.

NEWTOWN ELECTORATE EVENTS

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:32): I inform the community that makes up the Newtown electorate what really happens during the winter recess. People know that Parliament rises for a very long period. Some may call it the "winter break" but it is clear to the community I represent that a lot of things happen during this time. Rather than do this by way of a community recognition statement, I wanted to outline some of the amazing opportunities I have had to participate in activities in my local community and to raise issues that my community cares about more broadly. I had the opportunity to speak at Politics in the Pub in Surry Hills and at the Greens Reboot conference. I had the pleasure of watching Blackbreaks play their final gig for a while at The Townie. Although the event often clashes with the sittings of Parliament, this year I was able to attend the Lord Mayor's Citizenship Ceremony. It was wonderful to be part of the celebrations and to welcome so many new citizens to this country.

It was a pleasure to speak with the Lord Mayor of Sydney and with representatives across the political spectrum at the Affordable Housing Conference. Also, I attended with my Greens colleague Janet Rice the Aurora Ball, an incredible event that raises funds for important lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer [LGBTIQ] community charities and activities across New South Wales. At Addison Road Community Centre I was able to speak at an amazing refugee night-time food market and concert that demonstrated the connection of our community to national and global issues. It was a truly remarkable and festive occasion. Despite the cold weather people were very happy dancing and listening to some incredible performances in the hall.

During the winter recess we celebrated NAIDOC Week. The theme "Because of Her, We Can!" resonated throughout the Newtown electorate. I was able to participate in events at the Redfern Community Centre and the Langton Centre in Surry Hills. I was also able to attend the AbSec NAIDOC event in Marrickville just outside my electorate as well as a Community Drug Action Team event at the Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre. It was an incredible celebration where they showed a powerful film that allowed everyone to reflect on the contribution of Aboriginal women towards achieving change in our society.

I was pleased to be able to join a wonderful snap action protest at the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre for the Make Renting Fair campaign where people were allowed to tell their stories about why it is important for them to have a safe place to be rent. I went to Newcastle to speak at the National Women's Student Association conference as part of a panel of other speakers. I then enjoyed participating in a banner drop on the M4 highlighting the disastrous impacts of WestConnex. I also participated in the Surry Hills public housing forum at Northcott, as I do regularly. I acknowledge the City of Sydney councillors and Lord Mayor Clover Moore for their work with those forums.

It was a pleasure to be part of the Chinese Australian Forum farewell to Race Discrimination Commissioner Tim Soutphommasane, whom people would have seen give a significant lecture recently reflecting on his time at the Human Rights Commission. I enjoyed hosting a Reclink trivia fundraiser at the Sydney Park Hotel and having my football knowledge tested. I also travelled to Byron shire and participated in a waste-free event with a number of incredible community members. I must say it is rare to hold a forum in a tent. At Newtown we mostly hold them in public halls, but at the community centre in Mullumbimby we were outside under a beautiful covered area and it was absolutely wonderful.

I recently joined a hackathon hosted by Jess Miller at the University of Technology Sydney to look at air quality and how we can use new technologies to address the challenges we face. Sadly, I also attended the farewell event for Gould's bookshop. I hope people will appreciate it was the first Sydney University Young Labor event I have ever attended. I assure everyone it was only because I very much wanted to recognise the contribution of Gould's bookshop and the historic connection between the values of those organisations and where Bob Gould

stood. Finally, I was pleased to join PACT Salon last Saturday night and also to join the Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre earlier this week for a Homelessness Week morning tea.

OUR BIG KITCHEN

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Heritage) (17:37): On 13 July an amazing local community organisation in my electorate, Our Big Kitchen, hosted Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and me to cook some winter soup and roll some challah. That is the kind of communal cooking that makes OBK, as we know it, so special for everyone who visits. Our visit was a special occasion because we were joined by more than 100 people from my local community who also pitched in with the cooking.

