



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday, 24 October 2018

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 24 October 2018

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Bills

COMBAT SPORTS AMENDMENT BILL 2018

CRIMES (ADMINISTRATION OF SENTENCES) LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

FAIR TRADING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2018

CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING AMENDMENT BILL 2018

First Reading

Bills received from the Legislative Council, introduced and read a first time.

The SPEAKER: I order that the second readings of the bills stand as orders of the day for a later hour.

STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL (NO 2) 2018

Returned

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovementioned bill with an amendment. I order that consideration of the Legislative Council's amendment be set down as an order of the day for a later hour.

BETTING TAX AMENDMENT (POINT OF CONSUMPTION) BILL 2018

Returned

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovementioned bill without amendment.

[Notices of motions given.]

WORKERS COMPENSATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (FIREFIGHTERS) BILL 2018

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Victor Dominello, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (10:10):

I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Firefighters) Bill 2018. The reforms in this bill are designed to simplify the process for firefighters with specified cancers to make claims for workers compensation, by establishing a presumptive right to workers compensation benefits. Similar presumptive legislation has been introduced in many other jurisdictions across Australia and around the world. The New South Wales Government has given careful consideration to the design and operation of this legislation. It has studied what has transpired in other jurisdictions and it has consulted widely to come up with the best possible proposal for New South Wales firefighters.

This bill introduces a presumptive right in the workers compensation scheme for firefighters who are diagnosed with one of 12 prescribed cancers. The bill reduces the existing evidentiary burden placed on firefighters to prove the work-relatedness of illness. This is achieved by reversing the onus of proof for firefighters who meet the minimum service period for each cancer type. This bill puts the onus on the workers compensation insurer to prove that the firefighter's cancer diagnosis is not work-related. Unlike in some other jurisdictions, this bill does not impose a 10-year post-service limit on making a claim or receiving a cancer diagnosis. Firefighters

who are diagnosed more than 10 years after leaving active service will retain their right to presumption. This is in line with presumptive legislation introduced by the Western Australian Coalition Government in 2013.

I now turn to the objectives of the bill. The Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Firefighters) Bill 2018 seeks to simplify the process for making a claim for workers compensation by employed and volunteer firefighters diagnosed with any of the specified cancers. It does this by establishing presumptive rights to workers compensation benefits unless proven otherwise by an insurer, specifying 12 types of primary cancers to which the presumption applies, specifying minimum qualifying periods of service for firefighters and volunteer firefighters, and allowing for eligible firefighters to receive the benefit of the presumptive provisions for the specified cancers diagnosed on and from 27 September 2018, the date on which the Government announced its intention to introduce this bill.

I now turn to the details of the bill. Schedule 1 introduces a new section into the Workers Compensation Act 1987. Proposed new section 19A titled "Presumptions relating to certain cancers—firefighters". Proposed section 19A (1) provides that for an eligible firefighter, it is presumed that the disease—one of the specified cancers—was contracted in the course of their firefighting employment and that the employment was a substantial contributing factor. It is important to note that this provision ensures that the presumption will operate within the existing legislative framework, including the application of section 261 of the Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998, which sets time limits for making a claim after the date of injury or death, and allows the State Insurance Regulatory Authority to approve claims beyond those limits.

An eligible firefighter is defined by proposed new section 19A (2) and 19A (3) as a worker who, at any time, has been engaged in firefighting employment for the qualifying service period and contracted one of the 12 specified cancers. These cancers, and the qualifying service periods, are as follows: primary site brain cancer, five years; primary leukaemia, five years; primary site breast cancer, 10 years; primary site testicular cancer, 10 years; primary site bladder cancer, 15 years; primary site kidney cancer, 15 years; primary non-Hodgkin lymphoma, 15 years; multiple myeloma, 15 years; primary site prostate cancer, 15 years; primary site ureter cancer, 15 years; primary site colorectal cancer, 15 years; and primary site oesophageal cancer, 25 years.

Firefighting employment includes employment in one or more of the following agencies: the NSW Rural Fire Service; Fire and Rescue NSW; National Parks and Wildlife Service, under the Office of Environment and Heritage; the Forestry Corporation of NSW; and Sydney Trains. The presumption applies if, in the course of that employment, the eligible firefighter has performed activities including: extinguishing, controlling or preventing the spread of fire; bushfire hazard reduction work within the meaning of the Rural Fires Act 1997; and the provision of training or instruction in the performance of extinguishing, controlling or preventing the spread of fire or bushfire hazard reduction work which resulted in exposure to smoke or other hazards of a fire.

This is defined in the bill as "firefighting activities" and makes it clear that this Government recognises that firefighters, who are exposed to the hazards of a fire, are at a greater risk of contracting the specified cancers. Proposed new section 19A (4) provides that the presumption does not apply if the total aggregate period of firefighting employment is less than the qualifying service period. The qualifying service period is specified in schedule 4 of the 1987 Act for each cancer, and is counted from the date of injury.

Proposed new section 19A (5) provides that, for eligible firefighters, periods of service as an official volunteer firefighter can be counted toward the total qualifying service period. However, if a firefighter has served as both an eligible paid firefighter and also as a volunteer firefighter at the same time the periods are not to be added together. In addition, eligible firefighters are able to count periods of interstate or overseas firefighting service undertaken as part of their employment with any of the prescribed New South Wales Government agencies towards the qualifying service period.

Proposed new section 19A (6) clarifies that for the purposes of section 261 of the Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998, only the date of injury as defined will be considered. This is regardless of when the eligible firefighter or other person making the claim became aware of the injury. The date of the injury means the date of the diagnosis by a medical practitioner or, in the case of a terminal cancer condition, the date of death, whichever occurs first. The existing requirements under section 261 of the 1998 Act to make a claim within six months of the date of injury still apply. However, section 261 allows for claims to be made beyond six months when the failure to make a claim was caused by ignorance, absence from the State or other reasonable cause. When a claim is made more than three years after the date of injury, the claim can be accepted by an insurer, with the approval of the State Insurance Regulatory Authority. Section 261 will continue to apply to all workers compensation claims across the scheme.

Schedule 2 to the bill introduces a new section into the Workers Compensation (Bush Fire, Emergency and Rescue Services) Act 1987. Proposed new section 10A entitled "Presumptions relating to certain cancers—firefighters" applies the presumption to the relevant provisions of that Act. For example, section

10A (1) applies the presumption to the specified cancers contracted in the course of fighting a bushfire. A "bush fire" is defined under section 5 of the Workers Compensation (Bush Fire, Emergency and Rescue Services) Act 1987 as "a bush or grass fire or a fire in or at any building or a fire of any kind at which a rural fire brigade or fire fighter operates or is in attendance for the purpose of its control or suppression." This provision ensures that the presumption applies to any fire attended to by a rural fire brigade or firefighter, which may include a fire in a building or a fire at the scene of a motor vehicle accident.

Proposed new section 10A (1) links the presumption to the injuries that are covered by the Workers Compensation (Bush Fire, Emergency and Rescue Services) Act 1987. Section 7 (1) and section 7 (3) apply to personal injury received by a firefighter arising out of or in the course of fighting a bushfire or to "an injury being a disease which is contracted, aggravated or exacerbated or which deteriorates in the course of doing anything referred to in subsection (1) or (2) if the doing of that thing was a contributing factor." Proposed new section 10A provides eligible volunteer firefighters with the same presumptive provisions as eligible employed firefighters under proposed new section 19A of the Workers Compensation Act 1987.

This ensures that those who volunteer to serve our communities as an official firefighter, as per part 5 of the Workers Compensation (Bush Fire, Emergency and Rescue Services) Act 1987, are provided the same protections as eligible employed firefighters. This includes all eligible volunteer firefighters with the New South Wales Rural Fire Service but does not include Fire and Rescue NSW community fire unit volunteers as they do not meet the definition of official firefighter. The provisions will operate in the same manner as the principal legislation and should be considered in the same way as I have described the operation of those provisions.

The Government announced the presumptive legislation for firefighters on 27 September 2018 and the bill applies the new provisions from that date. Under transitional provisions of this bill, an eligible employed firefighter or an eligible volunteer firefighter, who is diagnosed between 27 September 2018 and the commencement of this legislation, is taken to have a date of injury which is the same as the commencement date. This will allow impacted firefighters to obtain the benefit of the presumption under this bill. Further, the transitional provisions allow an eligible firefighter who has previously claimed for one of the 12 specified cancers to make a further claim with the benefit of the presumption. The right to make a further claim exists where the original claim was denied by an insurer on the basis that the firefighter was unable to prove the work-relatedness of the cancer.

The bill also makes a general amendment to part 20 of schedule 6 to make it clear that regulations of a savings and transitional nature relating to an amending Act can take effect on a date earlier than the assent date of the amending Act if the regulations provide for an earlier date. It will only apply to transitionals relating to amending Acts made after 27 September 2018. This amendment is consistent with other savings and transitional regulation-making powers in the workers compensation legislation.

I note that the private member's bill introduced by the member for Fairfield on 27 September 2018 contained a provision to introduce unlimited retrospectivity. This approach is inconsistent with every other jurisdiction in Australia and is likely to add a significant financial burden to the Rural Fire Service [RFS] and Fire and Rescue NSW. Funding for these two agencies is raised through a combination of contributions from the Emergency Services Levy [ESL], council rates and consolidated revenue. The lion's share of funding for the RFS and Fire and Rescue NSW comes from the collection of emergency service levies, which is attached to home and contents and associated insurance policies. The Fire Brigades Act 1989 specifies the breakdown of funding as follows: ESL, 73.7 per cent; council levies, 11.7 per cent; and consolidated revenue, 14.6 per cent. Actuarial analysis of the introduction of full retrospectivity of these provisions suggests that it would add in excess of \$350 million in additional claims liability. That represents a \$101 hike on ESL charges and a \$16.50 hike on council levies.

The Government does not support this proposal, not just because of the cost but also because it is inconsistent with the application of the presumptive provisions in every other jurisdiction in Australia. It is worth running through the history of what has happened across Australia. In 2011, the Commonwealth and Australian Capital Territory Labor governments introduced presumptive legislation with no retrospective application and no coverage for former firefighters. In 2013, the South Australian Labor Government introduced its presumptive legislation with no retrospective application and coverage for former firefighters limited to 10 years post-employment. That was amended in 2014. In 2013, the Western Australian Coalition Government introduced its presumptive legislation with no retrospective application. That was amended in 2016. Similar to the New South Wales Government's proposal, the Western Australian law extends the presumption to former firefighters with no post-employment time limit on diagnosis.

In 2013 the Tasmania Labor Government introduced its presumptive provisions with no retrospective application and a 10-year post-employment time limit on diagnosis, which was subsequently amended in 2017. In 2015, the Northern Territory Labor Government introduced its presumptive legislation with very limited

retrospectivity back to July 2011, being the date that the Commonwealth legislation commenced, and a 10-year post-employment time limit on diagnosis. In 2015, the Queensland Labor Government introduced its presumptive provisions for firefighters with no retrospective application and no post-employment time limit on diagnosis, consistent with our proposal and the laws that apply to Western Australian firefighters. In 2017 the Victorian Parliament voted down a bill that included presumptive provisions for firefighters. The bill also included a controversial merger proposal, which led to the Victorian Opposition and other non-Government members of Parliament voting against the bill. The Victorian Liberal Opposition has subsequently confirmed that if elected, it will introduce standalone presumptive legislation for firefighters.

I now speak about the consultation that was undertaken about this bill. I thank Minister Grant, the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services for his strong advocacy and support for this reform. I also acknowledge the work of his chief of staff, Greg Dezman, throughout the consultation and development of the bill. Significant consultation has been undertaken in the development of this bill, and I thank Stephen O'Malley, David Heslop and Bronwyn Jones from NSW Rural Fire Service; Alison Donohue and Malcolm Connellan from Fire and Rescue NSW; Sam Toohey and Bronwyn Weir from the Office of Emergency Management; Ray Fowke and Brian Leahy from the Office of Environment and Heritage – NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service; Luke McIlroy and Jennifer Ringor from the Forestry Corporation of NSW; and Matthew Coates from Sydney Trains.

I also acknowledge the advocacy and contribution of the Rural Fire Service Association, particularly its president, Ken Middleton, acting chief executive officer [CEO] Trevor Anderson, and commercial services manager Sharon Ellicott. I also acknowledge the contribution of the immediate past CEO Bernard Cox. The Rural Fire Service Association has demonstrated exceptional professionalism and integrity throughout the consultation process. Our volunteer firefighters are lucky to have such a great membership organisation representing them and standing up for their interests. I understand that the Fire Brigade Employees Union [FBEU] does not support the Government's bill on the basis that it does not apply full retrospectivity. I put on the record that both Minister Grant and I have—separately—met with the Fire Brigade Employees Union State Secretary, Leighton Drury, to discuss matters relating to presumptive legislation. The FBEU was also involved in the stakeholder consultation process led by the State Insurance Regulatory Authority [SIRA] over the past 12 months.

Finally, I thank Carmel Donnelly, Darren Parker, Petrina Casey, Matthew Barrett, Elizabeth Dixon and Gavin Robertson from SIRA, along with the SIRA board and the secretary of my department, Martin Hoffman, for their contribution to this reform. I also acknowledge the contribution of my outstanding ministerial staff, Matt Dawson, Jane Standish and Tom Green, as well as our department liaison officer Emily Wooden. This bill ensures that our firefighters who work to protect the lives and property of the people and community of New South Wales are provided with protection and support when they and their families need it most. I call upon members opposite to support this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I welcome to the Parliament today guests of the Parliamentary Education Unit, led by Rita Bila.

Bills

SURVEILLANCE DEVICES AMENDMENT (STATUTORY REVIEW) BILL 2018

ROAD TRANSPORT AMENDMENT (NATIONAL FACIAL BIOMETRIC MATCHING CAPABILITY) BILL 2018

TERRORISM (POLICE POWERS) AMENDMENT (STATUTORY REVIEW) BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 17 October 2018.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (10:34): I lead for the Labor Opposition in debate on the Surveillance Devices Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018, which is cognate with the Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 and the Road Transport Amendment (National Facial Biometric Matching Capability) Bill 2018. The Opposition does not oppose the bills. Once again, I note that the bills could each have stood on their own. Having spent the past eight years under-utilising this Chamber, the Government is now—in a flurry of activity—lumping together as cognate bills anything it can find.

The objects of the Surveillance Devices Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 are expressed to include appointing a Surveillance Devices Commissioner and inserting an objects provision in the Surveillance Devices Act. Additionally, amongst other things, the bill aims to make consistent the information that is required to be in a warrant, the information that is required to be in the application for the warrant and the information that is required to be provided to the Attorney General about the application for the warrant. The bill also aims to require an applicant to include in the application known information adverse to the application and to require an applicant to identify persons who may be incidentally recorded by the surveillance device.

The bill is presented as responding to the statutory review of the Surveillance Devices Act and the report of the Ombudsman on Operation Prospect. The review of the Surveillance Devices Act is dated October 2018 and was tabled in this place on the day that notice was given of the bill. In July 2015, I issued a media release saying that the statutory review was then three years overdue. Its tabling in 2018 makes it six years overdue. It rivals the delay in the review of the Defamation Act. I have often said that this Government's legislative agenda reminds me of watching grass grow. Its process for statutory review is even slower. Some of the recommendations from the statutory review have forced their way into this bill. Recommendation 3 about optical devices, for example, is in schedule 1 [3]. Recommendation 2 seems to be dealt with in schedule 2 to the bill. I note that not all the recommendations of the delayed review have been implemented in the bill.

The other report relating to this bill and surveillance devices is the report of the Ombudsman on Operation Prospect. The matters that provoked that inquiry and report have been notorious for many years and have attracted considerable attention, including an upper House inquiry, as well as the enormous Ombudsman's inquiry. As a member of the parliamentary oversight committee on the Office of the Ombudsman, the Police Integrity Commission and, subsequently, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission [LECC] for all but four years since I have been in this place, and as Chair of the committee for eight years, these matters have been of considerable interest to me. I am still frankly outraged that then Commissioner Ryan said a 100-name warrant was necessary because of a police function that apparently did not occur.

The Ombudsman's report recommended the establishment of a public interest monitor similar to the Queensland and Victorian models for applications for surveillance devices and telephone intercept warrants. The Operation Prospect process revealed long-term systemic problems with the issuing of warrants for listening devices. As I said, the Ombudsman's recommendation was to establish a public interest monitor in New South Wales. Given that many more warrants are granted in New South Wales than in any other State, it is, in the Ombudsman's words, "imperative" that New South Wales has an effective regime in place for checking that adequate safeguards are in place. The safeguard of the Attorney General's role has been in place for some time and, in the Ombudsman's assessment, it has been ineffective. Merely improving that in a minor way is hardly adequate. As the Ombudsman said, "Without systemic reforms, the weaknesses evident in NSW's current safeguards are likely to persist ...". The focus of the Ombudsman is on fixing up the front end of the warrant process.

The Government's response to recommendations 25 to 30 in volume 5 of the Ombudsman's report is to create a position known as the Surveillance Devices Commissioner. This is a public service position that requires a legal qualification. New section 51B allows the Attorney General to delegate functions under parts 3 and 5 of the principal Act to a number of positions including the Surveillance Devices Commissioner. This delegation power seems to be the origin of the commissioner's powers. In his second reading speech the Attorney General specified what the commissioner will do.

The commissioner will receive advanced notice of applications for warrants with all the information that will be given to the judicial officer, assess whether the application is procedurally compliant, work with agencies to remedy inefficiencies before they are lodged, have the right to be heard by the judicial officer in relation to issuing a warrant, and receive reports about the use of the device. The commissioner will prepare an annual report to be contained in the department's annual report setting out the number of applications made, withdrawn and refused, and the number of applications in which the commissioner was heard.

Much of that is similar to the recommendations of the Ombudsman. There are, however, some significant variations. I ask the Attorney General to explain in reply why the recommendations have been departed from. First, as I read it, the bill does not extend the role of the commissioner to deal with telephone intercept warrants, as was recommended by the Ombudsman. There does not seem to be an explicit acknowledgement of the entitlement of the commissioner to ask questions before the judicial officer of any person giving information in relation to the operation. The reporting provisions in the bill are not as wide as those recommended by the Ombudsman. In particular, the commissioner's reports would seem to be merely numerical, with recommendation 30 of the Ombudsman also extended to reporting information about the hearings where there was intervention to raise issues and question applicant witnesses.

The other issue that I think should be explained to the Parliament deals with the role of the Attorney General. The Ombudsman's proposals seem to envisage the Attorney General retaining a role, with the public interest monitor having a separate role. The bill seems to replace the role of the Attorney General with the commissioner, which sidesteps recommendation 28. It would seem to be appropriate to have some explanation of that on the record. The issue of the commissioner is the most important in the bill, although there are other provisions I should note, many of which reflect the Ombudsman's recommendations. A new objects clause is provided with a reference to a privacy focus, consistent with recommendation 34. Recommendation 17 is amended, specifying the information to be included in the warrant. An affidavit must support the application and it should identify those who may be incidentally recorded by the device. Of course, that was one of the notorious aspects of Operation Prospect and was subject to a recommendation by the Ombudsman. The affidavit will have to include any information known to the applicant that is adverse to the application.

I will now deal with the second of the cognate bills: the Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018. The object of the bill is to give effect to the recommendations of a statutory review and involves amendments to the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act. The review was tabled on 7 June 2018. It followed from a report of a review by the Ombudsman tabled in June 2017. The statutory review followed pursuant to section 36 of the principal Act. This is the sixth statutory review of the Act. The review covers the period from 2015 to 2018, during which time it should be noted that a number of amendments were made to the Act. The review confirmed that part 2AAA powers and part 2AA powers have never been used, and part 2A powers have not been used since 2014. The statutory review states:

These powers, while rarely, if ever, invoked, provide the NSWPF appropriate tools to remain agile in meeting the terrorism threat. The Act provides the NSWPF necessary powers to intervene when the risk of terrorism begins to crystallise or where a terrorist act has occurred.

For a range of different reasons, the rare use of these powers is a positive thing. One provision in the bill is schedule 1 [23], which continues the part 2A scheme for three years—that is, the sunseting will be deferred by three years. The Ombudsman's report to which I referred earlier recommended that part 2A be allowed to lapse on 16 December 2018. It deals especially with preventative detention orders and prohibited contact orders. The then acting Ombudsman, Professor McMillan, in the foreword to his report argued that part 2AA powers introduced in 2016 effectively made the part 2A powers redundant. Accordingly, part 2A should be allowed to lapse. That being the case, whether they lapse is perhaps not of great importance. The fact that they are not utilised in one sense is a case for their continuation. One is hardly able to argue that they are being overused or used inappropriately if they are not being used at all. The Opposition certainly supports the bill as it is drafted.