Waverley councillors Sally Betts, Tony Kay and Leon Goltsman joined us as well, along with Kids Giving Back co-director Ruth Tofler-Riesel. Kids Giving Back is a wonderful organisation that provides local teenagers with volunteering opportunities. I salute Ruth for her efforts for our local youth. Rabbi Dr Dovid Slavin and his wife, Rebbetzin Laya Slavin, set up OBK in 2005 because they wanted to help one struggling family to have healthy and fresh meals. Since then OBK has grown in size and outreach. Last year I honoured Laya as my Vaucluse Local Woman of Year.

The award was a testament to the amazing work that she does, often quietly and purposefully behind the scenes, to make OBK what it is. Because the organisation has grown so significantly, today it has hundreds of volunteers who help prepare food for those who need the meals. The volunteers make a big difference, learn some culinary tips along the way and have the benefit of knowing they have helped their local community and people in need. I have visited OBK many times—I cannot count how many—as a show of support for their work. Earlier this year, I visited the kitchen to bake hamantash for the Jewish holiday of Purim and Haman. I joined Jewish Education Matters [JEMS], an amazing organisation that creates opportunities for young people who may not go to a Jewish school to learn and experience Jewish heritage.

JEMS was founded by Rabbi Yossi and Rivky Shuchat in 2011. I pay tribute to them for their energetic and tireless efforts to support our local youth. They are truly amazing. Together with JEMS and the youth they brought together, we baked 3,500 hamantash as gifts for local sick and elderly Jews who were celebrating Purim. It was great to see so many young people, along with their parents and grandparents, giving their time to help others. Last year, OBK distributed more than 80,000 meals. The group works with other charities, including the Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul Society, Lou's Place, Oasis Youth Support, Youth off the Streets and Wayside Chapel, as well as Jewish House and Caretakers Cottage, which are both in Bondi. It is not only the least fortunate in our community that OBK help. It also cooks for the elderly, single parents and even our emergency services personnel while they are busy helping us, particularly during times of crisis.

To instil the ethos of giving and community respect, OBK hosts regular school programs where it shares with children what it means to give back to others. Adults have found it fun too. OBK also holds a corporate team building workshop program and brings in corporate groups to build team spirit and cook and deliver food to those who need it. Those programs are a clear indication of OBK's ability to spread community spirit to people of all ages and backgrounds. As the New South Wales Environment Minister, I am pleased that OBK promotes food sustainability and the need to minimise food waste. It works with organisations such as Foodbank and SecondBite to rescue fruit and vegetables and transform them into healthy and delicious meals in the kitchen.

I have done my bit with OBK. In 2016, through the New South Wales Government Community Building Partnership program, I presented the group with \$15,000 for a kitchen upgrade. Last year I was happy to secure an additional \$15,000 to build new office spaces to support OBK to grow and create an outdoor space. Every time I visit, I see the great work that is being done. There are big smiles on the faces of everyone who is involved with OBK. It is an exemplar community organisation. More than anything, it is a place that brings our community together. By helping people to learn skills and have fun, it builds an even stronger community.

NULON MOTOR OILS DEVELOPMENT

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (17:42): I again advise the House of a proposed development by Nulon Motor Oils on Bringelly Road in the Liverpool electorate. When I previously raised the issue in this place in March, I expressed my strong opposition to the development on the proposed site. My position has not changed and I place on record my continuing opposition to the proposal. It is the wrong development for the site. The fundamental problem is that the proponent described the proposal as "light industrial", otherwise it would not be compliant with the relevant zoning. No-one who lives in the area or has looked at the issue thinks the development can legitimately be described as "light industrial". That is certainly my view. The proposed facility covers more than 10,000 square metres, with office space and facilities for bulk fluid delivery and dispatch, blending, boiling and storage.