Schedule 1 [1] notes that the safeguards of part 15 of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act apply to part 2, division 3 of the principal Act, in accordance with recommendation 2 of the statutory review. Section 23 is amended so that the current two-stage warning required to be given by police to a person concerning part 2 powers is reduced to one warning. Annual reporting is improved in accordance with recommendations 3 and 4 to improve the gathering of statistics. Schedule 1 [11] enables the Supreme Court to order that legal aid be provided to a terrorism suspect concerning proceedings related to the person's investigative detention. Proposed new section 25MC requires suspects under investigative detention to be treated with humanity and respect for human dignity and not be subjected to cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment. Proposed new section 25MA requires police to inform a terrorism suspect in investigative detention of the right to contact a lawyer and the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission [LECC].

The Act is also amended to allow police to take photographs or video recordings of a detainee to document an illness or injury. This seems to be necessary because the police believe the current ban on obtaining identification material from a detainee extends to that situation. I note that this proposal was made by the police to the review. The Act is also amended to require the police to advise a detainee that contact with the detainee and others will be monitored. The provisions relating to personal searches under the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act are applied to searches under the principal Act. That was also a recommendation of the statutory review. The bill also increases the maximum limit to four hours from two hours for contact between a person under 18 or with impaired intellectual functioning with a parent and other person. Schedule 1 [18] requires police to offer further assistance and information to such detainees.

There are also changes to the provision relating to the supply of information from police to the LECC, which has, of course, replaced the Ombudsman in overseeing this regime. The Ombudsman in a previous review had reported that his oversight functions were hampered by his ability to access police information. This was caused by Commonwealth secrecy provisions and claims of public interest immunity by the police. The Ombudsman had called for the principal Act to be amended to make it consistent with the Ombudsman Act and the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act that prevented public interest immunity claims in response to a requirement to provide information. The statutory review noted it was "concerning" that the Ombudsman could

not form a comprehensive and informed view of the operation of the Act without access to key documents. On pages 57 to 58 it said:

Part 2A powers are extraordinary and depart from long-established principles on detention. NSW Parliament recognised this when the legislation was enacted by establishing a robust scrutiny function. The NSWPF and the LECC should work to address the issues identified by the Ombudsman.

As a member of this place who has paid considerable attention to this legislation and all the details about it since 2002, I am somewhat horrified that what we were all told, and assumed, was a robust scrutiny mechanism in fact was not that at all. I asked the Attorney General on notice in June whether the recommendations in the review would be adopted on this and other points. Astonishingly—and in a dramatic break with precedent—he gave me a substantive response and said that he would indeed implement the recommendations, which are now provided in this bill.

The end result is schedules 1 [22] and 1 [25], which require the police to provide the information to the LECC subject to conditions to prevent sensitive information being accessed or made public. There is also a limited capacity for redaction or withholding information. This is not quite what the Ombudsman precisely requested in previous reports. The Opposition's view is not to seek to amend the provisions at this stage. If the LECC advises subsequently that this does not work adequately, Labor will reconsider our position. At the moment we do not oppose the bill, and certainly what is proposed in the bill is an improvement on the current situation.

The third and final cognate bill is the Road Transport Amendment (National Facial Biometric Matching Capability) Bill 2018. The bill's object is to amend the Road Transport Act. The amendments aim to authorise Roads and Maritime Services and certain other New South Wales government agencies to release photographs and associated information to the National Facial Biometric Matching Capability, to collect such material from that capability and to keep and use those photographs or information for any lawful purpose in connection with the exercise of the agency's functions. This capability is administered by the Commonwealth. It stems from an Intergovernmental Agreement on Identity Matching Services entered into by the Commonwealth, States and Territories in October 2017.

The challenge in the era of "big data" is to get the balance right between the availability of information for useful purposes and the protection of privacy. I do not think over the past eight years this Government has got the balance right. I have introduced several private member's bills during that period to try to get the balance right. All have been rejected by the Government. Most obviously, this bill should be accompanied by a regime of mandatory reporting of serious breaches of privacy by State agencies. Such a regime is good enough for the current Federal Government, but not the State Government. We will have to await the election of a State Labor government in March next year to remedy that default. Labor presently does not oppose the bills. As I have said, we are cautious about their provisions and propose to look closely at how they are implemented and what, in fact, happens as a result of their adoption. Having said that, the Opposition does not oppose the bills.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (10:47): I contribute to debate on the Surveillance Devices Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 and cognate bills. The Surveillance Devices Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 implements recommendations of the Ombudsman's 2016 Operation Prospect report with respect to strengthening the oversight of warrant applications for the use of surveillance devices by law enforcement agencies in New South Wales and recommendations arising from the 2018 statutory review of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007. These amendments will promote efficient, well-reasoned applications for warrants for the use of surveillance devices by the NSW Police Force and the NSW Crime Commission and enhance the overall quality and consistency of applications by promoting transparency and accountability in the application process. Everyone in this place knows that the world of today is very different from the world of the past. In acknowledging that change, we recognise that our enforcement agencies, whether State or Federal, need the appropriate tools to keep the wider community safe.

Schedule 1 [19] represents the most significant reform to be implemented by this bill. It will establish the new, independent statutory office of the Surveillance Devices Commissioner and permit the Attorney General to delegate key scrutiny powers under the Act, which are currently delegated to the Solicitor General, to the Surveillance Devices Commissioner. Schedule 1 [19] will introduce two new provisions into the Surveillance Devices Act 2007, which will become proposed new sections 51A and 51B of that Act. New section 51A will establish and provide for the appointment of a Surveillance Devices Commissioner by the Secretary of the Department of Justice, in consultation with the Attorney General.

The Surveillance Devices Commissioner will be an independent statutory officer, administratively based within the Department of Justice, and an Australian legal practitioner with at least seven years of practice experience, who is either currently, or was formerly, a judge or judicial officer of a superior court of record or qualified to be appointed as a judge or judicial officer of a superior court of record. These requirements will ensure that the Surveillance Devices Commissioner is fully independent of government and the law enforcement agencies

that are empowered to apply for warrants for the use of surveillance devices in New South Wales, and that he has extensive legal experience and the professional qualifications to apply the necessary degree of rigour to review and oversee those applications.

Proposed new section 51B will allow the Attorney General to delegate the exercise of any functions conferred on the Attorney General under the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 to the Surveillance Devices Commissioner, in addition to those individuals to whom these functions can already be delegated. This will allow the Attorney General to delegate to the Surveillance Devices Commissioner all the oversight and scrutiny functions currently conferred on the Attorney General, which are currently delegated to the Solicitor General and exercised in addition to the Solicitor General's primary functions as second law officer of the State. Pursuant to the delegation under new section 51B, the Surveillance Devices Commissioner will assess all warrant applications made under the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 by the NSW Police Force and the New South Wales Crime Commission against the factors that the eligible judge or magistrate must take into account when deciding the application to ensure the application is procedurally compliant.

This includes ensuring that each application contains all the information required under sections 17 and 28, as amended by schedule 1 [5] and schedule 1 [13] to the bill, such as: the name of the applicant; the alleged relevant offence with respect to which the surveillance device will be used; the kind of surveillance the warrant seeks authorisation to undertake; as applicable, the premises, vehicle or object on, or in which, the warrant seeks authorisation to use the device or to retrieve the device from; details of any alternative means of obtaining the evidence sought; whether those means have been attempted, and, if so, the result of that attempt; and, as far as reasonably practicable, the identities of persons who may be incidentally recorded by the device.

The Surveillance Devices Commissioner will also work with law enforcement agencies to remedy any deficiencies identified in warrant applications before they are lodged with the eligible judge or magistrate; have the right to be heard by the eligible judge or magistrate in relation to the granting of an application for a warrant; receive the report about the use of a surveillance device warrant from the applicant under section 44 of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007; and prepare content for the Department of Justice's annual report. The annual report is to include, for the relevant year, the number of applications for warrants that were made; the number of applications in which the Attorney General or the Attorney General's delegate—namely, the Surveillance Devices Commissioner—was heard before the eligible judge or magistrate in determining an application; the number of applications that were withdrawn; and the number of applications that were refused.

The bill will help to ensure that law enforcement agencies have a comprehensive framework for the use of surveillance devices in criminal investigations and for the covert gathering of evidence for criminal prosecutions, and the Act's existing robust mechanisms for overseeing the appropriate development of warrants for the use of surveillance devices are enhanced and subject to the necessary level of independent scrutiny—I think that is very important—to ensure they are well reasoned and procedurally compliant. I applaud the Attorney General and his staff on their hard work in drafting this legislation. The wider community looks to the Government to create a safe environment. As I said earlier, we live today in a very different world from that of a number of years ago. The recommendations of the review will give our hardworking men and women—whether they live in the regions or the cities—the necessary tools to carry out legitimate criminal investigations and ultimately keep our communities safe.

In all parts of the world we continue to see horrendous crimes committed against innocent people. Unfortunately, innocent people in the streets who are going about their daily business are becoming targets. The NSW Police Force, the Australian Federal Police and other enforcement agencies face a very taxing time. It is well known that encrypted devices such as BlackBerrys, smartphones and tablets are favoured by people who are intent on doing harm to others. I congratulate the Attorney General and his staff on recognising not only that fact but also that the men and women of the NSW Police Force and other enforcement agencies put their lives at risk every time they report for duty, which places an enormous strain on those officers and their families, and this Parliament should do all it can to give officers the appropriate tools and independent checks they need. In the past the inappropriate use of surveillance devices has caused enormous harm and produced disastrous results. The appointment of a Surveillance Device Commissioner will go a long way to addressing that problem. I again applaud our enforcement agencies for keeping our communities safe, and I commend the bills to the House.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:56): I speak to the Road Transport Amendment (National Facial Biometric Matching Capability) Bill 2018, one of the bills that is cognate with the Surveillance Devices Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018. My contribution will focus on concerns about the National Facial Biometric Matching Capability, which will have far-reaching implications for personal and civil liberties, rights and privacy. This important issue calls for due consideration and widespread consultation, but the Road Transport Amendment (National Facial Biometric Matching Capability) Bill 2018 was introduced only last week as part of cognate legislation in an extensive legislative program. Further, the details of the National Facial Biometric

Matching Capability do not lie in this legislation, but I understand that the Minister for Home Affairs of Australia will have some discretion. Members have not had a proper briefing on the system and there has been little public discussion about this capability or how data on people will be used.

Some say that in the era of social media, privacy is no longer an issue or a concern for people and governments should use all the data available to them for enforcement and administration. In my opinion that view is wrong. One need only look to the public outcry about My Health Record to realise that the community is worried about their privacy and how their records will be shared. While it may not be the case, most people at least think the information they provide on social media is curated by them, and it is not the responsibility of governments to take advantage of the data it collects on citizens and use it for any purpose without their permission. The community broadly accepts that collecting, sharing and matching identity information to deal with terrorism or serious criminal activity that puts the public at risk is justified, but this capability will cover more than just data on suspects.

The wider public is captured and their data can be shared and matched. Unidentified facial images can be linked to massive facial recognition databases. With the widespread use of closed-circuit television, which is installed across the inner city where my constituents live, images of people in public places can be linked to photo identification records held by the Government. Governments are continually telling us that we have nothing to fear because they would never misuse personal data. But we must legislate for any future government that may not respect human rights. Countries that engage in surveillance often target people who protest or show dissent against a regime and we should not complacently assume that this could never happen here. There will always be governments that want to strengthen and expand the surveillance of citizens to promote their own agenda under the guise of safety.

Law enforcement authorities habitually push for greater access to private data and information to help them do their job and will likely call to increase the capability to include less serious crimes and public nuisances. Over the past two decades governments have been all too willing to erode basic human rights in the name of law, order and safety. We do not know how the data will be used and people applying for a driver licence or identity card will have no idea that their information and images will be stored for unrelated purposes. That does not sit well with me. The bill lacks any safeguards to ensure that matching capabilities are used only in very serious crimes that threaten public safety and instead provides governments with the flexibility to practise mass surveillance. There is no oversight of the process despite its capacity to impinge on public and personal rights. The House must not dismiss concerns about human rights and privacy as paranoia.

The slow withering away of civil liberties can change our society. Increasing the surveillance of citizens often corresponds to an erosion of democracy and basic rights such as the freedom of speech and the freedom of movement. The bill is more than a new tool in security with its capacity to subject the population to surveillance. That is of great concern and the legislation should be deferred to educate the community about what is being proposed and to conduct widespread and meaningful consultation.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (11:01): I note the comments by my learned colleague the member for Sydney, whom I very rarely disagree with on any issue.

Ms Jenny Leong: You have just destroyed his chances of re-election.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: That might have been part of my cunning plan. I reassure him that the Government, in this legislation, has addressed some of the concerns that he raised in his contribution to this debate. There will be a threshold for the use of biometric information in relation to what charges could be laid. For instance, people will not be charged for jaywalking just because their facial biometric information has been matched by law enforcement agencies. The Government will make sure that members of the public who have a driver licence are well and truly advised that this information and capability will be introduced as part of this legislation. Like the member for Sydney, I am an avid libertarian when it comes to freedom from government interference and I assure him that his concerns have been forecasted and addressed in this legislation.

I support of the Road Transport Amendment (National Facial Biometric Matching Capability) Bill 2018. The bill is necessary to support the New South Wales implementation of the National Facial Biometric Matching Capability, which will ultimately help to make the people of New South Wales and Australia safer. On 5 October 2017 the Attorney General outlined in his second reading speech that the then Prime Minister and State and Territory leaders, including the New South Wales Premier, signed the Intergovernmental Agreement on Identity Matching Services, also known as the IGA. The IGA allows agencies from all jurisdictions to use new face-matching services. The services will give New South Wales agencies access to photos from passports, driver licences, visas and citizenships from across the country to support State law enforcement efforts to combat organised crime and protect the community from terrorism.

The proposed amendments to the Road Transport Act 2013 in this bill will allow the uploading of New South Wales driver licence facial images and associated personal information to the National Facial Biometric Matching Capability, which are crucial to its operation. The capability's effectiveness depends on the availability of licence and passport images from around the country. Without participation from road agencies around the country, the capability will be limited in the range of photos and datasets available for identification and verification checks. The more complete the total dataset, the more likely a search for a person of interest will return a match, better enabling New South Wales law enforcement agencies to keep us safe.

The National Driver Licence Facial Recognition Solution, a component of the capability, will create individual biometric profiles based on the information received from jurisdictions, which will, in turn, be used for face-matching services. The face-matching technology facilitates a number of services including the one-to-many face identification service, which allows a facial image to be compared against multiple facial images held on a database of government records. The National Driver Licence Facial Recognition Solution will return a gallery of the closest matching facial images to aid investigators and investigations undertaken by law enforcement agencies. In New South Wales this service will be available only to be used by the NSW Police Force, the New South Wales Crime Commission, the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission.

Another service available through the capability is the one-to-one face verification service. This service enables an agency to verify, by using held images, who a person is and whether he or she claims to be somebody different. A photo is compared against a facial image held on a specific government record associated with that same individual. This service is available to the law enforcement agencies I mentioned above, as well as to Roads and Maritime Services [RMS]. Lastly, the "one person one licence" service will allow a one-to-many search of facial images. In New South Wales this service is available to RMS. The service may identify whether a licence holder or licence applicant holds another licence of the same type in the same or different identity in another jurisdiction.

Identity crime is a key enabler of organised crime and terrorism. People convicted of terrorist offences in Australia have used fake identities to purchase items such as chemicals to manufacture explosives, ammunition and mobile phones to communicate anonymously. Police already have access to drivers' photos and the associated personal information held by RMS. These changes will allow law enforcement agencies to do their job more quickly and easily. Driver licence photos around the country will be made available via a common facial matching system, hosted by the Commonwealth on behalf of participants, including State and Territory licencing agencies. It is important to note that the capability does not provide automated or real-time surveillance of public spaces. This capability will only enable more targeted searching using still images taken from closed-circuit television or surveillance, for example, to quickly identify a person of interest to help keep the community safe.

Facial identification searches can be conducted only by law enforcement agencies to investigate offences punishable by three or more years of imprisonment. The member for Sydney can rest assured that that is the important point. In the budget this year, the Liberal-Nationals Government committed \$53 million over four years to support the State's participation in and the use of the capability by relevant law enforcement agencies. Since 2011 the Coalition Government has continued to make the investment in the law enforcement and counterterrorism capabilities that this State needs. The Government makes no apology for making sure that it has the right legislation in place in New South Wales, which will help our community remain safe. I commend the bills to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (11:08): I speak on behalf of The Greens on the Surveillance Devices Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 and cognate bills before the House. I note that they are different bills so I will address them individually. I appreciate and understand there will be an opportunity to attempt to separate the vote on the bills so we can recognise that while they have been introduced as cognate bills, they are very different in their scope and in what they are trying to do. It is important for us to have the chance to express our views and votes about these matters individually.

The Greens are supportive of the Surveillance Devices Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill and recognise the changes that are being made to the operation of the surveillance devices scheme following the report of Operation Prospect and the statutory review of the scheme. The changes include the appointment of a Surveillance Devices Commissioner and an explicit objective that the surveillance devices scheme is intended to provide law enforcement with a comprehensive framework to balance criminal investigations with individuals' privacy. It makes a range of changes to the surveillance devices scheme which The Greens believe are sensible and should work to correct some of the defects identified in the Operation Prospect report.

In particular, it is positive to note the recognition within the objects of the bill that the privacy of the individual is an important factor that the scheme must consider. We note that many of the recommendations of the Prospect inquiry related to apologies that were owed to the people who were the subject of illegal bugging. It

should not have taken so long to get light cast onto this issue. It took too long for the Government and police to recognise that a full public inquiry was required. It took too long for the Operation Prospect report to be released. The Greens support the bill.

I turn to two concerning changes before the House today in both the Road Transport Amendment (National Facial Biometric Matching Capability) Bill 2018 and the Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018. Briefly, the Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 aims to amend the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 to make minor amendments to the scheme following the statutory review of the Act. The bill makes changes including requiring annual reporting on the exercise of powers and a range of other changes. The Greens oppose the bill for the simple reason that we oppose the scheme. The amendments contained in the bill do not change the fact that the scheme is in substantial breach of human rights standards and should not be on the books in New South Wales. It is unacceptable that as a response to tragic incidents of terrorism the freedoms and rights of individuals in this State are undermined. It is unacceptable to use the tragedies that have occurred and the terrorism that has taken place to curve back on the things that we value about our community and our society.

We should not be collectively punished and have our rights removed because of these issues. The Crimes Act already deals with terrorist acts and other similar issues. We should take an approach that respects the human rights of the individuals living in this State. The fervent desire by those on the conservative side of politics to sacrifice freedom of speech, freedom of political association and freedom from arbitrary detention and other injustices in the name of terrorism should concern all of us. The bill once again extends the sunset clause for this scheme. We have done some research on the use of these clauses. It will come as little surprise to anyone who knows how law and order and politics work that the sun never sets. It might set at the end of the day, but when it comes to sunset clauses in terrorism legislation, the sun never sets.

Sunset clauses on terrorism or similar bills are never removed from the statute books. We see continual reviews and changes and the continual winding back of people's human rights and civil liberties. Laws that have massive impacts on people's liberties and rights are put in place with sunset clauses to offer some protection to the public and it is important that those sunset clauses are seen as such and enacted. For this reason The Greens absolutely oppose the Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill. As I said at the start, we oppose the scheme. We do not believe in the idea of continually increasing sunset clauses on such pieces of legislation. We do not agree with the bill and we do not believe it is necessary.

I turn to the Road Transport Amendment (National Facial Biometric Matching Capability) Bill. If ever we were fearful about the reach of the home affairs Minister and the border force man himself Peter Dutton stretching his powers further into the State of New South Wales, this bill realises those fears. Anybody in New South Wales who has a driver licence will have their licence photos and associated personal information contributed to this database. It is worth noting that when people provided their information and images to the Government they were not aware of the possible future uses of that information. This will include a person's name, date of birth, gender, recorded address and passport information, and it seems likely the system will be expanded to include all digital facial images issued by government agencies.

Under the scheme, Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies that hold facial images will share those images when requested. The requesting agencies can use the Facial Verification Service to verify someone's identity with or without consent. Authorised law enforcement agencies can access the capability for law enforcement, national security and community safety. Both Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory have rejected these laws, which go well beyond the 2017 agreement. This scheme is not limited to serious law enforcement functions but simply requires agencies to have a "legislative basis" upon which they can access the data. Currently defined uses include using the scheme to identify people who are suspects or victims of terrorist or other criminal activity; to prevent the use of fake or stolen identities; and for the purposes of protective security, community safety, road safety and identity verification. Discretion to expand who can access the scheme is held by none other than Peter Dutton, the home affairs Minister, and is not required to be considered by Parliament.

When I had my driver licence photo taken I did not sign off on any permission for Peter Dutton to have access to my images or my personal details or to use it for whatever he sees fit. Databases like this are globally viewed as being part of the development of mass surveillance of the population, with concerning implications for political freedom and democracy. Previous schemes proposed for national identity schemes were strongly opposed by the public, with both the Australia Card and the Access Card being withdrawn following public condemnation. This scheme is essentially implementing such a database by stealth, through the back door, with Peter Dutton pulling the strings of the Liberal-Nationals puppets in New South Wales who are falling into step with a home affairs Minister—

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order: I generally do not like doing this but I draw your attention, Mr Temporary Speaker, to the fact that the speech of the member for Newtown is well and truly outside the leave

of the bill, including her suggestion that the Government is doing this other than in the interests of the community, and something about Peter Dutton and all this other stuff that is being alluded to. I ask that the member's attention be drawn back to the bill, which is where it should be.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): Although debate is wideranging, I draw the member for Newtown back to the leave of the bill.

Ms JENNY LEONG: To the point of order: My understanding is that this is exactly about Peter Dutton because he is the Minister for Home Affairs and the bill is introducing an agreement between the State, Territory and Federal governments which will allow the home affairs Minister to access this information. It is completely relevant to the content of the bill. Should I continue?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member may continue.

Ms JENNY LEONG: Many people attending public protests already find themselves filmed by police cameras. The potential that this footage is being immediately matched in a Federal database is frightening. It is chilling to think that getting a driver licence and being filmed by police could create a situation in which a person is monitored and checked. Thousands of requests for metadata from government agencies every day are being made under existing legislation. Adding facial recognition to the mix will further erode our rights to privacy and protection from government overreach.

Like this scheme, the metadata scheme was originally limited to a small number of police and intelligence agencies but over the years it has expanded. It is currently unknown how many agencies have accessed data under the scheme. The Government is trying to sneak this one past the public by saying it is linked to terrorism and adding it as part of a set of cognate bills before this House. I wonder if members of this place have looked in detail at what they are signing off, which is an Australia Card or an Access Card equivalent that hands over all the information and photos of the people of New South Wales to the home affairs Minister, Peter Dutton, to do with as he wishes. The Greens absolutely oppose the bill and reject the manner in which the Government is doing this by stealth.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (11:18): It gives me great pleasure to speak on behalf of the Government to the Surveillance Devices Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018, Road Transport Amendment (National Facial Biometric Matching Capability) Bill 2018 and Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018. I take this opportunity to welcome all of the students in the public gallery to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly this morning. It will be an edifying experience for them to watch Parliament in action. On behalf of the Government, I speak in favour of the bills. From the outset, I commend the great work of the Attorney General, Mark Speakman, and his hardworking team who have put this legislation together.

The Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Powers) Bill 2018 implements each of the recommendations of the 2018 statutory review of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002, completed in mid-2018. The amendments will re-establish the consistency of certain police powers and obligations under the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 and under the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002; ensure there is internal consistency in processes with respect to detention of terrorism suspects under different parts of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002; enhance safeguards for detainees, including, in particular, detainees who are minors and/or have impaired intellectual functions; and enhance existing review and oversight mechanisms. New South Wales has a strong and responsive framework in place to help us deal with the enduring threat that terrorist activity can pose to the community.

The Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 is a key pillar of that framework. It empowers the NSW Police Force to react effectively to an emerging or crystallising threat of terrorist activity at short notice, or in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist incident; permits police officers to exercise "special powers" in relation to terrorist activities in certain, limited circumstances and for limited periods of time; and provides for robust oversight of the exercise of the powers that can be conferred under the Act, to ensure that appropriate checks and balances are in place and that the rights of detainees are upheld.

To ensure that the Act's objectives remain valid and its terms remain appropriate to achieve those objectives, the Act is subject to a detailed statutory review every three years. This ensures that there is regular, independent evaluation of whether the Act's powers remain appropriate and are not excessive; the Act remains fit for purpose and is suitably agile to respond to changing and emerging threats both here and overseas; and the balance struck between public safety and ensuring there is not undue interference with individual rights remains appropriate.

I make clear that the 2018 statutory review found that the Act's objectives remain valid; the threat of terrorism is, at this time, a continuing one; and it is essential that New South Wales has in its legislative arsenal Acts such as the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 to allow us to respond accordingly. The review also found

that the Act would benefit from amendments to ensure that it operates with optimal efficiency and provides the best possible protections to meet the needs of the New South Wales community. The Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 will amend the Act to restore or ensure consistency within the Act and with other Acts that address the exercise of police powers, enhance protections for vulnerable people and enhance oversight functions.

I will discuss a number of the bill's clauses with respect to these amendments in more detail. Schedules 1 [1], [2], [3] and [14] will amend the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 to realign its requirements with respect to the warnings that police must give citizens when exercising certain search powers and the circumstances and locations in which police may conduct strip searches with those of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act. This will relieve police of unnecessarily duplicative warning requirements, reinstate the former consistency of the two Acts, and ensure that police have the power to conduct strip searches in locations other than places of detention when the seriousness and urgency of the situation requires it.

Schedules 1 [5] and [6] will introduce new provisions requiring the Commissioner of Police to prepare annual reports to the Attorney General and Minister for Police and for tabling in Parliament that outline for the relevant year the number of authorisations made to permit exercise of police "special powers" under part 2 of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 and the number of declarations made for police use of force in response to ongoing terrorist acts under part 2AAA of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002. The new provisions will promote the existing oversight mechanisms of the Act and ensure that there is transparency in and accountability with respect to the exercise of the special powers and the use of force under the Act.

Schedules 1 [11], [16], [17], [18] and [19] will enhance or make explicit the protections in place for persons detained under the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002, and for vulnerable detainees in particular. Schedule 1 [11] will clarify that a detaining officer must inform a person detained under the part 2AA "Investigative detention powers" of his or her entitlement to contact a lawyer; provide those detainees with reasonable assistance to contact the Legal Services Commissioner to obtain legal aid; and ensure that all detainees are treated with humanity and respect for human dignity and are not subjected to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment. Schedule 1 [19] will clarify that a detaining officer is required to advise a detainee and any contact person, including a legal representative, that any contact between the detainee and the contact person will be monitored. Schedules 1 [16], [17] and [18] will enhance protections in place for detainees between 14 and 18 years of age, and detainees with impaired intellectual functions. For example, the amendments will increase the number of hours that these detainees can have contact with a parent, guardian or other acceptable person from two to four hours per day and clarify that the custody manager must assist these detainees to exercise their right to contact.

It is a regrettable fact of modern life that terrorism remains a pervasive and persistent threat to our community. Legislation such as the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 provides the authority and assurance that our law enforcement agencies can take the appropriate steps to identify and mitigate that threat, and to respond immediately in the event that the threat materialises. The bill will ensure that the relevant legislation remains appropriate to facilitate investigation and respond to the risk of terrorism in our community, while also ensuring that the rights of those who may be investigated are suitably protected.

I congratulate Mary Klein, Alexander Gibson, Mark Follett and the Department of Justice team, who have all worked on these amendments. I note that Bryce O'Connor from the Attorney General's office is present in the Chamber and has been for the entire length of this discussion. The bills are not the Orwellian drama that has been played out by the member for Newtown. This is sound legislation that provides protection for the people of New South Wales now and in the future. I commend the Attorney General and his staff for their great work. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (11:27): In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Liverpool, Tweed, Sydney, Baulkham Hills, Newtown and Terrigal for their contributions to the debate. I note the member for Liverpool's comments about the delay in the completion of the statutory review of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 and delays in statutory reviews generally. But as the review notes on page 9, the tabling of the final report for this review was delayed to ensure that it was not inconsistent with the Ombudsman's findings and recommendations from Operation Prospect, which were released in December 2016. The New South Wales Government has taken a considered approach to further reform in this area and has been careful to consult all interested parties. This has necessarily taken some time. I am committed to finalising outstanding reviews as soon as is practical. Since I became Attorney General I have finalised 18 statutory reviews. I note the comment by the member for Liverpool that the review does not implement all of recommendations of the statutory review; in fact, the bills do.

Schedule 1 [1] introduces a new provision setting out the objects of the Surveillance Devices Act, including to ensure privacy is not unnecessarily impinged upon, in response to Operation Prospect recommendation 34. Schedule 1 [3] introduces a further exception to the general prohibition on the use of optical

surveillance devices without consent in circumstances where a party to the activity being recorded is a law enforcement officer using an assumed identity or in a controlled operation, implementing statutory review recommendation 3. Schedule 1 [9] provides that an application for revocation of a surveillance devices warrant is not required if the warrant will cease to be in force within five days after the day on which the chief officer of a law enforcement agency is satisfied that the warrant is no longer necessary, implementing statutory review recommendation 2.

Schedules 1 [5] to [7], [10] to [13] and [20] clarify the information to be included in applications for warrants for the use and/or retrieval of surveillance devices and the information to be contained in any issued warrants, which must be provided to the Attorney General or the Surveillance Devices Commissioner as a delegate. That is in response to Operation Prospect recommendations 26 to 29, 31 and 32. Schedule 1 [8] allows a warrant to commence up to 10 days after the date on which the warrant was issued, implementing statutory review recommendation 1. Schedules 1 [14] and [15] clarify the processes for retrospective approval of emergency use of a surveillance device, including that they can be accompanied by applications for continued use.

Schedules 1 [16] and [17] clarify that information obtained from a controlled operation is protected information that must be kept in a secure place and must be destroyed if it is not likely to be used, implementing statutory review recommendations 3 and 6. Schedule 1 [18] clarifies the information to be included in the Department of Justice annual report with respect to numbers of applications for and issued warrants, in response to Operation Prospect recommendations 30 and 38. Schedule 1 [19] establishes the new office of the Surveillance Devices Commissioner and allows delegation of the Attorney General's functions in relation to scrutiny of warrant applications to the Surveillance Devices Commissioner. The commissioner's role will be dedicated to reviewing all applications against the Act's requirements and ensuring they are procedurally compliant prior to lodgement with the eligible judicial decision-maker. That is in response to Operation Prospect recommendation 25.

Schedules 1 [6], [7], [11], [12] and [20] clarify that the Attorney General—or, with the Schedule 1 [19] amendments, the Surveillance Devices Commissioner as the Attorney General's delegate—must be served with or given notice of all applications for warrants for use and/or retrieval of surveillance devices, and the information contained therein, and must have an opportunity to be heard on those applications. That is in response to Operation Prospect recommendations 26, 27 and 29. Schedule 2 amends section 5 of the Law Enforcement (Controlled Operations) Act 1997 to require particulars of the proposed use of any listening device or optical surveillance device to be specified in an application to conduct a controlled operation, implementing statutory review recommendation 4. Statutory review recommendation 5 will be implemented as soon as possible by making regulations.

I also note the comments of the member for Liverpool regarding the Surveillance Devices Commissioner not scrutinising telecommunication interception warrants. Although the Operation Prospect report identified some issues with warrants for use of telecommunication interceptions during the period from 1999 to 2002, the vast majority of issues identified related to warrants for the use of listening devices. Telecommunications interceptions are governed by the Commonwealth Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979. The Government is not aware of any current issues regarding applications for warrants for the use of telecommunications interceptions.

The Government will closely monitor the new surveillance devices warrant scrutiny scheme and determine whether it may be necessary to work with the Commonwealth to establish whether any amendment to Commonwealth legislation may also be needed with respect to telecommunications interception warrants. I note the comments of the member for Liverpool regarding the Surveillance Devices Commissioner cross-examining applicants for surveillance device warrants. I confirm that, subject to the eligible judge's discretion, the commissioner may be able to ask questions of the applicant. This does not amount to cross-examination, but is in accordance with the functions imposed on the judge as an eligible judge and how the judge seeks to handle the "opportunity to be heard" is in accordance with his or her inherent jurisdiction.

Any questioning, whether it includes questions of the judge to the applicant or of the Surveillance Devices Commissioner to the applicant, if permitted by the judge, contributes to the judge informing himself or herself of the matters in section 19, which states that an eligible judge or eligible magistrate may issue a surveillance device warrant if satisfied, first, that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion or belief founding the application for the warrant; secondly, in the case of an unsworn application, that it would have been impracticable for the application to have been prepared or sworn before the application was made; and, thirdly, in the case of a remote application, that it would have been impracticable for the application to have been made in person or that the application could not be made in person because the surveillance device needed to be used immediately.

I also note the comments of the member for Liverpool about annual reporting. The Surveillance Devices Commissioner will be required to prepare annual reports for inclusion in the annual report of the Department of Justice. The commissioner's annual report will provide transparency and public accountability, and outline

information including the number of warrant applications made, the number of applications that were withdrawn or refused, and the number of applications in which the commissioner was heard by an eligible judge. The Government considers that this approach is more consistent with New South Wales' existing practices. Further, requiring applicants for warrants to work with the Surveillance Devices Commissioner to ensure that all applications comply with a basic set of criteria prior to lodgement with an eligible judge will provide a more pragmatic and efficient way to ensure all warrants meet basic thresholds than scrutiny after lodgement by a public interest monitor, as recommended by the Ombudsman.

I note the comments of the member for Liverpool about the Attorney General's functions with a new commissioner. At present, the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 permits the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, or the Crown Advocate as the Attorney General's delegate to scrutinise warrants for use of surveillance devices. The Attorney General has delegated this function to the Solicitor General. This function may compete with the Solicitor General's other core functions, such as his or her role as the Government's principal legal adviser, court advocate and second law officer of New South Wales. Under the new arrangements, the new Surveillance Devices Commissioner will have the single, dedicated role of scrutinising surveillance device warrant applications. The Attorney General will retain a role to delegate to others where the Surveillance Devices Commissioner is conflicted. In that case, it will be delegated to the Solicitor General or the Crown Advocate.

I now move to concerns about the Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018. I note the member for Liverpool's comments about the scrutiny functions not being what were recommended by the Ombudsman. The statutory review of the Act considered this recommendation of the Ombudsman and the views of key stakeholders, and concluded that it was unnecessary to extend the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission's [LECC's] scrutiny functions to scrutiny of exercises of power under part 2AA of the Act at this time. According to section 25P of the Act and under the investigative detention order powers of part 2AA, the Commissioner of Police must advise the Minister for Police and the Attorney General whenever a terrorism suspect is arrested. Section 25P also requires the Commissioner of Police to report annually on the exercise of powers under part 2AA by police officers. Parliament expressly did not extend the LECC's oversight powers with respect to part 2A to part 2AA, in favour of retaining the current safeguards in part 2AA.

This bill will enhance existing safeguards for part 2AA investigative detention orders by, first, requiring a police officer to inform a detainee of his or her right to complain to the LECC in accordance with the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016; secondly, clarifying that a detainee is entitled to, and must be told of his or her entitlement to, contact a lawyer; thirdly, enabling the Supreme Court to order the provision of legal aid to a detainee subject to a detention warrant or in relation to whom a detention warrant is sought; fourthly, requiring detaining police officers to provide detainees with reasonable assistance to contact the Legal Aid Commission to obtain that aid; and, fifthly, explicitly requiring that any person exercising authority or implementing or enforcing investigative detention treats detainees with humanity and respect for human dignity, and ensures that they are not subjected to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment, with failure to do so punishable by up to two years imprisonment.

These new provisions will enhance the safeguards already in place to ensure procedural fairness to and the humane treatment of detainees. They will also ensure that there is internal consistency in the Act's safeguards for preventive detention order detainees and investigative detention order detainees. Part 2AA powers have not been used to date. We necessarily have no evidence at this stage to demonstrate that the oversight functions in place are not appropriately suited or would need any reform. Absent that evidence, the Government does not consider that there is any need for immediate amendments requiring additional LECC oversight of this part. The potential need for any further oversight by the LECC may be considered as part of the next statutory review of the Act, particularly if there is evidence that additional oversight is required. I inform the House that the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission was consulted on the statutory review and the draft bill.

I now move to concerns about biometrics. I note the privacy concerns about the biometric reform raised by the member for Liverpool and the member for Sydney. I will outline briefly the privacy safeguards in the capability. First, the system has been designed with robust privacy safeguards in mind. The capability has been subject to an independent privacy impact assessment [PIA] and agencies are conducting additional PIAs to examine the privacy implications of their specific usages. Each agency authorised to use the identity matching services will be bound by strict conditions about the use of the capability. In New South Wales the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 will continue to apply. Secondly, the capability has strict authorisation, audit and training requirements, an established compliance framework to identify and manage any misuse, and clear conditions on the parameters of permissible use of the different services within the capability.

Thirdly, any expansion of the scheme, including to the private sector, would require the agreement of the Government. The member for Sydney contended there was insufficient briefing about the capability, but I note that the intergovernmental agreement is available online. I also note the concerns of the member for Newtown

regarding privacy and human rights. The Commonwealth Identity-matching Services Bill 2018 has a number of oversight mechanisms including public annual reporting on the use of the services, a statutory review of the services and consultation with the Commonwealth information and human rights commissioners regarding any rules made under the legislation. New South Wales agencies that conduct searches using the capability are subject to strict audit regimes that contribute to the annual report. New South Wales retains an ongoing discretion to limit which agencies around the country can access New South Wales data, what data they can access, and for what purposes.

I note the Minister for Counter Terrorism has responded to the concerns expressed by the member for Sydney by stating that searches to identify a person for a law enforcement purpose can be conducted only for offences punishable by three years imprisonment or more. I make other comments in response to the concerns expressed by the member for Newtown. What I am about to say perhaps repeats a theme from previous debates in this House about terrorism legislation. This legislation is brought to the House in a sober and realistic manner. It is not scaremongering. The Government is not trying to engender alarm among our community. But the security alert for Australia is probable.

As a Government, our first priority has to be the safety and welfare of all citizens in New South Wales. That means in some cases taking steps that on one view may mean a limitation on people's civil liberties. But the Government has to balance that in a measured and responsible manner against the threat to life, persons and property were there to be a terrorist attack, heaven forbid, in New South Wales. It is not enough for the member for Newtown to say that all this can be dealt with by criminal legislation. There may be offences in our criminal legislation that deal with these types of activities, but we have to ensure that our investigative agencies have appropriate powers to prevent those offences occurring in the first place. That is the underlying rationale behind the Government's terrorism amendments.

The first two bills make amendments to the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 and the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 to improve the operation of those Acts, to enhance their existing oversight functions, and to help to achieve their objectives of promoting effective law enforcement, criminal investigation and public safety in New South Wales. These two bills also will help to clarify certain functions and operations under the Acts, and the application of the Act's provisions.

The third bill makes amendments to the Road Transport Act 2013 to authorise Roads and Maritime Services to contribute driver licence images and associated personal information to the National Facial Biometric Matching Capability in satisfaction of New South Wales' commitment under the October 2017 Intergovernmental Agreement on Identity Matching Services. These bills will help to ensure that the law enforcement processes for identity verification and protection of identity security in New South Wales continue to be efficient and effective, transparent and accountable, and strike the right balance between public safety and the protection of individual rights. I commend the bills to the House. In accordance with Standing Order 195, I move:

That the question on the second reading of the bills be put separately.

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

Motion agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the Surveillance Devices Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the Road Transport Amendment (National Facial Biometric Matching Capability) Bill 2018 be now read a second time. A division has been called for. There being five or fewer members against the question, the question is resolved in the affirmative.

Noes, 3

Mr Greenwich

Ms Leong

Mr Parker

Motion agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): The question is that the Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018 be now read a second time. A division has been called for. There being fewer than five members against the question, the question is resolved in the affirmative.

Noes, 3

Mr A Greenwich
Ms J Leong
Mr J Parker

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That these bills be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

GOVERNMENT TELECOMMUNICATIONS BILL 2018

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 18 October 2018.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (11:52): On behalf of the Government I speak in support of the Government Telecommunications Bill 2018. I congratulate the Minister for Finance, Services and Property on his great work on this bill. It is rational, logical legislation, which is exactly what we have come to expect from this Minister and his team. It is a very thorough document consisting of approximately 20 pages, and a lot of work has gone into it. As the Minister outlined in his second reading speech, the object of this bill is to establish the New South Wales Government Telecommunications Authority to provide a network for operational communication services for government sector agencies. This will require government sector agencies to use that network for operational communication. It will also provide for the networks of government sector agencies to be consolidated into a network provided by the new telecommunications authority.