When the proposal was advertised, it provoked an avalanche of submissions and petitions in opposition, with residents expressing a great deal of anger. In my view, that anger is quite legitimate. The petitions were signed by approximately 4,000 people. The proponent has now lodged a response to the objections, which has been presented by a group called Ethos Urban in a document dated 7 July 2018. There is a number of disturbing aspects to the document that I have discussed with a number of residents. In paragraph 3.8 on page 15, under the heading "Social Impact", the report tries to deal with some of the issues. In relation to the social impacts, the report states:

It is noted that a majority of the impacts relate to the prevalence of stress and anxiety caused by a person's anticipation and/or perception of adverse effects on their health and safety as a direct result of the proposed Nulon facility. As demonstrated within this RTS [response to submissions] further clarity has been provided to confirm the majority of these perceived impacts are unwarranted.

Telling the residents that their concerns are unwarranted is simply the unmitigated arrogance of developers and proponents who think they have a perfect right to dismiss residents' concerns. The use of terms such as "anticipation" and "perception" represents the enormous condescension of people who will never live anywhere near this facility. Residents do not accept this arrogant, patronising determination to bulldoze ahead regardless, nor should they. There are other disturbing elements in the response to submissions. One of the arguments consistently prosecuted in support of the proposal was that it was job creation and that it was creating new jobs. That justification begins to look distinctly threadbare once the response to the submissions is read.

Paragraph 3.2.2 of the response deals with employee numbers and it reveals that the current Nulon plant at Moorebank employs 65 full-time equivalent staff. It also reveals that if the development is approved, it will commence with a grand total of 70 full-time equivalent staff. There is a possibility of more jobs, but the plant will not commence with them. In fact, all that is promised is five new jobs. Another concerning aspect of the response to submissions relates to the hours of operation, which is dealt with at paragraph 3.2.3. It is stated that production and warehouse staff will attend shifts between 6.00 a.m. and 3.30 p.m., and administration and office staff will attend work between 7.30 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. The hours of operation for the blending process will be from 6.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. Monday to Friday. There is also the possibility of some overtime. The response points out that the application seeks approval for processing from 6.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. Page 8 states:

However, for the purposes of worst cases scenario assessment of air quality impacts, the operational hours for the processing have been assumed to be 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This has caused considerable concern to a number of my constituents who are now fearful of the possibility of a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week operation. While the current application specifies fewer hours of operation than that, if it is approved the fear is that a further application will be lodged to extend the hours. Of course, this possibility is totally unacceptable. The developer needs to make it very clear now not only that the current application is not for a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week operation but also that no further application for an extension will be made.

Residents also believe that the response includes an extra two 15,000 litre holding tanks will be installed. That suggests a larger operation than was originally revealed. Residents are concerned about this process. Nulon assured everyone that its application was adequate. Instead, a plethora of issues has been raised about the application and its supporting information. The developer has taken its own sweet time to respond, leaving residents disillusioned with the process. This is undoubtedly the wrong development for this site and Labor representatives maintain our opposition to it. I note on the other hand that the developer has been supported by two Independent councillors, Rhodes and Harle, and by Councillor Balloot and Councillor Ayyad, both Liberal councillors.

LIQUOR SALES REGULATION

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Education) (17:47): Regulation of any kind is contentious. In a free society, we should be rightly concerned about government intervention that interferes with our freedoms. Of course, freedom is paradoxical. To be free, we need clear, common rules of conduct to protect us from exercises of natural freedom that might interfere with the natural freedoms asserted by someone else. Regulating the sale of alcohol is one area of contention. In my community of Pittwater, we have developed an excellent understanding of the relationship between pubs, bottle shops, the council and the police that has largely resolved significant issues of underage drinking and vandalism, assaults and other antisocial behaviour.

As the local member, about a decade ago I would dread balmy Saturday evenings in summer because of the parties involving underage drinkers that would so often degenerate into bouts of destruction and violence and children being harmed. As the Minister for Education, I am painfully aware of the social, emotional and physical damage that alcohol wreaks on our young people, and our community more broadly. My electorate of Pittwater must be vigilant to ensure that the bad old days do not re-emerge this summer. One area that requires vigilance is disruptive technologies and business models set up to supply alcohol and the risks they pose. Disruptive businesses

and industries that have been enabled by rapid technological advancement over the past decade have not only rendered old industries and jobs obsolete but also left existing regulation floundering in their wake. This is an exciting time to be alive. There are many benefits and opportunities such disruptors can bring; however, they also have the potential to create real challenges.