The bill also create the offence of damaging or interfering with the network provided by the telecommunications authority. This achieves a new communications network for government agencies, such as fire brigades and other emergency services. The Government Telecommunications Bill 2018 replaces the previous Act that governs the operation, access and ownership of critical radio telecommunications assets across the New South Wales Government. Importantly, the bill supports the delivery of the Critical Communications Enhancement Program that will create a single integrated source of critical communication. I will repeat that because it is vital: The bill supports the delivery of the Critical Communications Enhancement Program that will create a single integrated source of critical communications. As the Minister has also said, this is an extremely important step in providing all government agencies, particularly emergency services, with a reliable and uniform communication network. This bill aims to bring all government agency radio networks under one authority so as to improve the management of public resources and also provide the best possible public safety outcomes for our community.

I highlight the fantastic work done by emergency services in my electorate of Terrigal on the Central Coast. I am sure that Mr Temporary Speaker Provest would be just as supportive of the great work that they do in his electorate of the Tweed. This Government continues to deliver for the needs of our regions, both on the Central Coast and in the Tweed. Our paramedics on the Central Coast also do a fantastic job. There is an ambulance station based in Terrigal in my electorate. In June this year I was delighted to announce that, as part of the New South Wales budget, the Central Coast will receive an additional six paramedics next year. There will also be an increase in paramedic numbers over the following three years.

This is an example of how the State Liberal-Nationals Government is delivering for the needs of our growing region on the Central Coast. We know that our region is estimated to grow by 75,000 or more people between 2016 and 2036. That is why it is so important that vital infrastructure and services continue to be delivered. I note the Minister is in the Chamber and again I congratulate his great work on this bill and what it will deliver to the people of the Central Coast and our outstanding emergency services. Because we have built a strong New South Wales economy, we will be able to make additional investments of resources and services into our local communities, including my electorate of Terrigal.

I thank the hundreds of professional and volunteer firefighters who serve the Central Coast region. The Terrigal electorate is a naturally beautiful area with plenty of vegetation and undeveloped areas. This means that during the summer season our local area can be threatened by the hazards of potentially catastrophic bushfires. We have many fire brigades, including the Saratoga Fire and Rescue unit, the Terrigal Fire and Rescue unit, the Kincumber Fire and Rescue unit, the Copacabana Rural Fire Brigade, the Avoca Beach Rural Fire Brigade, the Macmasters Beach Rural Fire Brigade, the Killcare Wagstaffe Rural Fire Brigade, the Wamberal Rural Fire Brigade, and the Empire Bay-Bensville Rural Fire Brigade.

I am proud to be part of a State Liberal-Nationals Government that is supportive of our men and women in blue. The Police Force in my electorate of Terrigal falls within the Brisbane Water Police District. It is ably led by Superintendent Tony Joyce, who took up this role in late 2017 and is doing a fantastic job with his team in responding to and preventing crime in the Brisbane Water district. The work that they do is directly reflected in the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR] results for the Central Coast, where there is continual downward pressure on crime. That is due to the great work of the men and women in blue who work productively and proactively with the community across the Central Coast. We have seen community engagement, but also incredibly good levels of communication between the public and the Police Force. Again, as I have said here many times, the State Liberal-Nationals Government supports our local police and their work.

It was disappointing that the local area commander at Tuggerah Lakes recently publicly criticised the member for The Entrance. That is something that is very rarely seen. He was publicly criticised for deliberately and consistently misleading the community about the number of police on the Central Coast. He was factually incorrect. To have a superintendent of police criticise the misinformation from a member of Parliament speaks volumes about the member's lack of understanding of how the police system on the Central Coast works. I am pretty sure the member for Cessnock never would have received such criticism from his local area commander. This is a very good bill. It is important that we have continuity of communication across the Central Coast and New South Wales.

I look forward to hearing the member for Cessnock commending the Government for this bill because I know it provides a great outcome for all the emergency services in the electorate of Cessnock, as it does on the Central Coast. The bill ensures that government agencies, including our hardworking emergency services, will have new communication systems to keep people safe. It will allow emergency services to coordinate their activities and respond to incidents in a more flexible and efficient manner. The bill will provide a new approach to the planning, delivery and management of radio and related communications services for the New South Wales Government. The Government Telecommunications Bill 2018 replaces the old Act that governs the operation, access and ownership of critical radio telecommunications assets.

I commend the Minister for his energy, diligence, enthusiasm and drive in delivering the bill. The Government is in the position to deliver great outcomes from one end of New South Wales to the other because of its strong financial management of the State's assets. The rationalisation of this service demonstrates what a good, strong, financially responsible government can deliver for everybody in New South Wales, from Terrigal to the Tweed. We are all benefiting from this Government's work. I also congratulate the Minister's staff, particularly Matt Dawson and the amazing Tom Green, who is indefatigable. As a local member, I work with Tom on a one-to-one basis. I congratulate him on his willingness to assist members.

Mr Victor Dominello: Tom "Solutions" Green.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: He is Tom "Solutions" Green. That is a great way to encapsulate Tom's enthusiasm. I also congratulate Natalie Spiridon on her involvement with the bill. With that, I wholeheartedly commend this outstanding bill to the House.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (12:01): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Government Telecommunications Bill 2018 and note from the outset that it will not be opposing the bill. The objects of the bill are as follows:

- (a) to establish the New South Wales Government Telecommunications Authority (the Authority) to provide a network for operational communications services for government sector agencies,
- (b) to require government sector agencies to use that network for operational communications,
- (c) to provide for the networks of government sector agencies to be consolidated into the network provided by the Authority,
- (d) to create the offence of damaging or interfering with the network provided by the Authority.

The Labor Opposition recognises that the bill will repeal the current Government Telecommunications Act 1991 and create a new body to be known as the NSW Telco Authority and will also establish the Government Radio Network [GRN]. It also acknowledges that, currently, various New South Wales agencies operate their own radio network, including infrastructure. As reported in the second reading speech of the Minister for Finance, Services and Property, this effectively means that New South Wales has 70 or more small, individually run networks for the purpose of radio communications, which is incredibly inefficient. The effect of the bill will be to have a single radio network from which each government agency can rent, buy or borrow a wavelength capacity in either an encrypted or un-encrypted form to go about its work. As explained to me by the indefatigable Tom "Solutions" Green, this means that all agencies can operate separately but in times of crisis have the ability to inter-operate. Tom knows a lot more about this than I do.

In the 2017-18 budget the Government allocated up to \$600 million over the forward estimates for the Critical Communications Enhancement Program. I note the concern that that amount will not be sufficient. I expect infrastructure can be built and constructed inside that envelope. If it goes north from there, I have put my concerns on the public record today. The new authority will be able to acquire current assets owned and operated by various agencies. It is sensible that it should be an offence to deliberately damage any telecommunications property. In his second reading speech the Minister identified that the current coverage of the geographical mass of the State is as low as approximately 30 per cent. But under this new operating model the coverage would be above 80 per cent. That is a good outcome for all government agencies.

I endorse the fact that the New South Wales Government will seek to establish and operate its own network with full control and responsibility, as opposed to trying to source it from an external provider. I drive across the State at various times and fortunately there are talking books and podcasts because telecommunications—even sometimes radio networks—are fairly sparse out west. The bill allows for the New South Wales Government to enter into a leasing arrangement for external private entities if those entities would like to lease or rent some opportunity to use the infrastructure provided by the Government. At some stage it might allow this authority to make a financial return to the State, which would be wonderful. Having said that, I worry that if it becomes a profitable entity it might be put up for sale sometime in the future. I give an undertaking that that will not happen under a New South Wales Labor government. Having said that, the Opposition will not oppose the bill.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Geoff Provest): Order! I ask the member for Terrigal and the member for Cootamundra to take their conversation outside the Chamber.

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (12:05): I promise not to be distracted by the member for Terrigal and the member for Cootamundra. This life-saving Government Telecommunications Bill 2018 is an important legislative platform for the Government's commitment to improving service delivery and reducing duplication. In particular, the bill supports our commitment to deliver benefits to the people of New South Wales under the Critical Communications Enhancement Program [CCEP]. The bill supports the improvement and expansion of services by removing constraints in legislation, updating outdated provisions and clarifying the way in which the NSW Telco Authority manages and operates public safety communications, including the Government Radio Network [GRN]. An important outcome of the bill is to consolidate and enhance the GRN to improve day-to-day and emergency communications for New South Wales government agencies.

As part of the Government's commitment under the CCEP, the GRN will expand from 190 sites to approximately 800 sites, providing greater accessibility to public safety communications in regional areas of New South Wales. The bill establishes clear arrangements for securing and transferring leases and agreements for new and existing sites. It also clearly establishes access rights and protection against damage to infrastructure to support this rollout. The bill also involves public safety representatives at a peak level, with the inclusion of two nominees of the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services on the board of the authority. The bill also provides for board members to be appointed from a wider field of candidacy, such as industry, academia and other fields of telecommunications expertise, to assist in the provision of high-level advice to the Minister for Finance, Services and Property and the authority.

I also draw the attention of the House to the removal of obsolete or outdated definitions and the introduction of new definitions that reflect the current operating environment and will enable adoption of new technology in the future. Another legislative "tidy up" afforded through the bill is the removal of "objects" to be replaced with a new section on "Functions of the [Telco] Authority". This clearly articulates the authority's role in operating and managing the government telecommunications network, including the GRN. This new section also confirms additional requirements that now form part of that function. For instance, the bill is now consistent with the NSW Government Operational Communications Strategy requiring all negotiations with the Australian Communications and Media Authority in relation to radio frequency allocation on behalf of any New South Wales government agency to be carried out by the authority, in consultation with relevant agencies as appropriate.

The intent of this requirement is to support the New South Wales Government's goal of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of operational communications while ensuring a coordinated and strategic approach to the management of spectrum licences for the State. The authority's role under the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 as the telecommunications functional area coordinator is also now recognised under this new section, given the importance of this work and its increasing relevance to the authority's core business. I also draw the attention of the House to the Government's commitment to integrated critical communications on one platform to free up resources to focus on the frontline delivery of public safety and to expand access to services. It is for this reason the Government has introduced these legislative reforms to support the authority and public safety agencies to deliver core services efficiently to the people of New South Wales.

The reality of making these legislative changes is that they will have a real impact on all communities. In April 2015 my electorate was subject to the well-known east coast low that generated the super storm, which was centred on Dungog. That tragic event resulted in three people unfortunately losing their lives. Dungog was without any form of communications for approximately 72 hours. That lack of vital telecommunications services resulted in an inability to coordinate emergency services personnel to assist and protect the people of Dungog during the storm. There have been many other instances in my electorate of Upper Hunter and around the State when telecommunications have been a major issue. Whether it be during floods or fires, we have experienced deficits in our emergency services' ability to respond to and coordinate their protection of people in my electorate and in other parts of the State.

The investment of approximately \$600 million in the GRN will literally save lives. This is all about saving lives and ensuring that our emergency services personnel can communicate with each other, coordinate their approaches and get to the people who need our assistance during extreme emergencies such as major floods and fires. The topography of my electorate varies enormously. I have the mountains of Barrington Tops through to the Liverpool Plains and everything in between. I experience on a daily basis the lack of reception and communications when I travel around my electorate. When I am not in Parliament, I spend my time travelling around talking with my constituents.

There are many black spots and many people who do not have telecommunications services. They often live in country areas that are at major risk from both flood and fire. It is good to be a member of a government that is committed to spending \$600 million on upgrading this network. From memory, I think it will increase the GRN coverage in New South Wales from 30 per cent to 95 per cent. That will be a major safety boost for my constituents in the Upper Hunter and in many other areas across New South Wales. The impact of this investment should not be underestimated. I congratulate the Minister and his staff on bringing this bill to the House.

I had a discussion with the Minister a few days ago during which we said that if we were to spend \$600 million on a road project the media would be covering it comprehensively and people would be talking about it all over social media. There would be extensive commentary, whether in favour of or against it. However, we are spending \$600 million on the GRN, which will literally save lives and assist our emergency services personnel, but we have not heard a thing about it in the broader community. That is a shame because, as members of Parliament, we are here to do what we can to make life better and safer for the people of New South Wales. This is a major investment and a major initiative that will do exactly that. This legislation should attract extensive coverage because, as I said, it will save lives. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (12:15): In reply: I am pleased to reply to the second reading debate on the Government Telecommunications Bill 2018. As all members have heard, the bill will support the Government's Critical Communications Enhancement Program [CCEP] through the integration and expansion of radio coverage and related communications across the State. The first key message about this bill is that outdated legislation should not stand in the way of delivering better services to improve community safety. The Government has a strong commitment to ensuring community safety and to improving public services, including services in regional and remote locations.

I thank the member for Terrigal, the member for Cessnock and the member for Upper Hunter for their contributions to this debate. I recall the discussion to which the member for Upper Hunter referred, and I remember his pointing out to me the simple and powerful message that this bill will save lives. It cannot be more powerful than that. As the member said, if we were to spend \$600 million on a road or rail project, the media would be all over it. Unfortunately, this investment has not attracted the same amount of coverage because it involves a telco service. The reality is that telecommunications are essential. As the member for Terrigal said—and he is correct—it is only because we are in a strong financial position as a result of managing the economy well that we can invest this record amount in the CCEP. The Government is extremely proud of its achievement in ensuring that it delivers the much-needed critical infrastructure that will keep our community safe.

The bill will ensure that the NSW Telco Authority has a clear legislative mandate that reflects its current role and functions as the owner and operator of the Government Radio Network [GRN]. It will also ensure that the board of the authority has a membership and structure that involves key users of the network, including the NSW Police Force, the State Emergency Service and those with relevant expertise from a broad cross-section of society. The bill will bring all government agencies onto one integrated government telecommunications network, which will include the GRN and reduce duplication. It still provides for the Minister to authorise the establishment of alternative networks for specific operational requirements that cannot currently be provided by the GRN or for the management of an event or incident. This and other powers can be delegated to staff within the authority to ensure that there is no barrier to rapid authorisation of an alternative network in an emergency.

Another potential barrier to the efficient management of a consolidated government telecommunications network is overcome through the provision of modern property infrastructure management and access powers for

the authority. This will reduce red tape when the authority requires access to use or to undertake maintenance of infrastructure. It is particularly important that the anomalous provisions in the Government Telecommunications Act 1991 are replaced as the authority acquires additional infrastructure owned by other government agencies, telecommunications carriers and private landowners who agree to have infrastructure placed on their property. Given the critical role that the GRN has in public safety, the bill will introduce tailored offence, penalty and compensation provisions for damage to GRN infrastructure and assets. This will support the authority's protecting this infrastructure, acting as a deterrent to persons who intentionally or recklessly cause damage or interference. The provisions will also enable the authority to obtain appropriate compensation for the cost of any such damage to infrastructure to ensure that its operation remains cost effective.

The compensation provisions will also require any person requesting relocation of the authority's infrastructure to pay reasonable associated costs. This includes, but is not limited to, relocation resulting from landowners who wish to subdivide their property or make changes to their property. This formalises existing provisions established in existing agreements with property owners. These legislative tidy-ups demonstrate the Government's commitment to making it clear to government agencies and individuals alike that the Government is committed to improving public safety services for the people of our State. I thank all members for their contributions to the debate. Once again, I stress the importance of this bill in ensuring that New South Wales has a strong and robust legislative framework that will support the Government's agenda to consolidate its existing telecommunications network and infrastructure, and to continue its commitment to expand these services across the State. The bill is palpable evidence that New South Wales is leading the way in our country when it comes to data and digital transformation, because communication is a key part of that.

Before I conclude, I thank some outstanding individuals who have made a huge collective effort to get this bill to where we are today. I thank my outstanding chief of staff Matt Dawson and Tom "Solutions" Green, my departmental liaison officer Natalie Spiridon and another outstanding individual, Kate Foy, the Managing Director of NSW Telco Authority and her team, including Alan Green, Sean Carmichael, Jourdan Di Leo, James Corkill, Helen Vallance, Toby Dobson, Rochelle Kelly, Rosemary Chandler and Andrew Bauman. I also thank the many men and women in the police, the Rural Fire Service, the State Emergency Service, Fire and Rescue NSW and the Ambulance Service of New South Wales, who worked shoulder to shoulder in the bill's development. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

FAIR TRADING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2018

CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Second Reading Speech

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (12:22): On behalf of Mr Matt Kean: I move:

That these bills be now read a second time.

The Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2018 and the Charitable Fundraising Amendment Bill 2018 were introduced in the other place on 17 October 2018, and are in the same form. The second reading speech appears at pages 92 to 97 in the proof *Hansard* for that day. I commend the bills to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (12:22): I am pleased to lead for the Opposition in debate on the Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2018 and the Charitable Fundraising Amendment Bill 2018. The range of changes presented in these bills is significant. It is incumbent on government to provide an efficient yet robust regulatory environment that encourages strong and healthy competition. More importantly, it is incumbent on governments to provide a regulatory environment that ensures that consumers are protected—whether it be protection from unsafe products, consumer confidence in licensing schemes for tradespeople or improving transparency in our markets so consumers can make better, more informed choices.

The Charitable Fundraising Amendment Bill 2018 deals with the recommendations contained in the report of the inquiry into the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 undertaken by Justice Bergin. While the Opposition supports the intent of the bill, I note that the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation should consider a move towards nationally consistent fundraising laws to reduce the administrative burden on charities. The Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2018 also seeks to achieve these consumer protection outcomes and, while the Opposition has some reservations about specific sections of the bill, we support its intent.

I will now address those reservations and the substance of both bills. The Charitable Fundraising Amendment Bill 2018 gives effect to a number of recommendations contained in the report of the inquiry under the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991, which was undertaken by Justice Bergin. Bergin made 29 recommendations, 23 of which pertained to law reform. The remaining six recommendations were related to administrative or compliance issues. The bill seeks to deliver the substance of these recommendations. New South Wales residents are very generous: They donate more than \$1 billion to charity each year. Any legislative reform should seek to bolster confidence in the sector so that charities can continue to fundraise efficiently and return those funds to local and international communities through their projects and other initiatives. Reducing duplication and the administrative burden on small charities will, no doubt, be beneficial to the sector.

In particular, new section 12 will streamline the registration process for charities. Charities will now be able to use their proof of current registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission to apply for fundraising authority in New South Wales. Legislative harmonisation will also occur for charitable fundraising authority holders who conduct community games to fundraise. The streamlining of the legislation will make it easier for authority holders to comply with the relevant Acts. While these changes and others detailed in the bill will assist in harmonising legislative requirements for fundraising authority holders in New South Wales, I still harbour concerns that the full administrative burden is not lifted from charities, particularly large charities. This is because there is still a desperate need for nationally consistent fundraising laws for charities operating in multiple States.

There is still confusion regarding online donations and the alignment of reporting in different States as many large charities and sector peaks have noted. As Justice Connect appropriately highlights, a charity can be required to report its bank details to one State, get a police check in another and advertise in a paper in a third. Its campaign to "fix fundraising" has highlighted many of these administrative problems and a change in one State does not fix a national problem. Essentially, there are seven sets of rules in seven different States. The Opposition therefore asks the Minister and this Government: What is the Government doing to streamline the process? Will the Government raise the need for nationally consistent laws at the meeting of consumer affairs Ministers, which I believe will be held this Friday?

With more and more donations occurring online and across State borders, it is of the utmost importance that we develop and implement nationally consistent laws on fundraising. While these new laws are a step in the right direction, I call on the Minister to push his Federal, State and Territory ministerial colleagues for national legislation to address the significant burden on charities and community fundraisers. The bill also addresses Fair Trading's compliance and enforcement powers in the Act to conduct random inspections of charities and to investigate any breach of the Act that may occur. The public inquiry addressed this concern and the bill responds by proposing a number of changes to strengthen compliance, including new section 26, which provides powers of investigation to authorised officers.

As per new section 25K, the Minister can direct a person or body to pay remuneration and expenses of an authorised officer for the exercise of investigation functions in relation to the person or body if a person has been found guilty of an offence. The Opposition asks the Minister to clarify the definition of an "offence" under this Act, and to clarify whether this new section is retrospective. I now turn my attention to the Fair Trading Amendment (Reform) Bill 2018. The bill details a large number of consumer- and business-focused reforms arising from the Government's Easy and Transparent Trading report. More than 500 submissions were submitted to this paper, providing feedback to the Government before the introduction of the bill to Parliament.