The arrival of new online businesses that specialise in the purchase of alcohol is both a blessing and a potential curse. We now have smartphone apps that can allow alcohol to be ordered, purchased and brought to your door with a few prods of a touchscreen. This is a seismic shift in how alcohol is bought and sold in our community. It is big business too, with online mobile bottle shop Jimmy Brings recently being purchased by the supermarket giant Woolworths. Previously people had to go to the pub, club or bottle shop to access alcohol. Now the alcohol comes to them. These services provide an easy and almost instant purchase that simply did not exist before. We must be aware of what this could mean for our community.

The sale of alcohol has traditionally been heavily regulated. The physical location of a point of sale, its proximity to vulnerable members of our community and the purchaser's age and whether they are under the influence of alcohol have all been taken into account. Instant mobile service of alcohol has the potential to completely subvert this position. When there is a possibility that existing regulations will be left flummoxed by new technologies like this, it is vital that policymakers are alert to the challenges this gives rise to. These technologies can undermine existing small businesses and this can more broadly impact the life and vitality of town centres and retail precincts. More worryingly, there is the potential to increase access to alcohol where councils and communities have sought to minimise opportunities for alcohol purchase for very good social reasons.

It is important to remember that the core reason alcohol is so heavily regulated is because of its ability to do harm in our community. We know it is a wonderful freedom but we also need to recognise that if not appropriately spatially and personally controlled it can do harm, particularly to children. Deaths and serious injuries from alcohol substantially outnumber those caused by other substances. Road accidents, domestic violence, chronic health issues, I could provide an almost endless list of social challenges that alcohol can contribute to. There is also solid evidence that the location and density of bottle shops can be a factor in the health and welfare of local communities.

It is timely that the Liquor Act is currently being reviewed. Indeed, this is exactly when we should be looking long and hard at the challenges disruptive technologies pose to this industry. We need to ask hard questions about whether current regulation is effective, whether new regulation is required or indeed if existing regulation is no longer fit for purpose. We must ask these questions and we must ask them now. Instant gratification can be a wonderful freedom but it often needs the thinking to be undertaken beforehand. Too often, regulation of disruptive businesses—Uber, Airbnb, bike share companies—has been reactive. Here is a perfect opportunity to do the thinking first to ensure that we enhance our freedom and do not risk it. If not properly regulated, I fear these disruptive technologies could be badly misused. Unscrupulous individuals could sell alcohol with no care for the consequences for individuals or the wider community. This is a big issue for our community. It is an exciting challenge. By no means do I oppose disruptive technologies, but we need to consider the impacts of these things first.

ST GEORGE HOSPITAL BIRTHING AND DELIVERY SUITE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:52): Once in January and twice in June this year I visited St George Hospital to tour the birthing and delivery suite. I was escorted by Professor Chapman, Doctor Henry and Associate Professor Karantanis and we discussed the need for the expansion and relocation of the birthing unit. My most recent visit was with the Premier to announce the eagerly awaited funding injection to make the project a reality and to offer a solution to the current hurdles faced by the staff at St George Hospital. The current delivery suite was opened in 1992 and it has not been upgraded or refurbished in more than 25 years. In the delivery suite there are only six delivery suites, which service more than 2,500 births per year. It is also the tertiary referral centre for high-risk pregnancies for Sutherland Hospital and often accepts transfers from the Illawarra region.

The population surrounding the St George Hospital has now outgrown the number of available delivery rooms. Consequently, at least once per week the delivery suite has to divert its patients to other hospitals and this has led to much discontent amongst women who come to the delivery suite only to get turned away to another hospital. Additionally, women sometimes need induction of labour if they have serious conditions affecting the health of their babies. Such women may have their induction unexpectedly delayed by 24 or 48 hours because of a sudden overload at the delivery suite at St George Hospital. Patients and staff are becoming increasingly concerned.