I will discuss the reforms in two parts: first, those reforms that are designed to improve protections for consumers interacting with businesses and organisations; and, secondly, those reforms that are focused on reducing the regulatory and administrative burden on businesses. First, the bill introduces a number of reforms that will increase transparency for consumers. The bill addresses the use of non-disclosure agreements used by businesses to circumnavigate their responsibility of providing consumers with safe products or services. Consumer advocates, such as CHOICE, have expressed concerns about the use of non-disclosure agreements. This was most noticeable in the case of Thermomix, where serious incidents highlighting the unsafe nature of the product were not disclosed to Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC] or to relevant State authorities because those customers who had complained to the company were asked to sign non-disclosure agreements before receiving their remedy.

It is absolutely vital that products or services that are dangerous are reported to the authorities immediately. This reform will give consumers a route to make that report without voiding a non-disclosure agreement. This then equips Fair Trading and other authorities with the relevant information to investigate the problem and, if necessary, issue a public warning or alert the ACCC to potential problems. A number of other reforms will help consumers navigate complex markets, such as the disclosure of commissions. This is addressed particularly in schedule 1, where the problem of information asymmetry with third-party referrals, information and recommendations can lead consumers into purchasing a substandard product or service. Services such as comparator websites, for example in the insurance industry, market themselves as offering a range of products across the market when, in fact, they cover only a limited number of services. Consumers may be none the wiser on the financial kickbacks or incentives involved in these transactions. The reforms seek to provide consumers with better information so they can make better purchases through mandating up-front disclosure. I also note that the reforms on rental bonds will streamline processes from tenants, allowing the bond to be transferred from one property to another before that first bond has been released.

Secondly, the Minister and the Government seek to reduce red tape for businesses, particularly trades. Trade licensees for 13 minor trades, including kitchen bench top installation, painting and decorating, dry plastering, fencing, glazing and paving will now need to notify the regulator only every five years that they still require a licence. I note that this is a departure from the Government's previous position as stated in its Easy and Transparent Trading Consultation Paper. The Minister has previously sought to abolish those licences altogether. The response from stakeholders was overwhelming.

The Government received more than 400 submissions and reported in budget estimates that only seven submissions were in favour of abolishing licences for those trades. There was an overwhelming majority support for licencing to remain. However, even as recently as September, the Minister was refusing to rule out the abolition of those licences. Thankfully, we see here in the detail of the bill that the Minister has listened to the community and business voices and has seen reason. The licences will remain and consumers will have confidence in the work being performed by the tradespeople, who will retain their licences which they can then market as a signal to consumers of their skills and qualifications.

The legislation will also introduce new specialised classes for motor vehicle repairers to allow certain employees to require certain qualifications for work that they are not performing. For example, an employee who changes tyres could require only a certificate I or II instead of higher qualifications. I note that this is also a backflip on the Government's previous position where it abolished restricted licencing in this sector. The Opposition is very concerned at the prospect of restricted licencing for liquefied petroleum [LP] gas and electrical repairs to caravans and recreational vehicles [RVs] in schedule 4 to the bill. The Opposition will move an amendment to reflect its concern with this section of the bill. I understand that it has been circulated. Electrical and gas fitting is no joke, particularly the complex work required in caravans and RVs.

Problems with gas and electricity in caravans and RVs are not new. The Opposition is familiar with complaints from consumers about so-called "lemon" caravans. A news report in *CHOICE* magazine quotes Tracy Leigh, the administrator of the Facebook group Lemon Caravans & RVs in Aus, who calls the industry a shambles and notes that despite electrical and other significant problems plaguing the industry, little recourse is taken. The last thing that we want to do at this time is reduce the standards and quality of installation and repairs for caravan and RV manufacturers. If these manufacturers cannot get it right now, with fully qualified tradespeople working on their vehicles, we should not seek to restrict licences.

The amendment in this place proposes to omit all words on schedule 4.1 [3] and schedule 4.2 [1], which pertain to the definition of specialist work for electricity and LP gasfitters for caravans and RVs, and the category of work for electricity and LP gasfitters for caravans and RVs. If this Government is serious about consumer protections, as it appears to be in addressing the use of, for instance, non-disclosure agreements, then it should and will consider the amendment that the Opposition will move today. The amendment takes the safety of New South Wales residents seriously. The Minister, in his introduction to the Government's Easy and Transparent Trading paper, expressed his wish to empower consumer businesses in this State.

While many of the above reforms seek to address issues in the current Act by supplementing existing legislation with additional protections, some will reduce consumer confidence, in particular those problems identified in the Opposition's amendment to the bill. The safety of consumers should be the most important factor in the amending of the Act. While much of the bill seeks to protect consumers, the Opposition would highlight that a reduction in red tape in some areas, such as the installation and fitting of LP gas and electrics in caravans and RVs, will reduce consumer confidence and open up the possibility of severe harm to the people of New South Wales.

Again, in regard to the Charitable Fundraising Amendment Bill 2018, the Opposition asks the Minister to consider the national implications of this bill and, where possible, the Minister should in the first instance

address the complicated State-by-State legislation at a national level through regular meetings of consumer Ministers across the country. We commend the Government for taking steps to improve consumer protection, streamline regulation and increase transparency in the private and not-for-profit sector. Having identified the deficiencies of both bills the Opposition notes that, if operating from Government, it will watch the implementation of these significant reforms and will seek to ensure they are working as intended.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:35): I speak in support of the Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2018. The bill continues to deliver on the New South Wales Government's commitment to reducing unnecessary red tape for businesses while maintaining protections for consumers. I commend it to the House, together with its cognate partner, the Charitable Fundraising Amendment Bill 2018. The amendments in schedule 4 to the Fair Trading Bill demonstrate how the Government continues to respond to the needs of businesses and their workers regulated by Fair Trading. Schedule 4, among other worthy licensing reforms, introduces new types of specialised licences for tradespeople under the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013, as well as the Home Building Act 1989.

From June to September this year the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation engaged in comprehensive consultation with industry and the community on the package of reforms that we now see in the bill before the House. During consultation, leading industry groups such as the Motor Traders' Association [MTA], the Institute of Automotive Mechanical Engineers [IAME] and the Caravan and Camping Industry Association [CCIA] called on the Government to make the laws work better for businesses and consumers in sections of the motor vehicle industry. The Government thanks the MTA, the IAME and the CCIA for their consistently valuable contributions to the development of regulations affecting their members.

The reforms in the bill are the result of meaningful, extensive consultation with industry and the wider public, and will deliver substantial economic benefits. Independent consultants ACIL Allen estimate that specialised licences for new classes of repair work under the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act could save repairers up to \$17 million a year, as well as more than 600 hours in training time for those who only work in these new specialised trades. At the same time, it is estimated that specialised licensing for certain types of electrical and gas work on caravans and recreational vehicles could deliver savings of up to \$1.6 million per year for tradespeople and consumers.

The reforms represent what this Government is all about—sensible and smarter regulation, making it easier for businesses. All the while we are protecting consumers and improving the outlook for youth in the community to get appropriate qualifications and increase their job opportunities. In 2013 the current classes of repair work under the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act were put in place as a result of a major review of the previous Motor Dealers Act 1974 and the Motor Vehicle Repairs Act 1980. The combined Act aimed at greatly reducing the complexity of the licensing regime for dealers and repairers. The existing motor dealer and repairer legislation consolidated the 22 classes of repair work under the previous Acts to just 12 core areas, with a minimum certificate III qualification required for all classes. Five years on, industry representatives have made a convincing case to the Government that the repair work classes need expanding, and that the requirement for a certificate III across the board is onerous and not always necessary.

The Government has listened to industry and the wider public. Against a criterion of no increased risk to consumer safety or detriment, we have re-evaluated the current requirements. Although the policy behind the change was sound, the categories and qualifications do not remain fit for purpose. The Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation asked his department to see what qualifications currently exist that can ensure a person could get the necessary qualifications and experience to undertake this work safely. Several valuable certificate I and certificate II qualifications exist for specific aspects of motor vehicle repair and servicing. For example, the current law requires a tyre shop to employ a fully-licensed, certificate III-qualified motor mechanic to do just wheel alignments.

This applies even where that business offers no other mechanical services. This has led to unintended consequences of the previous policy, resulting in higher wage costs for higher skilled tradespeople, pressure on the industry, skills shortages and resulting higher costs being ultimately passed on to consumers. The Motor Traders Association has said that in rural and regional areas this has become onerous, even prohibitive, for some small businesses, leading to some businesses becoming unviable. Schedule 4 to the bill inserts the necessary power to create specialised categories of repair work, signalling the Government's clear intention to resolve these issues in the interests of a better functioning marketplace.

Following passage of the bill, the Government will work closely with industry and the vocational education and training sector to decide upon the final list of new specialised classes of tradespersons certificates. Fair Trading has advised the Government that a good starting point could include driveline or transmission systems, and steering and suspension systems. This will give the motor trades a more flexible and responsive licensing regime, while ensuring that repairers have the necessary qualifications to complete their work safely,

with due care and skill. Make no mistake: Umotor vehicle repair laws will continue to require tradespeople to have the approved skills to do their work safely.

Based on an indicative list of the types of specialised certificates to be created, ACIL Allen estimates the benefit of this reform to industry over 10 years to be almost \$175 million. Schedule 4 to the bill also provides for a second area of specialised licensing, especially designed for gas or electrical work on recreational vehicles [RVs] as well as caravans. These include work relating to electrical appliances, connections or wiring in a caravan or recreational vehicle, or in any other type of dwelling prescribed by the regulations; and work relating to liquefied petroleum gas pipes, fittings or appliances in a caravan or recreational vehicle. Importantly, in both cases the regulations will be able to prescribe types of work that cannot be performed by holders of the new restricted licences.

This is a real example of smarter regulation. It is a classic win-win situation. This reform creates a new category of work, which will increase job opportunities, reduce costs for businesses and increase the pool of tradespeople to do the work, resulting in shorter delays in production. But not only that, it also creates specialists in this field. This reform will deliver tradespeople who have trained and received qualifications especially designed for this type of work, and that will be all they do in the gas and electrical trades. This will not only ensure no increased risk to safety but potentially reduce the chance of faulty work being done.

The Government thanks the Caravan and Camping Industry Association for suggesting this reform as well as for its time working with the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation to help formulate reforms that will deliver real benefits including reduced costs to consumers. The CCIA has more than 200 members who are manufacturers, repairers and retailers of RVs, camping equipment and accessories, making a substantial and growing contribution to the New South Wales economy. A significant part of this is from the many RV travel options available, including motorhomes, campervans, caravans, camper trailers, tent trailers, slide-ons and fifth wheelers.

Across Australia, approximately 80,000 RVs are on the road at any one time and there are approximately 20,000 new registrations of recreation vehicles every year. However, as the CCIA noted, the industry is facing constraints imposed by current government regulations in the context of high demand for skilled tradespeople across multiple sectors of the economy. In particular, repair and reconnection work on caravans and RVs related to gas and electrical systems currently requires a fully licensed and qualified contractor in all cases. This results in many manufacturers and repairers needing to engage external contractors to undertake and sign off on all electrical and gas work, even when the scope of that work does not involve the same level of complexity and risk that would justify the higher qualified individual.

The additional costs and delays this can cause are further compounded by the recent construction boom in New South Wales, which puts pressure on skilled tradespeople available to work on caravans and RVs. Fair Trading will not be able to offer the new licence categories immediately because they will need to be underpinned by prescribed units of competency appropriate to the scope of work. The Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation has committed to working collaboratively with industry and other stakeholders to ensure that the experience and qualifications are commensurate with the type of work to be undertaken. It is all about targeting regulatory measures to a carefully assessed level of risk in the marketplace, a hallmark of the Better Business reform package.

As I said at the outset, creating a more flexible and responsive licensing regime while maintaining safety standards is estimated to deliver \$1.6 million per year in savings. It is important to stress that the Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill is also aimed at enhancing the choice for consumers in the New South Wales marketplace. Whilst the proposed reforms go a long way to reducing regulatory burden on businesses, the Government has worked steadfastly not only to maintain but also to enhance consumer protections and choice in the marketplace. In an age of fiercely competitive commerce and seemingly abundant choice for consumers, it is important that choices presented to consumers are legitimate and that consumers are empowered to make the right decisions. Indeed, as my colleague Mr Scot MacDonald said in the other place last week, the bill is about empowering everyday Australians by cutting red tape and giving consumers the information they need to make meaningful decisions about their future. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (12:44): I speak in support of the Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2018. It is wonderful to do that in the presence of the extremely hardworking fair trading Minister today. The Attorney General, who is present in the Chamber, is also extremely hardworking, not only in relation to this bill. The member for Manly and member for Coogee, who are also present in the Chamber, do their bit. I applaud the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation for his work that led to the bill being introduced in the House, together with its cognate partner, the Charitable Fundraising Amendment Bill 2018.

Greater consumer choice and transparency drives business competition, leading to enhanced prosperity for all. Accurate, relevant and easily accessible information increases individual autonomy and underpins the ability of everyday people to make meaningful decisions on issues that affect their lives. One of the primary reasons for government intervention in a market is to address information asymmetry to create a level playing field. It means consumers can make the best choices based on all the available information. The bill includes reforms that will ensure that consumers have all the information they require to make meaningful decisions.

"What are some of these things?" I hear you ask, Mr Assistant Speaker. They include a requirement for all traders, including online, to disclose the key terms and conditions in consumer contracts that would substantially prejudice the consumer's interests; to make it mandatory for intermediaries to disclose whether they receive any commissions, referral fees or other financial incentives for referrals to third parties, or for the traders they rate or recommend on comparator websites; and allowing consumers to inform NSW Fair Trading of possible breaches of consumer protection laws, even though they may have signed a non-disclosure agreement with the trader—that is an important one.

I could speak at length about the bill, but it speaks for itself. Those members who have spoken before me have spoken volumes. On Tuesday I had a great chat with the Minister during which he went through the details of the bill, leading me to be very confident that this is an outstanding bill. Rather than go on and on, I say to the Minister that this is great work. I also acknowledge the work of his entire team, as I know he would like me to do. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (12:49): In reply: I am pleased to introduce the Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2018 and the Charitable Fundraising Amendment Bill 2018. These bills will deliver two main objectives for the Innovation and Better Regulation portfolio. First, the better business reforms in the Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill will empower everyday people by cutting red tape and giving consumers the information they need to make meaningful decisions about their own future. Secondly, the Charitable Fundraising Amendment Bill will implement the recommendations for legislative reform arising from the public inquiry undertaken by Justice Bergin into the RSL NSW and its related entities. Last year the Hon. Nick Greiner, a former Premier of this great State, and an independent panel of regulatory and data experts undertook a review of the New South Wales regulatory policy framework. An important recommendation of the review panel was that Ministers and agencies should take a stewardship approach to the legislation in the portfolios they administer.

The better business reforms arise out of a stewardship approach to the legislation within the Innovation and Better Regulation portfolio. My staff read through every line of each of the 58 statutes that I administer to make sure that they remain fit for purpose and to identify where the weight of unnecessary red tape and regulatory burden sat and could be lifted from the hardworking people in this State without compromising consumer protections or consumer and worker safety. My department comprehensively mapped the provisions and requirements in the legislation across the Innovation and Better Regulation portfolio. This mapping process identified duplicate provisions, inconsistencies and antiquated requirements that impose burdensome costs that do not assist the statutes in meeting their regulatory objectives.

In June this year, I wrote to more than 100 think tanks, industry groups, academics and other stakeholders, seeking their ideas for change. I also released a consultation paper entitled "Easy and Transparent Trading", which received more than 500 submissions. The amendments in the Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill implement identified areas of reform and ideas for change while adhering to a central guiding philosophy that every person should be encouraged to thrive and empowered to dream big, realise their aspirations and make the most of their talents and hard work.

I am proud to introduce these reforms in the House today. I am proud that these reforms will deliver greater economic freedom for the people of New South Wales and improve the ability of consumers to make meaningful decisions about their own futures. As John Locke once wrote more than three centuries ago, "The end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve and enlarge freedom." That is what the reforms do. The reforms will bring substantial benefits to the New South Wales economy, businesses and consumers. ACIL Allen Consulting was commissioned by the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation to undertake a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of the entire reform package.

Over 10 years, the reforms will put \$495 million back into the pockets of hardworking businesses across the State and consumers will have millions more to spend to make things better for themselves and their families. Throughout this process I have made it clear that any reductions in red tape and regulatory burden cannot increase the risk of consumer detriment or compromise the safety of workers and consumers. The reforms make changes that will improve the lives of the citizens of this State without increasing risk.

I will briefly comment on some of the issues raised in the debate. The member for Swansea asked questions about when the charitable fundraising regulations will be harmonised across Australia. The reforms take New South Wales several important steps towards harmonising our State with the Commonwealth regulatory body, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. Work continues with other jurisdictions to further harmonise and make it easier for charities to carry out their worthy work. New South Wales continues to work with regulators in other jurisdictions and the Commonwealth while pursuing these local reforms. Discussion between Ministers and the Consumer Affairs Forum are continuing, identifying any opportunities for closer alignment between the States and the Commonwealth.

The bill did not come to this place by accident; it took a lot of hard work by many people. I acknowledge my team in the department, who are in the gallery today. I thank them for working hard to deliver this result on time. It is a huge win for the citizens of this State. That is why they are outstanding public servants. I thank Gabrielle Mangos and the entire team for their hard work. The reforms came about because of the work of my senior policy advisor, Julia Steward. She does an incredible job and I thank her for all her hard work.

There is no doubt that the reforms would not have been possible without one of the most outstanding, brilliant and intelligent staff members that I have ever come across, my chief of staff Ben Coles. He has been the driving force behind this reform. What he has done is incredible and will benefit hundreds of thousands of small business owners and millions of consumers in this State. This is why this Government came to office in the first place. I thank Ben. This is smarter regulation. It is taking a stewardship approach to the legislation within a portfolio and ensures that it remains fit for purpose. It will also bring significant economic benefits to businesses, consumers and the State of New South Wales. I commend the bills to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser): The question is that these bills be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Ms Yasmin Catley.

Consideration in Detail

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: By leave: I will deal with the bills in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 to 3 be agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that schedules 1 to 12 be agreed to.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (12:56): By leave: I move Opposition amendments Nos 1 and 2 on sheet C2018-146 in globo:

No. 1 **Definition of specialist work**

Page 33, Schedule 4.1 [3], lines 13–22. Omit all words on those lines.

No. 2 **Categories of specialist work**

Page 33, Schedule 4.2 [1], lines 33–38. Omit all words on those lines.

I acknowledge the hard work of the Minister. I know that his intention is to reduce red tape and to benefit consumers in New South Wales. I acknowledge that because the bills will mostly achieve those outcomes. A lot of hard work has gone into the reforms. A lot of the amendments cover a broad area of consumer affairs. I too acknowledge the public servants who are in the gallery. Having been a public servant for 20 years of my working life, I know how hard it is. It is often a thankless job, but the Minister has shown some gratitude today and I mirror the Minister's views on their hard work. I thank them. This amendment deals with electrical and gasfitting installations in caravans.

When the member for Holsworthy gave some statistics on caravaners—there being more than half a million of them in Australia—I proudly put up my hand as one of them. I know the pleasure that caravanning can bring to families. I have travelled the State and the southern part of the country in a caravan with my family. There is no doubt it is a beautiful part of the world. My concern is that unsuspecting travellers or people who are living in their mobile homes and travelling around such as our grey nomads—and I have my fair share living in the Swansea electorate—will be unaware that there will now be less safety when it comes to the installation of electrical and gasfittings in their recreational vehicles as a result of this change.

I have seen fires. In fact, I have experienced a fire. When my young family and I were in Uluru, our battery ignited due to some wiring issues. I am acutely aware of how dangerous fires can be as a result of the serious situation my family was put in. As the member for Holsworthy reminded us, more than half a million

caravans and recreational vehicles are registered in this country and on any one day we can see up to 100,000 holiday-makers travelling around this beautiful country. It is a great Australian pastime. But long gone are the days when caravans were relatively simple outfits. Nowadays travellers spend many months living and travelling in their vans. The vans are fitted out with stoves, fridges, microwaves, air conditioners, water heaters, washing machines, dryers and other devices, all of which need to be powered.

Today's recreational vehicles [RVs] have one or two electrical power systems. They may have a 240-volt alternating current circuit which connects to mains supply. That is for items which draw fairly heavy current and necessitate or prefer 240 volts. They may also have 12-volt direct current power, which is used for other items such as lighting or refrigerators. While members on the other side of the House might consider it a simple job to wire a van or RV, we must remember that we are dealing with gas and electricity. Once an item has left the workshop, if it is installed incorrectly or by a person without the knowledge required to ensure safety, it could have devastating and life-threatening effects.

The Government's suggestion to remove the requirement for qualified electricians to install gas and electricity in caravans is dangerous and negligent. It is one thing to run the wiring through a new van during the manufacturing stage on the workshop floor, but understanding the complex testing of that cabling and how it will respond to the outside world once it leaves the workshop is a completely different matter. It is critical to use the correct cable gauge, thus ensuring the cross-sectional area of the electrical conductor is large enough to cope with the anticipated load. As I have just described, these loads are increasing. Another critical factor is ensuring that earth leakage safety devices are operable and functional within the required time limits. Once on the road, RV and caravan movement and associated vibration can have a detrimental effect on cable installations. Electrical shorts are a key cause for concern and can cause sparks which create fires. Ever-present movement and vibration also presents the risk of insulation penetration by screws and staples when cabling is run through walls.

A qualified electrician with a wealth of knowledge will know to run as much cabling as possible through the roof of the van and to also run 240-volt and 12-volt cabling separately wherever possible. A qualified electrician will also know that it is best to use grommets on all cable apertures to minimise the risk of a live frame. This is particularly important in aluminium vans, which make up a large proportion of the market. Additionally, all 240-volt cabling should be glued in position and bullet connectors should be used instead of soldering. These are just some of the precautions that would be taken by a qualified electrician, but they save lives in the event of a fire in a van or RV. It is not uncommon for caravans to catch fire, and electrical systems can be the cause of that fire. Faulty cables or short circuits can cause sparks which eventually give rise to fire.

Labor's amendment removes the Government's reckless approach that removes the requirement for workers to hold an electrical licence when installing electrical wiring and gas fitting in recreational vehicles. There is currently a restricted electrical licence for the disconnection and reconnection of existing circuits. For instance, if a plumber is working on plumbing a restricted licence applies but there is a formal licence and training that complements this capacity, and that is appropriate. The last Labor Government beefed up fire regulation during its term on the back of knowledge that some 1,000 fires occurred in recreational vehicles. The regulations affected fire alarms and extinguishers. What has changed since then? We have more recreational vehicles on our roads, but owners and holiday-makers will be unaware of the danger due to the reduction in licensing requirements introduced by this Government. I ask the Minister and the Government to seriously reconsider removing these sections from the bill to ensure that safety is paramount.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (13:03): I do not doubt that the shadow Minister's concerns are sincere, but they are misplaced. The reforms that the Government seeks to pass would not only ensure no increased risk to safety but also would put in place a regime that would increase expertise in the area of electrical and gas fitting work, reducing the chance that faulty work will be done. Clauses 14 (n) and 14 (o) provide for a specialised licensing regime designed especially for gas or electrical work on recreational vehicles, including caravans. The bill provides that this work relates to electrical appliances, connections or wiring in a caravan or recreational vehicle, or in any other type of dwelling prescribed by the regulations, and to work relating to liquefied petroleum gas pipes, fittings or appliances in a caravan or recreational vehicle.

The bill amends schedule 1 to the Home Building Act 1989 to allow the regulations to be able to prescribe types of work that cannot be performed by holders of the new specialised licences. While the reform will aid the caravan and recreational vehicle industry and help reduce costs for consumers, the creation of a specialised category of licence will also bring a major pay-off in the quality and safety of this work. The reform will essentially create specialists in this field—tradespeople who have trained and have completed qualifications that have been specifically designed for this type of work. This will mean that rather than a licensed electrician or gasfitter who does a range of work, this reform will deliver tradespeople who have trained and received qualifications specially designed for this type of work and that is the only gas and electrical work they perform. This will not only ensure

no increased risk to safety but would put in place a regime that would increase expertise in the area of electrical and gas fitting, reducing the chance of faulty work being done.

I thank all the stakeholders who participated in discussions and provided feedback. The bill has the support of the Caravan and Camping Industry Association and will benefit the approximately 80,000 recreational vehicles that are on the road at any one time across Australia. This is smarter regulation and it underpins the overarching aims of the Better Business Reform package for targeted, fit-for-purpose regulation. This is about ensuring that we cut costs and reduce red tape but with no reduction in safety standards for consumers and businesses. That is exactly what these reforms do.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that Opposition amendments Nos 1 and 2 on sheet C2018-146 be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes33
Noes50
Majority.....17

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J	Atalla, Mr E	Bali, Mr S
Barr, Mr C	Car, Ms P	Catley, Ms Y
Chanthivong, Mr A	Crakanthorp, Mr T	Daley, Mr M
Dib, Mr J	Donato, Mr P	Doyle, Ms T
Finn, Ms J	Foley, Mr L	Harris, Mr D
Harrison, Ms J	Haylen, Ms J	Hornery, Ms S
Kamper, Mr S	Lalich, Mr N (teller)	Leong, Ms J
Lynch, Mr P	McKay, Ms J	Mehan, Mr D
Mihailuk, Ms T	Park, Mr R	Parker, Mr J
Scully, Mr P	Tesch, Ms L	Warren, Mr G
Washington, Ms K	Watson, Ms A (teller)	Zangari, Mr G

NOES

Anderson, Mr K	Aplin, Mr G	Ayres, Mr S
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)	Brookes, Mr G	Conolly, Mr K
Constance, Mr A	Cooke, Ms S	Coure, Mr M
Crouch, Mr A	Davies, Mrs T	Dominello, Mr V
Elliott, Mr D	Evans, Mr A.W.	Evans, Mr L.J.
George, Mr T	Gibbons, Ms M	Goward, Ms P
Grant, Mr T	Greenwich, Mr A	Griffin, Mr J
Gulaptis, Mr C	Hazzard, Mr B	Henskens, Mr A
Humphries, Mr K	Johnsen, Mr M	Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A	McGirr, Dr J	Notley-Smith, Mr B
O'Dea, Mr J	Patterson, Mr C (teller)	Pavey, Mrs M
Perrottet, Mr D	Petinos, Ms E	Piper, Mr G
Provest, Mr G	Roberts, Mr A	Rowell, Mr J
Sidoti, Mr J	Speakman, Mr M	Stokes, Mr R
Taylor, Mr M	Toole, Mr P	Tudehope, Mr D
Upton, Ms G	Ward, Mr G	Williams, Mr R
Williams, Mrs L	Wilson, Ms F	

PAIRS

Cotsis, Ms S	Barilaro, Mr J
Hoenig, Mr R	Berejiklian, Ms G
McDermott, Dr H	Hancock, Mrs S
Minns, Mr C	Lee, Dr G

Amendments negated.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that schedules 1 to 12 be agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 12 agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr MATT KEAN: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Visitors

VISITORS

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I welcome to the gallery teachers and students from the Nowra Anglican College, who are guests of the member for Kiama.

Bills

PLANNING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (GREATER SYDNEY COMMISSION) BILL 2018

First Reading

Bill received from the Legislative Council, introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading Speech

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister of State) (13:44): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill was introduced in the Legislative Council on 17 October this year and is in the same form. The second reading speech appears at pages 90 to 92 in the proof *Hansard* for that day. I have 17 pages of wonderful insight into the planning system and I am quite happy to ensure that they are read. I commend the bill to the House.

Business interrupted.

Community Recognition Statements

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG ALUMNI AWARD WINNER DIANE MANN

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (13:15): I am thrilled to congratulate Diane Manns, the Chief Executive of the Sutherland Shire Family Services [SSFS], who has been named as the University of Wollongong 2018 Alumni of the Year for Social Impact, in recognition of her commitment to the community for more than 20 years, in particular, championing the rights of children, young people and families impacted by violence or trauma. Diane joined the SSFS in 2008 to lead its DV Pass Project, an initiative conducted in partnership with the NSW Police Force to support victims of domestic violence.

Later the project was recognised as the best practice model for the provision of support to women and children impacted by domestic violence. In 2011 Diane became operations manager, overseeing SSFS' various programs and managing family caseworkers and line managers. She was promoted to manager in 2014 and is now responsible for supervising more than 30 staff and the strategic direction of the organisation as well as the financial and operational viability of the 12 programs SSFS operates. I congratulate Diane, who is a passionate and engaging leader and an absolute role model for women in the Sutherland shire.

ELERMORE VALE LIONS BILL HANLEY AND RON MACLEOD

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (13:16): On 22 May 1968 Bill Hanley and Ron MacLeod joined the Newcastle Central Lions Club. When the club folded, both men transferred to the Lions Club of Elmore Vale in 2006. In May this year Bill and Ron were rewarded for their long service by being presented with the Australian Lions Foundation Medals by past district governor and Australian Lions Foundation Australia Grants chair Ken Hallam. Ron was also presented the No. 1 Advanced Fellowship for the work he has done in raising over \$60,000 for the Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation. What a wonderful feat! On behalf of the Wallsend electorate, I congratulate Bill and Ron on their dedication to Lions over the past 50 years.

GREAT LAKES BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:17): Recently the John Wright Park in Tuncurry was filled with shades of pink for the eleventh annual Mini-Fields of Women tribute. More than 100 pink lady silhouettes were on display in a show of support for women and families affected by breast cancer. Hosted by the

Great Lakes Breast Cancer Support Group, known as Breast Friends, the event was a chance for those whose lives have been impacted by breast cancer to gather, reflect and raise awareness. Breast Friends is a self-help breast cancer support group where women can share their experiences in a confidential and safe environment. A strong network of support has developed with more than 160 members. All women from the Great Lakes area who have experienced breast cancer are welcome to attend the group meetings that are held on the first Wednesday of every month at the Tuncurry Bowling Club. I make special mention of the event organisers Heather Kelly, Michelle Cheers, Sue Hobbs and my wife, Sue.

ASIAN WOMEN AT WORK TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (13:18): Asian Women at Work celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary this year. Asian Women at Work was established in 1993 and provides support to women who are new to our community. The organisation advocates for women's rights in the workplace and their dignity in the community. It provides a range of services and support including support groups, seminars, leadership development and advocacy. There are currently more than 25 established social, educational and support groups. I congratulate the newly elected management committee members who include Laura Meng, Kieu Lien Dinh, Helen Liu, Ky Minh Chau, Hao Trinh Doan, Jin Fan, Willa Li, Thu Hong Nguyen, Eva Huong Phan, Lang Tang, Sophie Yan and Jing Zhu. I also recognise the fantastic staff who include Lina Cabaero, Bich Thuy Pham, Angela Zhang and Roni Wang. I commend the commitment of Asian Women at Work to serving our community and congratulate the members sincerely on their twenty-fifth anniversary.

TWEED HEADS SKYDIVER SHANE TURNER

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (13:19): I congratulate Tweed Heads skydiver Shane Turner on his recent achievement breaking the Australian speed skydiving record during the World Parachuting Championships, held in the skies above Runaway Bay. Shane broke the Australian speed skydiving record when he posted a speed of 510 kilometres per hour on his first jump and his next two jumps being even faster with readings of 514 kilometres per hour increasing to 524 kilometres per hour—easily overtaking the Rex flight in the area and skyrocketing him to number one on the leader board. I congratulate Shane. Having skydived myself, I know it is an amazing effort and a great record to hold.

MOUNT DRUITT HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER JOHN VELLA

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Drutt) (13:20): I recognise Mr John Vella, a long-time volunteer at the Mount Drutt Hospital cardiac rehabilitation unit. John volunteers at the unit three times a week. On one of those days he dedicates his time collecting patients from their homes and driving them to and from their appointments at the unit. He also dedicates a further two days a week to assisting at the unit with jobs such as cleaning, setting up the work-out machines and ensuring that patients are kept hydrated by delivering water to them during their sessions. John is 100 per cent dedicated to his volunteering duties and the staff and patients he assists welcome his generous spirit. It gives me great pleasure to recognise and thank John for his efforts. I wish him all the best.

NORTH COAST JUNIOR CRICKETER OF THE YEAR TAQUAYLA DAWSON

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (13:21): I offer my congratulations to Taquayla Dawson, who had an incredibly successful year as a junior cricketer. Her season was capped off recently when she was named the North Coast Junior Cricketer of the Year and awarded the John McMahon Scholarship. The extremely talented 14-year-old played in four grades of cricket during the last season, including men's third grade. She was selected in numerous representative teams including the under 15s female State Challenge Country Sixers, the under 15s female Country Championships North Coast team, the Ballina LJ Hooker Carnival for Mid North Coast XI and the NSW Girls Academy. Taquayla has just returned from a month-long tour of the United Kingdom where she scored a half century in one game and her team won six of the seven games they played. I wish Taquayla every success for the upcoming season. I am sure we will see her taking on greater honours over the coming years.

SOUTH LAKE MACQUARIE AMATEUR SAILING CLUB

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (13:22): I acknowledge the South Lake Macquarie Amateur Sailing Club at Sunshine and the extraordinary efforts of the club's volunteers. Recently the club hosted the NSW Youth Sailing Championships for the second year in a row, welcoming about 350 competitors and their boats from all corners of the State. Lake Macquarie has produced some of the world's best sailors, including Olympic gold medallists and world champions. Much of that success is because of outstanding junior training programs run by clubs such as South Lake Macquarie. This year the club is celebrating its seventieth anniversary. Many people have made that possible, but I make special mention of Phil Evans, who recently stepped down as club president after 11 years in the job. Phil provided remarkable guidance, enthusiasm and commitment to the

job and he has left big shoes for new president Doug Wilson to fill. I congratulate everyone associated with the club and thank them for their outstanding contribution to the local community and to their sport.

KUMON MATHEMATICS CHAMPION CHARLES FAWCETT

GLENMORE PARK PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for Ageing) (13:23): I bring to the attention of the House the outstanding achievements of young people in Glenmore Park. I congratulate six-year-old Charles Fawcett, who has topped the ranking in Kumon mathematics and achieved first place nationally in the nationwide program. After stunning his parents and tutors with his incredibly intellect at only three years of age, Charles has gone on to achieve amazing results in mathematics, placing second in Kumon mathematics on three other occasions, and first in New South Wales, and now officially placing first nationwide. Charles has a drive to further his knowledge of mathematics as he enjoys finding unique patterns, proposing conjectures and learning about and from other mathematicians. I wish young Charles all the best and look forward to seeing him achieve many more amazing goals.

I congratulate the years 4 and 5 students of Glenmore Park Public School who have taken a stance against homelessness by growing fruits and vegetables to donate to Penrith Community Kitchen. With the help of their teacher and generous donations from Bunnings Warehouse and Penrith Valley Rotary Club, the young boys and girls have proved that age is no barrier to achieving great things for the community. In August the students had their first harvest and were incredibly proud that they could make such a large impact in the lives of others. Their hard work and diligence is a reminder to us all of the hardships of the homeless community and the simplicity of extending a helping hand. I say well done to Glenmore Park Public School.

BHARTIYE MANDIR

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (13:24): Last week I was I deeply saddened and disturbed to hear the news of appalling acts of vandalism at the Bhartiye Mandir Hindu temple in Regents Park. Our country is built upon values of respect, kindness and strength in diversity. The attacks on the temple are in stark contrast to those values and must be condemned. On Saturday I visited the temple, met with community members and observed the pain and sorrow they are experiencing. I did then and will again today express my condolences and extend my thoughts and prayers to all of those affected. I commend the community's efforts in quickly coming together to clean and rebuild the temple and in giving generously in response to a despicable act. I also acknowledge the efforts of people from other faiths including those from my electorate who practise the Muslim faith and joined the Hindu community at Regents Park to help with the clean-up and rebuilding. It is times like these when we come together that once again highlight the overriding belief that humanity and kindness will always win out against hatred.

ROTARY CLUB OF ALBURY-HUME RIVER OF STORIES

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (13:25): The Rotary Club of Albury-Hume River of Stories short story and poetry competition is in its fifteenth year. Albury author and instigator Barry Young again coordinated the event held last Saturday in the Albury Library Museum. More than 500 entries were received from year 7 to year 10 students from 13 secondary schools. As part of the program students attended workshops managed by professional children's authors. Individual winners were Amelia Spinks from Albury High School and Lara Diffey from the Scots School Albury, who won the years 7 and 8 category for short stories. Winner of the years 9 to 10 category was Tessa Quinlan of Victory Lutheran College. The competition recognised a total of 20 young writers. I congratulate all of the students as well as the schools on their encouragement. I also congratulate Barry Young and the Rotary Club of Albury-Hume on its continued commitment to the project.

BANKSTOWN SPORTS CLUB

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (13:25): Last Monday I attended the Service to Sport medal and awards night hosted at the Bankstown Sports Club to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the club. The event paid homage to the year 1958 with a diner and rock'n'roll theme. I acknowledge president John Murray, vice-president Richard Phillips, the club directors including Mark Condi and all of the staff for a fantastic evening and wonderful opportunity to pay tribute to the 43 grassroots sporting clubs across Bankstown, Birrong, Greenacre, Auburn and Baulkham Hills. Each year close to 1,000 volunteers are called upon to run our teams for the benefit of more than 8,000 participants. I congratulate Young Volunteer of the Year Josh Webbey on his role as football coaching coordinator at Birrong Football Club. I also congratulate Volunteer of the Year Mette Kitonia from the Bankstown Jets and all other award recipients.

PORT MACQUARIE ELECTORATE TRIATHLETES

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (13:26): I recognise the remarkable sporting achievements of Port Macquarie locals Greg Brooks, Zoe Dowsett, Belinda Johnson and Ian Thomson, who were

selected to compete in the 2018 ITU World Triathlon Grand Final on 15 September and 16 September at Broadwater Parklands on the Gold Coast. Our Port Macquarie elite quartet competed against 5,000 of the world's best triathletes from 46 nations for the final race of the 2018 season, which showcased the highest standards of fitness and endurance, to secure an international title in their age bracket.

Experienced triathletes Belinda and Ian have tested their abilities before at an international level. New recruits Zoe and Greg made their debut in the 1,500-metre swim and 40-kilometre bike ride before finishing with a 10-kilometre run. The weekend's results saw Zoe Dowsett reign triumphant amongst the Hastings quartet, finishing nineteenth out of 71, while Belinda Johnson finished thirty-sixth after a flat tyre punctured her chances. On the day our veteran athletes Ian Thomson and Greg Brooks finished thirtieth and forty-ninth respectively in their age division, which are commendable results. I congratulate our fantastic four triathletes on their achievements at the 2018 ITU World Triathlon Grand Final.

GOSFORD CITY BASKETBALL

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:28): I praise the rebel culture and the rebel way and share the joy that is the 25-year celebration of Gosford City Rebels basketball. It was in the very beginning whilst coordinating a local basketball competition in school halls with portable scoreboards and a team of incredible volunteers that the spirit of adventure, risk taking and unique circumstances of Gosford City Basketball was born. Exam tables were packed up, scoreboards and team benches installed, referees coordinated, games played—and exam tables restored every night of the week—as generous schools lent their courts.

A plan to construct a stadium was developed and the rebel culture developed simultaneously. It is RIP—relentless, intense and proud. A huge loan was then negotiated that allowed the construction of Gosford City Basketball and Sports Stadium. A quarter of a million people now visit the stadium every year. I congratulate the "magnificent seven" inaugural board members, led by the king of all rebels, risk-taker Bob Liubinskas, who said from the outset, "We build it and the rebels will follow." I also congratulate the passionate and committed basketball friends and family who keep the sport alive and well on the coast and the current board led by community advocate Kieran Moore who are continuing the strong foundation set in 1992.

CURE BLINDNESS AUSTRALIA

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Disability Services) (13:29): Last Saturday I attended the Dining in the Dark fundraiser for Cure Blindness Australia in Newcastle to help raise awareness and funds for those with low vision and blindness. The guests and I were blindfolded while eating to gain an insight into what it is like to live with blindness. Cure Blindness Australia does some amazing work, funding research that will hopefully one day cure retinitis pigmentosa and related eye conditions.

I was inspired by the story of special guest John Domandl, whom I met at the dinner. Legally blind, John is a world champion in triathlon and ironman challenges, and is receiving supports under the National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS]. I acknowledge Deb Hescott, Chair and Vice President of Cure Blindness in the Hunter and Tim Owen, OAM, committee member. As the Minister for Disability Services in New South Wales, I am heartened by the community spirit of those people who generously gave up their time to raise funds for important research into blindness, which is being undertaken at Westmead Children's Hospital.