In addition to this, the new acute services building has led to a relocation of the operating theatres. This has resulted in further distancing and isolation of the delivery suite from surgical intervention in the case of

emergency caesarean sections. Women have to be trolleyed vast distances through corridors in public access halls and up lifts to finally get to the operating theatre lobby. The extra minutes required to race to theatre could have dire consequences for mothers and their babies. However, there is a simple solution, and only a Liberal-Nationals Government can deliver it. We have listened to the needs of the community and have allocated much-needed funding in the recent State budget.

Announced just a few weeks ago when the budget was handed down by the Treasurer, the New South Wales Government has committed \$11.5 million to expand and upgrade the birthing suite and refurbish the existing operating theatres. This much-needed funding has provided solutions to all the obstacles that the facility, medical staff and expectant mothers are facing. This upgrade will involve relocating the delivery suite to the site of the old intensive care unit, which is currently desolate and located next to the operating theatres. This would permit a 30 per cent expansion of services for women in labour at St George Hospital. The medical professionals at St George Hospital see this as a long-term solution. The new delivery unit will be built to include eight birthing rooms and two assessment rooms.

I commend the Government for addressing the urgent need for such an upgrade to assist the mothers of the southern Sydney area with a more immediate and safer service. At the recent medical staff council meeting there was overwhelming support by the medical staff of all departments for the proposed expansion and relocation, and the feedback I have received since the funding was announced has been communicated with heartfelt gratitude. Since my election in 2011, the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has invested more than \$353 million for the redevelopment of St George Hospital.

I note that the member for Rockdale and the member for Lakemba are in the Chamber. The following is included for their benefit. The redevelopment has included a new emergency department; a nine-storey acute services building with more nurses and beds, marking the completion of stage 2; 108 car spaces added to the Grey Street car park; \$1.5 million for upgrades to the Cancer Care Centre; a brand-new ambulance superstation at Kogarah with modern, purpose-built facilities; and \$145,000 to refurbish the St George Hospital hydrotherapy pool.

This Government has a track record of investing in local hospitals after 16 years of Labor's neglect. I want to ensure that St George Hospital continues to exceed health facility standards and that it meets the demands of the local population. We have done so much already, but there is always much more to do. I am thrilled that the Government has secured funding for stage 2.5 of the hospital's redevelopment and that the hospital will be able to expand and relocate the birthing unit to a more appropriate location. I thank the Minister and, more importantly, I thank the Premier.

AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADET JASCENTA KRESKAY

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (17:57): Tonight I will refer to the fantastic work being done by an amazing young woman from my electorate, Jascenta Kreskay of the 302nd Squadron of the Australian Air Force Cadets, Rockdale. Last year, at just 18 years of age, Jascenta embarked on the difficult trek along the Kokoda Trail. When Jascenta came to me seeking assistance, I was proud to be able to support her in achieving this goal. I pay tribute to the local people and organisations that helped Jascenta in her journey, in particular the Brighton-Le-Sands RSL Club. While we often hear complaints about the younger generation being disengaged from our society, young people like Jascenta really give me hope for the future. Jascenta's dedication not just to her own service but also in paying respect to our nation's military history and to those who have come before her is truly impressive.

Four weeks before their Higher School Certificate exams, most girls Jascenta's age would be glued to their schoolbooks. However, no doubt relying on the military discipline she had learnt in the cadets, Jascenta was instead beginning her journey along the trail, having had to balance her study and training obligations for several months prior to this. As if these challenges were not enough Jascenta faced the daunting experience of travelling overseas for the first time by herself—it was a daunting experience for any young person—all prior to walking the notoriously difficult track. Jascenta began her journey at the end of the track—a fitting way to mark Kokoda's seventy-fifth anniversary and a great way to give Jascenta and her fellow walkers an appreciation of the historical importance of what they were doing. Jascenta felt privileged to be guided by relatives of the original Fuzzy Wuzzys Angels. Having assessed herself as a little clumsy, Jascenta was appreciative that one of the porters adopted her near the beginning of the trek and prevented countless stumbles and falls.