EMERTON HOLY FAMILY PARISH FAIR

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (13:30): On Saturday 13 October it was a privilege to attend the annual Holy Family Parish Fair in Emerton. Holy Family Parish has existed since 1965 and is a thriving and proud culturally diverse Catholic community in the Mount Druitt region. Every year the parish pulls together a terrific day with stalls, entertainment and rides to raise funds for improvements to the school and the church. Thank you to the parish leadership for inviting me once again. In particular I acknowledge the leadership of my good friend parish priest Father Greg Jacobs, who is a stalwart leader in this community. I thank Father Greg for organising the fair every year and for his service to the community in Emerton.

NATIONAL HISTORY CHALLENGE WINNER KAYLA GRAY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:30): I congratulate Kayla Gray, a student from Queenwood junior school in Mosman, who has been judged a State winner in the National History Challenge Competition for 2018. Her entry on "Electricity Comes to Sydney" was deemed equal best in New South Wales in the Primary I: Year K-4 category. The National History Challenge is an exciting annual contest, which has been running for nearly two decades. It encourages students to use research and inquiry-based learning to discover more about the world, Australia and its past. Students are the historians; they can investigate their community, explore their own and their family's past, explore major events that have taught the world, explore Australia as

a nation, and explore new ideas or theories. Congratulations to Kayla. I know that she worked very hard on her contribution and presentation. Being a State winner shows how hard she worked and the hard work of her teachers at Queenwood in supporting her.

SHELLHARBOUR CITY COUNCIL DROUGHT RELIEF INITIATIVE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (13:31): Recently the Shellharbour City Council adopted an incredible drought-relief initiative. Following the realisation that our State is currently experiencing one of the worst droughts on record for our farmers, Shellharbour's Mayor, Marianne Saliba, lodged a mayoral minute to produce hay on council-owned land. Shellharbour City Council will temporarily suspend mowing on all large parcels of land, allowing the grass to grow and later be cut for hay production. Council staff estimated that approximately 160 bales could be produced from currently uncut grass in the area, which could provide immediate relief for local farmers. I congratulate Shellharbour City councillors and its mayor, Marianne Saliba, on this incredible and forward-thinking initiative. Our entire community is proud of the work they are doing—thank you.

MINGARA ATHLETICS TRACK

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:32): Last week I spoke about a petition for Mingara athletics track that I have launched with The Entrance councillor Jilly Pilon, and the Hon. Taylor Martin from the other place. I am delighted to inform the House that within the first few days, our petition attracted more than 250 online signatures from local residents who are supportive of this community campaign. I also congratulate Jilly Pilon, who is a great representative of The Entrance ward, on her support of this petition. Mingara athletics track is a regional sports facility used by people and organisations from across the entire Central Coast, including schools, and for community events. The track's surface is now 18 years old, which is why we are fighting for our fair share of government funding to fix it. A new track would ensure our community continues to have access to this world-class facility. I urge everyone across the Central Coast to support our community campaign and sign the petition to secure funds to upgrade the track at Mingara.

NEWCASTLE GRANDPARENT OF THE YEAR JILLIAN GREEN

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (13:33): I congratulate Jillian Green on being awarded the Newcastle Grandparent of the Year. On Monday I was privileged enough to meet Jillian and present her with the award. Jillian is a single grandparent who is raising six of her 14 grandchildren, works full time with the Aboriginal Legal Service and is active in the community as an advocate for Aboriginal rights. Despite all this, Jill does not consider herself exceptional. The children are active with school and sports commitments, with three children representing the State in touch football and the others being active in regional athletics and netball. Jillian is involved with each child's training schedules and school commitments. Jill intends to use her platform as Newcastle Grandparent of the Year to advocate on behalf of other grandparent carers and highlight the need for greater support. I am so proud to have Jillian as our 2018 Newcastle Local Grandparent of the Year. I wish her and her family all the best.

COOGEE LIONS CLUB

Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (13:34): On behalf of the Coogee community I thank the Coogee Lions Club, which, this month, raised more than \$30,000 for charities in the local area. On Wednesday 3 October I was proud to support its fundraiser, which collected money for numerous organisations supporting the protection of women, youth outreach and local health facilities. Special thanks to David Morgan, President of the Coogee Lions Club, for hosting the event and Ms Bernadette Summers of the Coogee Chamber of Commerce, which donated \$10,000 to the event that night. Over the years both those organisations have raised tens of thousands of dollars for charitable causes in the Coogee electorate and beyond.

KARUAH OYSTER AND TIMBER FESTIVAL

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (13:35): Last weekend, the Karuah Oyster and Timber Festival was buzzing—literally! There were chainsaw racing and world-class wood chopping events, and fresh oysters being shucked and sucked, all on the banks of the beautiful Karuah River. Thousands of people descended on the festival to eat the best oysters in New South Wales, stroll the stalls, watch the woodchop, join in the oyster-eating competition or the kids fishing competition, or take a punt on a duck in the great Karuah River duck race.

Congratulations to Stacey Ebben and her team of volunteers on pulling together such a terrific day and to MC Gary Edmonds for always looking calm. I thank major sponsor the Karuah RSL Club, together with the other 30 local businesses that supported the event and are too numerous to name, but include Cole Brothers Oysters, Weathertex, Karuah Motor Inn, Riverside Motel, Big 4 Holiday Parks, Karuah Quality Meats, Webster's newsagency, Karuah pharmacy, Karuah IGA, and many others. I am pleased to report that after five years with

a stall at the festival, I finally achieved my goal of eating oysters, with a beer and watching the woodchop. I am already looking forward to next year.

NUWARRA PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (13:36): I acknowledge Nuwarra Public School's NAIDOC Day. The school prolonged its NAIDOC Day to wait for its new yarning circle for outdoor learning and storytelling time. Nuwarra Public School has a large portion of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island backgrounds, which made the event even more special and meaningful for all involved. On the day the school was visited by Koomurri Aboriginal Incursions, which introduced the students to a smoking ceremony, traditional dance, storytelling and didgeridoo. One of the teachers from the school and the Aboriginal Education Committee worked together to design the yarning circle for the Nuwarra Public School community. This circle gave the school another place for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander students to meet. I am extremely proud to celebrate our Aboriginal community. I thank Nuwarra Public School for its constant celebrations and teaching of the Aboriginal culture.

VALLEY HEIGHTS RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (13:37): On Saturday 20 October the Valley Heights Rural Fire Brigade celebrated its sixtieth anniversary and many of its firefighters received medals. National medals were presented to members in recognition of their years of diligent service—people who go above and beyond what is expected of active members of brigades. Peter Linnegar, David Kelly, Hugh Paterson and Stephen Price were acknowledged for 18 years, 22 years, 24 years and 27 years of service respectively. Long Service Medal recipients included Geoff Bailey, Marie Butler, Heidi-Anne Colquhoun, Peter McDonald, Robert Schnebli and Stephen Skinner. Badges were presented to new members of the brigade who have achieved one year's consistent and committed dedication to the brigade: Gene Brennan, Sue Hayes, Mark Murray, Skye McGuinness, Jesse Nicholls, Hayley Stone and Tina Thomson. As we in the Blue Mountains reflect upon the fifth anniversary of the 2013 fires and their aftermath, I thank and honour the fabulous Valley Heights Rural Fire Brigade.

AUSTRALIAN AUCTIONEER OF THE YEAR STU BENSON

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (13:38): I commend Mr Stu Benson for his remarkable contributions to the Baulkham Hills community, which has seen him decorated recently as Australian Auctioneer of the Year. Since switching careers from agent to auctioneer eight years ago, Stu has participated in several dramatic sales, assisting in the transaction of \$500 million of property sales. The 37-year-old father of four from the beautiful suburb of Kellyville began his own business, Benson Auctions, when auctions were not so prevalent throughout The Hills.

Stu subsequently encouraged agencies to employ different strategies of selling—namely, with gavel in hand negotiating nail-biting million-dollar-plus property sales, and now conducts approximately 500 sales a year. According to Mr Benson, a good auctioneer needs to be clearly spoken, able to read a crowd, and empathetic. While there are only a few streets remaining across The Hills where Mr Benson has not stood with gavel in hand, his advice has certainly stood the test of time as he continues to entice buyers as Australia's best auctioneer. His work for charity is unmatched.

DEATH OF STAN MORRIS

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (13:39): I bring to the attention of the House the sad passing of Mr Stan Morris, at the age of 87. Stan dedicated 30 years of his life in various roles volunteering for Fairfield City. In 1985 he was deputised as a volunteer park ranger for Fairfield City and there was literally no limit to the number of activities that he would voluntarily give up his time for. Just name it, Stan had helped out there before. During the bushfire crisis a few years ago, Stan drove firefighters up to the Blue Mountains and then brought them home. His late wife, Elaine, would also be there making sandwiches. As a park ranger he once discovered the body of a person who had committed suicide and stood guard so that no-one would get a nasty shock before the authorities arrived. He was always a presence patrolling Fairfield Park, Endeavour Sports Reserve and St Johns Park. Fairfield City has lost one of its favourite sons and a true servant of the community. I offer my condolences to his loving family.

FERNBANK RETIREMENT VILLAGE

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (13:40): In 1986 Fernbank Retirement Village was established at St Ives. It is home to approximately 160 residents who form a wonderful local community, which I have visited numerous times. I look forward to joining with residents again at Fernbank on Wednesday 31 October for a delicious morning tea, including some cannoli. It should be a great chance to gather in support of a good cause,

with donations going to Project Pink—the PA Research Foundation's breast cancer awareness campaign. Thanks to Fernbank Retirement Village Community Manager Robyn Parry-Lyons, staff and volunteers at Fernbank Retirement Village for their ongoing dedication to Fernbank residents and the broader community.

LAKE MACQUARIE CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (13:41): On 10 October 2018 I had the pleasure of attending the Lake Macquarie citizenship ceremony and welcomed the following new citizens to the electorate of Charlestown: from the Philippines, the Cruz family and Mr Alfred Bacallan; from China, Ms Hiu Mei Lee; from Hong Kong, Mr Freddie Ye Sheng; from Vietnam, Mr Tuan Loi Luu; from Iraq, the Al-Omary family; from India, Mrs Kavya Mayanamada and Mr Anand Dube; from South Africa, the Duvenage family, the Van Rooyen family, Mrs Liezel Esterhuysen and Mr Rory Stone; from the United Kingdom, Ms Alyssa and Miss Leah Esterhuysen and Ms Rachel Thomas; from Canada, Mr Kyle Davies and Ms Courtney Lemon; and from neighbouring New Zealand, Ms Christina Nelson and Mr James Gordon. I wish our new citizens all the best, and welcome other future citizens who choose to settle in Charlestown.

THE BATHURST BULLET

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Lands and Forestry, and Minister for Racing) (13:42): I inform the House about the special anniversary of rail transportation in the Central West and the travelling communities in the Bathurst electorate and beyond who have used the Bathurst Bullet. In October 2012 the Bathurst Bullet was introduced to enable commuters to avail themselves of a daily train service to Sydney. More than 1,500 passengers use this service every month. Most of those commuters are now able to undertake medical appointments, go to cultural events or visit family and friends in the city for the day. This rail service has impacted the lives of many country people and created greater access to the city, which was critically needed. For many years this essential link was denied. I celebrate the anniversary of the Bathurst Bullet. I also acknowledge those who worked tirelessly for this service and look forward to many more years of operation of this invaluable connection from the bush to the city.

SPORTS CHAMPION JESSICA PICKERING

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (13:42): Jessica Pickering is a remarkable young woman who has had an exceptional year. I share her achievements with the House. Jessica has just returned home from Buenos Aires with Australia's first medal in the Youth Olympic Games, being awarded silver in trampoline gymnastics. She earned her place on that team after being crowned Continental Champion and Synchronized Champion earlier this year at the Australian Trampoline Championships. Earlier in 2018 she took out the Hunter Region CHS Trampoline Championships in all disciplines, won four gold medals at State Combined High Schools and was named Champion of Champions.

Jessica has also made quite the splash in the sport of diving this year. Her achievements include the Hunter Region 17-years championship gold medal, 17-years Combined High Schools State Springboard championship and a bronze medal in the New South Wales All School Diving Championship. In addition to her sporting prowess, Jessica is a student and a leader. She is in year 11 at Belmont High School and in 2019 will serve as the school's vice-captain. What an all-rounder! Jessica is an inspiration.

TENNIS TERRANORA

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (13:44): I congratulate Brendan Moore and Louis Clark from Tennis Terranora on their recent win during the Australian Money Tournament [AMT], held recently at Arkinstall Park. Brendon and Louis took out the AMT men's doubles. Backing up his amazing singles effort, Brendon paired with fellow Louis to defeat Patrick Coates-Beadman and Adam Gardecki 6-2 6-1 in a superb display of doubles tennis. With roughly 280 competitors, a great day was had by all. My congratulations to Brendan and Louis.

KING PARK PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (13:44): I commend and congratulate King Park Public School. On Monday 22 October 2018 the school's football team was named champions of the New South Wales Primary Schools Sports Association [NSWPSSA] State Boys Football Knockout Finals for 2018. Almost 500 teams entered the competition, which is a true testament to the dedication of the students at King Park Public School and teamwork throughout the competition. Their hard work was rewarded and the team played in both the semifinals and finals at the headquarters of Football NSW at Valentine Park, Glenwood.

King Park Public School won its semifinal 4-1 against Lindsay Park Public School, before going head-to-head with Floraville Public School in the finals. It was a long tough road to the finals, but the boys played hard and secured the championship 2-1, crowning King Park Public School as the NSWPSSA State champions for the second year in a row. Their victory was achieved through a lot of hard work, perseverance and dedication from

all the players, coaching staff, teachers and their parents. Congratulations to the team at King Park Public School on an outstanding effort and commitment throughout the competition. The team has made us all very proud.

HOCKEY OFFICIAL KIMBERLEY MONAGHAN

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (13:45): I offer my congratulations to former Graftonian Kimberley Monaghan, who recently realised one of her life goals when she was invited by Hockey Australia to officiate at the recent Darwin International Hockey Open (Men's Four Nations) event. During the week-long tournament she officiated on matches involving the Australian Kookaburras, Japan, Argentina and Malaysia. Kimberley was mentored by one of Hockey New South Wales' foremost officials, the late Eric Ralphs. For the past eight years she has sat on the national officiating panel of Hockey Australia. She has also been part of the selection panel that appoints umpires for national titles and Australian Hockey League matches. It is always fantastic to see locals excel on both the national and international stages. I wish Kimberley continued success.

SOUTHERN SPORTS ACADEMY SCHOLARSHIPS

Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (13:46): I congratulate all the athletes at the Southern Sports Academy. In particular, I congratulate the two young athletes who were recipients of individual athlete program scholarships sponsored by Flynn Sprake Financial Planning, and Sureway Employment and Training. Joel Buck, age 13, was Australian Sub Junior Trick, Slalom and Overall Barefoot Water Skiing Champion in 2017 and 2018, and part of the Junior Australian Team at the World Championships in Ontario, Canada in September this year where he came seventh overall.

Kai Watts, age 15, has excelled in soccer and Australian Football League [AFL] at the State and national level, and has won a position at the School of Indigenous Excellence in Redfern for year 11 and year 12 for his AFL. Kai has volunteered with local Yazidi children in Wagga Wagga. He is in the process of making a short advertisement with Sport and Recreation NSW on the benefits of volunteering. He won the Gwen Gardiner Award this year for a young person who not only represents himself at his club but goes above and beyond for others and his community.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOLF INDUSTRY AWARDS

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (13:47): Golf is a wonderful sport, which is enjoyed by many thousands of people in New South Wales. On Monday 22 October the New South Wales Golf Industry Awards Night was held. I note that the Assistant Speaker represented the Government at that fine event. I acknowledge all the winners of the various categories on the night. In particular I acknowledge two golf clubs located on the border of my electorate that won awards. The Roseville Golf Club was honoured with the Club Junior Program of the Year award. That is a fantastic program and it is well acknowledged. The Killara Golf Club was honoured with the NSW-ACT PGA Legends Tournament of the Year Award for the David Mercer Senior Classic. I congratulate those recipients and the industry generally.

VEOLIA SCHOOL SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (13:48): I applaud the 200 Newcastle school students from St James Primary School, Bishop Tyrell Anglican School, Plattsburg Public School, Edgeworth Public School, Waratah Public School and New Lambton South Public School who participated in the month-long Veolia School Sustainability Challenge. This pilot program allowed the students to demonstrate their commitment to producing less waste, recycling products effectively, conserving water and electricity, and being more resourceful. Mulch Madness, the cleverly named submission by Waratah Public School, was awarded a \$5,000 grant from Veolia and an exclusive Jets experience for being named most innovative. I congratulate all the schools and thank Veolia for its idea.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: Welcome to all our guests in the gallery this afternoon. We hope you enjoy question time. Specifically, first and foremost, I extend a very warm welcome personally to former school friends of mine from North Sydney Girls High School, Heather Barber, Judy Doherty and Sue Simmons, who of course are my guests. Judy was the Principal of Lane Cove West Public School, and the Minister for Planning always speaks highly of her. Judy would have some stories about my behaviour at North Sydney Girls High School, but we will not repeat them. I also welcome the Hon. Louise Asher, member of Parliament, member for Brighton in Victoria, who is my guest. I welcome back to the gallery Robyn Young, a guest of the Minister for Health, and Minister for

Medical Research, and member for Wakehurst. I welcome Dugald Saunders, a guest of the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services, and member for Dubbo.

I also welcome members of the Philips Retired Person's Association, guests of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, Western Sydney and Multiculturalism and the member for Parramatta, and the member for Epping. I welcome students and their teachers from Coolamon Central School, guests of the member for Cootamundra. I welcome a group I met earlier this morning, participants from the Legislative Assembly's Public Sector Seminar. For the benefit of members, we have now been conducting these public sector seminars for six years. We have had 18 seminars and almost 1,000 participants. It has been a very popular program. Let us see if the member for Rockdale behaves this afternoon the way I described he might. He has a new suit, so he might be worse.

Although they are not in the Chamber because there was not quite enough room, I welcome year 5 and 6 students and their teachers from the Nowra Anglican College, who are viewing question time in room 814-815, guests of the Speaker, and the member for Kiama. We also have some very special guests today, because, as members would know, tonight is the Deputy Speaker's valedictory speech. I do not think we should be cheering that, member for Rockdale.

Mr Stephen Kamper: That is why I wore the suit.

The SPEAKER: Today in the gallery we have Thomas's wife, Deborah, his son, Stuart, his grandson, Charlie, and Bronwyn, Chris and Dillon from his office. I welcome them all and look forward to Thomas's valedictory speech later in the day. Welcome to question time everybody. We hope you enjoy the afternoon.

Question Time

JOBS FOR NSW

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:25): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Why was a \$300,000 unsecured loan given to a company called Kontented Pty Ltd that went broke within months, with reports of staff taking legal action for unpaid commissions and payouts? Will taxpayers ever see this \$300,000 again?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:26): The theme continues. Jobs for NSW is a body, a vehicle, a professional outfit that works with businesses in this State. The member has touched on a loan product. I have explained in this House that through Jobs for NSW there are a number of products such as grants predominantly for start-ups, especially seed funding, and interest-free loan products up to \$500,000 especially for regional businesses. Why? The Government wants to support regional businesses to grow and invest in their businesses to create jobs. We have gone all over the place here. Last week there were questions about an equity product, where the Government gets a return on investment and the money comes back to the taxpayer.

A loan product is one where the investment can come back to the taxpayer, and there are also grants. The board of Jobs for NSW is headed up by David Thodey. Someone may be questioning the professionalism and independence of David Thodey, who is being called upon by the Federal Government in a number of areas of reform in relation to the economy and issues that are important to our nation. I do not question the professionalism and the reputation of David Thodey. I do not question the independence of the Jobs for NSW board. I do not question the professionalism of the public servants who do the work of identifying these opportunities for grants, loans or equity. These are the products that the Government has and it will take a risk. There is no question when you give a grant or a loan product or take an equity stakeholder in a business—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. This question relates specifically to a \$300,000 bad loan and whether it will be repaid given it is taxpayers' money.