It was not easy to adjust to the gruelling pace. I can only imagine how difficult it would have been to get up, after Jascenta's first full day of walking, to a 4.00 a.m. wake up call, a combination of the reveille and *Welcome to the Jungle* by Guns and Roses—a nice touch of larrikinism that I am sure the diggers would have enjoyed. By the third day Jascenta was really feeling the strain of the trip. She said she was physically exhausted but did not want to give up even though her body was telling her to and she began to gain an understanding of how the soldiers

must have felt. Nevertheless, Jascenta persisted along the trail, walking 10 to 20 kilometres every day over difficult country.

On the eighth day her group arrived at Isurava. Jascenta found it especially moving to experience firsthand the site where so many soldiers had lost their lives. This was where, at the age of 24, Bruce Steel Kingsbury made the ultimate sacrifice when he was not much older than Jascenta and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallantry. Since her return, Jascenta has continued to give back to the local Rockdale community on a regular basis through volunteer and community work while balancing a demanding workload at university. There are not many local events where I do not see Jascenta contributing. It makes me smile every time when I see such a dedicated young person working to make her community a better place to live—and for no personal gain.

It is a very special thing that our community was able to support this amazing young woman to achieve this feat; and even more so as Jascenta is now using that experience to give back to the community of Rockdale. I was extremely proud that Jascenta was the keynote speaker at one of our local dawn services this year where she recounted her experiences. I am sure she has inspired another generation of young people to embrace the Anzac spirit. On behalf of the community of Rockdale I again thank Jascenta for her ongoing work in our community. I cannot wait to see what she accomplishes next.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:02): I thank the member for Rockdale for Jascenta's story. I acknowledge the contribution that Jascenta has made to her local community and to the wider community. I congratulate the Rockdale and St George communities on supporting Jascenta in her community involvement. She sounds truly inspirational. I thank her and look forward to reading her story in the local papers and to seeing her at community events in the St George area.

CLUB MARCONI SIXTIETH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (18:02): This week marks the sixtieth birthday of one of the truly great icons of the Italian-Australian community in Western Sydney—Club Marconi at Bossley Park in the Prospect electorate. Club Marconi was first established as a meeting place for the Italian immigrant community in Western Sydney. In 1958, 106 founding members came together to buy five acres of farmland to build a cultural hub for the growing community, hosting dances, feasts, and playing sport. The club was named after Guglielmo Marconi, inventor of the wireless radio. The early leaders of the club chose Marconi's name to celebrate his life and because, just like a wireless radio, the club let people from all over the world stay in touch with their culture. The club has served as home for generations of Italian immigrants and local families. More recently, Club Marconi has hosted newer waves of immigrants—the Assyrian, Vietnamese, South American and Chinese families that make Bossley Park and the surrounding suburbs so diverse and vibrant.

Much has changed since the early days. The club now has more than 38,000 members representing 18 nationalities and more than 24 different languages plus a team of more than 200 staff. The club is surrounded by 31 acres of playing fields, where local families get fit playing rugby league, soccer, cricket, bocce, netball and tennis. The site now features a childcare centre, the 11,000-seat Marconi stadium, indoor squash courts, parking for some 1,500 vehicles, and a health and fitness centre.

What has not changed is the club's commitment to our community. The annual Republic Day continues as one of the largest and most important events for the Italian community, with an annual turnout of more than 28,000. Every year, representatives from every political persuasion make sure to attend, including representatives from the Italian Parliament. The Marconi Stallions Football Club has represented Bossley Park and Fairfield since 1958, winning the old National Soccer League title four times and giving many players their start in professional and semi-professional sports. This team currently dominates the National Premier Leagues, the highest football division outside of the A-League.

The Marconi cycling team produces cyclists that compete against the best in the State, in the nation and abroad. Young athletes such as Kristie Caplikas are competing in the Australian junior triathlon team, and Scott Law is representing Marconi cycling in the United States. The Marconi Fencing Academy is also a great success. Robert Ciccarelli has won honours internationally representing Australia in the world cadet and junior championship, and Chloe Esposito, OAM, has brought home a gold medal in women's modern pentathlon. In snooker, Marconi has members such as Australia's No. 3 snooker player Michael Pearson and Australia's No. 2 player Joe Minici, who have made it to the semifinals and finals of international competition. Club Marconi even hosted the Sydney Open Billiards earlier this year. This is not to mention the golf teams, the netball teams, the physio teams and many other codes of sport that are featured at this great club.

Club Marconi is also known as a great entertainment and live music venue, with headline acts from Australia and abroad visiting this great place. The club donates generously to community projects such as the

South-West-Italo-Australian-Association Retirement Village, as well as many community groups and charitable causes. I was proud to thank the club for helping Chantelle Attard achieve a gold medal in the Special Olympics only a few months ago. I warmly congratulate Vince Foti, the current Club Marconi President, and the club's very active board members for their years of devotion to the club and the greater community of Western Sydney. I also commend the great work of Chief Executive Officer Tony Zappia and his dedicated management team and staff who make Club Marconi a great place to visit. Club Marconi has achieved a lot in 60 years. I look forward to the club's next chapter as Marconi continues to contribute to the Western Sydney community to support our families and promote Italian-Australia culture for future generations of young Australians. Viva Italia! Viva Marconi!

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:07): I thank the member for Prospect for his contribution. I have also visited Club Marconi for a grand Italian function, which included representatives from both sides of this Chamber. Likewise, members on both sides of this Chamber join together in congratulating Club Marconi on its contribution to the community. I place on record our appreciation to the member for Prospect for making that contribution.

BOTANY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (18:08): I commend to the House the service of three Botany garbos—who as they call themselves—who have retired recently from the service of what is now Bayside Council. Those three gentlemen have contributed a total of 116 years of service to the council as dedicated, hardworking garbage collectors. David Barry Roper started service with the then Botany Municipal Council on 24 November 1980. Phillip Michael Fisher commenced service with that council on 1 August 1977, and Robert "Bobby" Field commenced service with Botany Municipal Council on 15 May 1980.

The Botany Municipal Council and the Botany Bay City Council always had a policy to provide day labour, and garbage services were provided by day labour. As mayor, it was always my view that that was the best way in which to provide service to the community and employment for local people. The garbage service has always been a popular service with the community. Employing local people to provide local services in local government has considerable benefits. For example, there would be more than one occasion when an elderly lady forgot to put out her garbage and council employees, such as those three gentlemen, would do it. Try getting that level of service from a contractor!

Governing a council with employees collecting garbage has its challenges. In the almost 31 years that I was a council mayor, I doubt that those council garbage collectors would have voted for me and I doubt that their union representatives would have, but the reality is that I always recognised the quality of the service. I only became popular with some of those council employees after I left, which I thought was rather unusual. I received an email from one of them, which states:

Dear Ron,

Like to say thanks for keeping the old Botany garbo's up and running in the 1990's and onwards! Just recently Phil Fisher, Bob Field and myself David Roper retired within a month of each other being a combined 116 years service with the council!

It would never of happened under your watch but speaking only for myself I received not a note a letter shake of the hand or kiss my backside from the Management of Bayside council! Pretty ordinary I think!

A simple thank you would have been nice. That's why I say bring back Botany as camaraderie is gone with this new mob!

Anyway thanks again Ron. I enjoyed my days on Botany Council immensely!

Yours faithfully

David Roper

Mr Roper's assertion of the impact of amalgamations, which the Government wisely dropped on other areas, says it all—I do not have to comment. I will digress by giving some history about David Roper. He is the grandson of the great Harold Larwood, who was one of the best fast bowlers the world has seen. In 1932 and 1933 he participated in the Bodyline series on behalf of the English side. He bowled, of course, what was called the bodyline at the direction of Douglas Jardine. Harold Larwood, who refused to apologise for bowling the bodyline because he did so under the direction of his captain, was ostracised by the Marylebone Cricket Club. He ultimately left the United Kingdom and made his home in Kingsford in my electorate in Sydney, Australia. In 1995, Harold ultimately passed away at the age of 91. His daughter had two sons, David and Stephen, and one daughter. They resided in Malcolm Street, Mascot. In fact, I went to school with David Roper's elder brother. On behalf of the community, I thank those three outstanding council employees for their service, even though their own employer would not, as Mr Roper said, even kiss their backside.

GREECE BUSHFIRE DISASTER

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (18:13): Tragedy and grief always come as a shock. The recent bushfires in Greece have indeed left the world shocked and devastated. There are no words that can encapsulate or do justice to the pain and sorrow that the Greek community and diaspora are experiencing. I express my condolences to the families and friends who have lost their loved ones. We extend our thoughts and prayers in the hope that, with time, healing can begin. In Australia, we are no strangers to natural disasters and the devastation they leave in their wake. Our history is not only full of stories of tragedy, but also stories of bravery and community togetherness in the face of adversity. Greece is no exception to this. We stand in solidarity with the people of Greece who have sacrificed their lives and exerted tremendous efforts in rescue endeavours and disaster relief initiatives. Our country has long had strong relations with the people of Greece, with Melbourne home to the largest Greek diaspora community in the world and many Greek communities spread across New South Wales, including large numbers in the electorate of Lakemba and that of my colleague Sophie Cotsis, the member for Canterbury.

I extend my condolences to the Greek communities in Australia who may be grieving loved ones and the destruction of their homeland. As a migrant, I understand the connection we have with our heritage and how events overseas have a strong ripple effect on the communities here. My electorate of Lakemba is home to more than 4,000 Greek Australians. The Greek community in Lakemba is an active one, holding frequent events and community initiatives. I am proud of the great work they do in the community and the important role they play in propelling us forward. During my time as local member, I have attended many Greek community events and can attest to the Greeks' enthusiasm for life, love of family, support for one another and hardworking nature towards the community at large. Only in July I attended the 120th anniversary celebration of the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW. This was a great celebration of the many years the Greek community has been in Australia, adding depth and value to our rich culture. It is interesting that this Greek community organisation has existed longer than Federation.

In this Parliament, we see the great contributions that the Greek community has made to the wider Australian population. Prime examples of this are my colleagues Sophie Cotsis, Steve Kamper and Eleni Petinos, who are hardworking and dedicated individuals, striving constantly to improve our State. I pay tribute to the Greek Australian parliamentarians who preceded us and contributed greatly to the Parliament we know today. The Greek community embodies great harmony. Of course, there is also a love of food, culture and a go-getter attitude that reflects our modern Australia and the diversity on which we pride ourselves.

I commend the efforts of Greek community organisations in Australia who quickly came together and formed the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW committee in response to the bushfires. This committee includes representatives from various Greek organisations who have set up bank accounts to collectively fundraise for the people of Greece. They include President of the Greek Orthodox Community Harry Danalis, Ms Nia Karteris and the Greek archdiocese and parishes led by Archbishop Stylianos, who have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars by working together. They are proud Australians but they have never forgotten their origins and the need to help others. When an event like this happens, we see the best come out in people and the true meaning of humanity shines. It is great to see such organisations and communities banding together to lend a helping hand to those suffering loss.

Tragedies like this, whilst absolutely terrible, provide an opportunity for a peoples to emerge stronger, more united and greater all round. Greece has seen some difficult times but through the rubble will emerge a strong and much more resilient country. To the people of Greece across the world who have been touched and tinged by the hardships of these bushfires, I say you are not alone. We in Australia are with you, supporting you and beside you during these difficult times. I know that things look bleak right now, but they will get better. Healing is a process but there will always be a light at the end of the tunnel.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:16 until
Tuesday 14 August 2018 at 12:00.**