The SPEAKER: I heard the specific question. I will listen to the Deputy Premier further but I caution the Deputy Premier to try to answer the question.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The reason the Government is in the space of either grants, loans or equity is that there is a failure in the market. The greatest issue small and medium enterprises face is access to finance and access to capital. This is not just a New South Wales or an Australian issue, but a global issue. It is very difficult unless you have bricks and mortar. I speak from experience as I have spent 20 years running my own business. I have mortgaged my home. People used to ask me, "What do you do for a living, John?" I used to say, "I am a gambler. I am gambling my kids' future against the mortgage on the home." That is exactly how I felt. When you do not have access to finance but you have a good idea, there is an opportunity for the Government to play a role. Already we are entering into a space where there is a level of risk. When there is a loan product there is a level of

risk that a business may fall over. But that is the risk the Government is prepared to take to create jobs in this State. The investment the Government is putting into this State is investing in businesses—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. The Deputy Premier talks about risk. The question was about a bad loan. The Opposition wants to know whether the \$300,000 will be repaid.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier is being relevant to the question he was asked. He might not be answering specifically, but he is being relevant.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The Opposition wants to single out one investment. In real terms it is possible the Government will not get this investment back. That is the risk we have taken as a Government. The Opposition does not want to talk about the many other investments that have been made where prosperous businesses have grown and created jobs, especially in regional New South Wales. The Opposition does not want to talk about the success stories. I can go back in history and look at the grants the Labor Government dished out across the State. In the skills space, the Electrical Trades Union was paid under those grants, got contracts for training and fell over and left those poor students without training and qualifications. The Government has taken a risk. In this case it is a loan product and the Government will line up like every other creditor.

But I would rather take the risk of backing the mums and dads and small businesses of this State and support them to grow the jobs for our kids in regional New South Wales. They are part of the success story. When we talk about the 511,000 jobs created since 2011, it is not because of government. The truth be told, government does not create jobs. It creates an environment for investment with programs to support. It is the mums, dads and individuals who take risks, show courage and make sacrifices to be part of the small and medium enterprise sector to create the jobs. The 511,000 jobs that we have created in this State are in partnership with businesses. The Government should never hide that it is in partnership in creating jobs for the kids up in the gallery for the future.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (14:21): My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the Government delivering a stronger, better future for our frontline emergency services?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:31): I thank the member for Oatley for this important question. All members know how hardworking the member for Oatley is. Not only is he delivering—

Mr Ryan Park: Just ask him.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: He can at least add up, which is more than you can do. In any event, not only is the member for Oatley delivering for his community day in and day out, but he also is passionate about supporting our frontline workers, as we all are, especially our emergency services personnel who put their lives on the line day in and day out to keep us safe. Whether it is our firefighters, our police, our paramedics, our State Emergency Service [SES] or our emergency service workers across the board, we know the vital role they play in the community. Unfortunately, it is through difficult circumstances we often see them in action.

We see them on the frontline going into danger rather than retreating from it, because that is what they are trained to do. They are ready to put themselves in harm's way to protect all of us. We recognise this. That is why my Government is absolutely committed to supporting our emergency services with record investments and record numbers. This year the Government delivered a record \$1.6 billion for the firefighters and the SES, including \$134 million for new equipment and infrastructure and \$74 million for capital works for Fire and Rescue NSW. We have also delivered a record \$3.9 billion for our police, giving our officers the best tools they need to continue to fight crime.

I am pleased to say that the Government has already delivered 1,000 extra police officers since being in government. An extra 100 are being deployed this financial year, with many more to come. The Government is also delivering an extra 750 paramedics and ambulance call centre staff over the next four years. I thank the Health Services Union for its support of the Government. It appreciates a good policy when it sees it and was deeply grateful. I have just outlined all the funding the Government has allocated to emergency services. The Government would not be able to do this if it did not have a strong budget and a strong economy. It is not just the dollars; emergency services also need our support in many other areas.

That is why I am incredibly proud of the hard work that both the Minister for Police, and the Minister for Emergency Services, and the Minister for Finance, Services and Property have done in ensuring that the Government is protecting its firefighters. This morning my colleagues made it clear that the Government's bill will make it easier for firefighters diagnosed with certain cancers to claim their workers compensation entitlements. I thank those people who have advocated for this change in the community. I particularly thank the

deputy commissioners of the Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW, and the president of the Rural Fire Service Association, who stood alongside the Ministers this morning.

As we know, unfortunately there is strong evidence in Australia and around the world linking firefighting work with higher rates of some cancers. That is a fact. However, the nature of firefighting means that in many cases it can be difficult for an individual firefighter to pinpoint their work as a cause of their cancer. Historically, that has meant some firefighters have experienced difficulty in claiming workers compensation entitlements. The Government's bill amending the workers compensation legislation will create a presumption that certain cancers developed by eligible firefighters are work related. The onus will no longer be on them to prove that point. That will make it easier for unwell firefighters to claim compensation. It will give comfort to serving firefighters that, should they fall ill, they will be able to access their entitlements. When a firefighter falls ill, they should know that they will receive the support they need and that they are entitled to, and that they do not have to fight to claim what is rightly theirs.

Importantly, this new presumptive legislation will also cover our hardworking Rural Fire Service volunteers. Thankfully, again due to its strong financial management, the Government is in a position to make and to fund this necessary change. We have been working hard on this legislation for more than a year and we have consulted the Rural Fire Service Association, the Fire Brigade Employees Union and all of our firefighting agencies. I thank everyone who has provided input because it is important to hear all the feedback. Members opposite also have a proposal, but it differs from the Government's proposal on one substantial point. [*Extension of time.*]

That is, unlike the Opposition, the Government will not be imposing a 10-year limit on firefighters accessing the presumptive provision after retiring from employment or volunteer firefighting services. The Government believes that is better protection than will be provided by members opposite. This is an important point. I repeat, the Government's bill imposes no time limit on accessing the presumptive provisions after a firefighting career ends.

The SPEAKER: If the member for Kogarah is not interested in the subject he can leave early, as he usually does.

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: The Government's bill will ensure that firefighters, who risk their lives and health to protect the people of New South Wales, promptly receive their entitlements. Once introduced, the changes will apply immediately to eligible firefighters diagnosed from today with one of the prescribed cancers. The scheme will apply specifically to 12 cancers that unfortunately are experienced by firefighters. The provisions will be available to paid and volunteer firefighters and current and former firefighters, including those engaged by Fire and Rescue NSW, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Forestry Corporation of NSW and Sydney Trains. I pay tribute again to our emergency service workers and acknowledge their work for our community. I say unequivocally that this Government stands by them and will provide them with the resources they need to do their job. It will also protect them, their health and their rights. This is the party for frontline workers, this is the party for workers, and this is the party for the people of New South Wales.

JOBS FOR NSW

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:40): I direct my question to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business. What steps has the Deputy Premier taken to recover the \$300,000 unsecured loan that his department made last year to a company called Bedrock Offsite Pty Limited that has now gone broke? Will taxpayers ever see their cash again?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:40): We can keep lining up all afternoon. I have already said clearly that we take a risk when we invest in these businesses. But we would rather take that informed risk than not, and we are doing it through a Jobs for NSW process. Jobs for NSW has a framework to identify any investment, be it a grant, a loan or an equity stakeholding. We must allow that process to set the standard. As I said earlier, we have public servants with expertise in this area who make a judgement, and the board of Jobs for NSW makes the final decision.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have already warned the member for Wyong. I call the member for Wyong to order for the first time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I will put this into context. Over the years, Jobs for NSW has supported more than 500 businesses.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question to the Deputy Premier asked what steps he has taken to recover the loss of taxpayers' cash.

The SPEAKER: I am listening and at the moment the Deputy Premier is being relevant to the question he was asked.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It is clear that because it is responsible for the loan product, Jobs for NSW will be lining up as a creditor and following the process involved in securing the return of that investment. To answer the question quickly, Jobs for NSW will do what it needs to do to get back that investment. However, that must be put into context.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I have ruled that the Deputy Premier is being relevant. Would the member for Campbelltown like to raise another point of order?

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order does relate to Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: I have just ruled that the Deputy Premier is being relevant.

Mr Greg Warren: We did not ask what Jobs for NSW is doing; we asked what he is doing.

The SPEAKER: Very clever! There is no point of order. I ruled that the Deputy Premier was being relevant, but the member pursued the point of order. I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the first time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I will not be lectured by people who have never run a business, who have never mortgaged their home, and who have never taken a risk. I will not be lectured by members of a party who come into this House every sitting day to attack small businesses. When they do that they are attacking individuals, families—

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. The Deputy Premier said that no-one on this side of the House has ever run a business. I have run a business, but I have not asked the taxpayers to fund it.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maitland is being argumentative.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I congratulate the member for Maitland on running a small business. However, she is not championing small businesses; she is lining up with her colleagues to attack small businesses. Their rhetoric does not match what they do.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: They are using question time to take joy at someone having their company put into administration.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! I have ruled on relevance. The member for Campbelltown's point of order should be about something else. The noise is increasing. There was so much shouting that members did not hear me when I called them to order. If members want to stay in the Chamber and to participate in debates—

Mr Greg Warren: How many calls am I on?

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown is on one call to order. However, if the member continues with the point of order after I tell him to resume his seat he will be on two calls to order. If he continues to interject he will be on three calls to order.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. The Deputy Premier's imputations against the Opposition are irrelevant and inconsistent with the facts. Madam Speaker, I ask that—

The SPEAKER: Is there a standing order regarding imputations against the Opposition? I do not think so.

Mr Greg Warren: There probably should be.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I want to put this in context. There is a \$190 million fund and more than 500 businesses that have been supported.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the third time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The Government has taken the risk. I have been lucky enough to spend 20 years in business, and never needed a grant.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members appear to be asking to be removed from the Chamber.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: But there are businesses that need support and ours is the party that will support business.

REGIONAL YOUTH SERVICES

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES (Barwon) (14:44): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business. What steps is the New South Wales Government taking to provide stronger, better lives for young people in regional New South Wales?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:44): I thank the member for Barwon for his question, and for the opportunity to travel to the electorate of Barwon—a large electorate spanning over 330,000 square kilometres; an electorate the size of Germany.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time. I have given enough warnings.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I had the opportunity while in that electorate to visit many of the communities that are so important for Barwon. Members will have heard me talk about the passion of The Nationals in regional New South Wales and the passion of the Liberal-Nationals Government for the future health and welfare of the kids in regional New South Wales. I have spoken at length in this House about the threat that we believe kids in our regions face—a greater threat, sometimes, than kids in the city face because of the lack of services. Members will have heard me talk about youth unemployment, depression and anxiety, and mental health, which are real issues for young people in New South Wales. Members will have heard me quote some alarming statistics about suicide in regional New South Wales. That is why on my trip to Barwon it was fantastic to pop into Narrabri with the member and Andrew Shier, the new candidate who will be replacing the retiring current member. We had the opportunity to visit the Narrabri Youth Shack. The Narrabri Youth Shack is a fantastic resource for the people of Narrabri and, more importantly, for the young people of Narrabri. People in regional New South Wales often do not have the delivery of services. Sometimes Government is missing on those issues that are so important.

Often in regional areas the local community finds a solution. In Narrabri, the council was able to use its old tourist information centre and, in partnership with the Youth Shack, deliver local solutions for young people aged 12 to 18. They can hang out with friends, play video games, play pool, listen to music, watch movies or television and have something to eat together as a community. It allows young people to come together. I know how important youth clubs are because wherever I travel in regional New South Wales—places like Bellingen and Kempsey—I see examples of communities coming together to find local solutions to deliver for their local communities.

In regional New South Wales the greatest fear for parents and grandparents is, right now, the abuse of the drug ice and its attack on our kids and our future. There will be no regional New South Wales if our kids do not play a part in the story of its future. That is why it is important to put resources in place. My journey is about what is happening in the spaces of mental health, youth unemployment and suicide. It was great to hear the announcement by the New South Wales Premier the other day that there would be \$90 million additional funding to deal with suicide. One suicide is too many. Remarkable stories have been coming out of these communities because of the investments made by them—not necessarily by governments.

I have a case study that I would like to talk about today. It is a heartbreaking story but, thankfully—because of the Youth Shack in Narrabri—it is about hope and the future. Members of the Youth Shack came into contact with a 14-year-old Aboriginal girl, who was continually being suspended from school because of extremely disruptive behaviour. Her mother was addicted to ice and had abandoned her at birth. When her father found her at two years of age she had never slept in a bed and would only sleep on the floor. Her father unfortunately has his own demons and is involved with illegal drugs. At the age of 10, she was sexually assaulted by her ice-addict brother. She smokes cigarettes and marijuana. This 14-year-old girl started going along to the Youth Shack 12 months ago. The team there discovered it was her birthday and asked how she was celebrating. She told them she had never celebrated a birthday. That day the Youth Shack held her first ever birthday party to make her feel special.

The team also managed to refer her to the Youth Insearch program. Since attending the program, she has not been suspended, she has reduced her drug use, her communication and personal presentation has improved,

and she continues to come to the Youth Shack every afternoon. This girl wrote a card to the Youth Shack manager, Anna Dugdale, who I had the opportunity to meet. The card said, "Thank you for being the person you are. Every time I see you, you brighten my day. I don't know where I would be without you." This example is one of many that the Youth Shack could provide about its support of the young people we take for granted in regional New South Wales. The Youth Shack is a proven community resource—an asset for the people of Narrabri, but unfortunately, there are gaps. [*Extension of time*]

There are gaps in youth services across regional New South Wales. In Sydney it may be easier—I am not saying it is easy—to access services because the services are often found in major cities such as Sydney or major centres in the regions. Some of our smaller towns and cities do not have those services. There need to be local solutions. In places like the Narrabri Youth Shack people like Anna have put their hands up to find a way forward to support the kids and to give them hope for the future. The future is not just for the young people; it is for regional New South Wales. In regional New South Wales the tyranny of distance makes it difficult. It is difficult in times of drought.

Drought has an impact on the wellbeing and health of farmers and their families and the broader community. Farmers and landholders are doing it tough on the land. They are pulling their kids out of preschool. Their children are not participating in after-school activities. They are having to make those kinds of decisions. Watching mum and dad go through the difficulties of drought—often too proud to reach out for support—has an impact on the kids, but places like Narrabri Youth Shack, the Youth Hub in Bellingen or the services in Kempsey often provide places for young people where they feel safe if they do not feel safe at home, where they do not have comfort and the wraparound services.

Today I want to speak to this House again about an issue that is important to the people of regional New South Wales. When the Government runs its balance sheets in the black, when it makes tough decisions so that it has the resources to invest in infrastructure—to build roads, hospitals and schools—it is about creating an environment for regional New South Wales. This Government wants a strong and healthy regional New South Wales. To have a strong and healthy regional New South Wales we need healthy children, strong children, resilient children. And they need access to services that will help them grow in their journey. That is what the Youth Shack has done without the help of the Government, but watch this space—this Government wants to respond to the greater need right across regional New South Wales to give our kids the best chance in life.

GO NSW EQUITY FUND

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:52): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. How much did the Government pay Roc Partners, a company that is registered in the Cayman Islands tax haven, to tell the Government to invest \$3.3 million of taxpayers' money in a beef company Roc Partners own?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (14:52): Once again these guys think they have some silver bullet—that somehow they can attack professionals.

The SPEAKER: I ask the member for Londonderry and the member for Port Stephens to cease interjecting. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: We have spoken about the Go NSW Equity Fund and the process of how an investment is made.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Prospect to order for the second time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: That investment was identified by Roc Partners. It was identified by the investment committee.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Prospect to order for the third time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: A decision is made by an investment committee. That investment committee has members of First State Super—

Ms Prue Car: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Londonderry is taking a point of order early in the answer.

Ms Prue Car: It is so early on because it is quite simple. It relates to Standing Order 129. How much did you pay? How much did the Government pay?

The SPEAKER: The member should be addressing the point of order to me. There is no point of order. I warned the member for Londonderry that it was very early on in the answer. I call the member for Londonderry to order for the second time. Resume your seat.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Members should understand that a party like First State Super is investing two-thirds to the Government's one-third. So if the Government puts in \$3.3 million First State Super is putting in \$6.7 million. That company would have to put that to their shareholders—to their board. It must have confidence in the investment and the partnership with the New South Wales Government or Roc Partners. Let us put that into context. This investment is done through a process that allows the investment committee, with representatives from First State Super—we all know that First State Super has members of the union and a union representative; people who represent the Labor Party. I trust the process and I trust the professionals. But like with a lot of these investments, a lot of the detail is commercial-in-confidence.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The question relates to the cost charged by Roc Partners and the advice it received to invest in them. How much?

The SPEAKER: Order! I heard the question. I can only rule on relevance. There is no point of order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: A lot of these investments are made with commercial confidentiality. Why? It is because when you are investing in a business, when you are investing in the financial component of a business, at times that investment needs to be protected. The answer is simple: It is commercial-in-confidence. But the question could be directed to Jobs for NSW or the GO NSW Equity Fund.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Prospect that he is on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The investment is in line with the framework designed and followed by the process for investment of equity. Jobs for NSW, headed by David Thodey, is independent. I leave the answer at that.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time. He will calm down.

Mr Andrew Fraser: It's the new suit.

The SPEAKER: I know it is the new suit. The member will be strutting out onto Macquarie Street and on his way home to Rockdale if he continues to interject. He will frighten people in the street.

NORTH COAST INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (14:56): My question is addressed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. How is the Liberal-Nationals Government delivering a stronger and better future for the North Coast of New South Wales. Is the Minister aware of any alternative approaches?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight) (14:56): I thank the member, who is 100 per cent for the Tweed. He is an absolute champion for his community and his electorate. There is no doubt about that. He knows what his community needs and he is delivering it with the support of this Government.

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

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: He knows that our focus is delivering the next generation of roads, hospitals and schools across New South Wales. Recently we opened the Tweed marine centre, an initiative of this Government and only the second of its kind in New South Wales, bringing together police, the Department of Primary Industries and maritime services. It is a very good initiative and a great facility, delivering safety, reassurance and research into fisheries within the Tweed, making life simpler, easier and more efficient. That is what a good Government does. What about the alternative? In the Tweed, it is a family affair. It is nepotism. The Federal member for Richmond and the Labor candidate for Tweed—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield has not heard where the line of argument is going, but she wants to stop it. The member does not want to hear the Minister. What is the member's point of order?

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. These attacks should be made by way of substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield has not yet heard what the attack is. The member will resume her seat.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. If I have to tell her more than once, she will be removed from the Chamber. I call the member for Strathfield to order for the first time. There is no point of order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: The Federal member for Richmond and the Labor candidate for Tweed share not only the same toothbrush but also the same strategy in derailing hospitals—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will come to order. I am waiting to hear the point of order of the member for Strathfield.

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. Attacks on other members should be made by way of substantive motion, not by professing to give an answer that has no relevance to the question asked.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will hear further from the Minister. At this stage, I am not convinced that personal attacks have been made on members.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I think the fact that the candidate and the member are married and might share a toothbrush occasionally is not offensive. But they also share the same strategy.

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order—

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

Mr Chris Minns: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. Dental hygiene is no laughing matter. At the end of the day, the Minister should take this seriously. Craig Elliot is a bona fide hero. He deserves the thanks of all of you. He catches his own crooks.

The SPEAKER: Order! I was so optimistic about the member for Kogarah's ability. There is no point of order. The Minister has the call.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I thank the member for Kogarah for undermining the points of order from the member for Strathfield.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will return to the leave of the question.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: A Labor government would deprive the people of the Tweed of a state-of-the-art hospital. It would prefer that the people of the Tweed have to drive around to multiple locations for their medical appointments. That is the position Labor has: lots of new little areas. But it is against the advice of the Medical Council. That is the shame—

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

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I thought the member for Cessnock was having a nap. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Clayton Barr: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. It is odd for the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight to be making commentary about a hospital.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is talking about a hospital in Tweed. She is being relevant to the question she was asked. There is no point of order. The member for Cessnock will resume his seat.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: It is about delivering infrastructure to regional New South Wales and to the North Coast. Whether it is the billions of dollars that we are—

Mr Ryan Park: You can't spell "infrastructure".

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira cannot spell anything. The member will not accuse others of not being able to spell.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: We are 81 per cent finished on the Pacific Highway motorway upgrade. Travel times have improved. A journey that used to take nine hours between Newcastle and the Queensland border will take less than seven hours once the upgrade is complete.

The SPEAKER: Order! All members who have been called to order are deemed to be on three calls to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: An estimated 10,000 direct and indirect jobs have been delivered. We are getting on with the job of the Coffs Harbour bypass. We are taking the trucks out of the main street of the Coffs central business district. The Federal Labor candidate is criticising us at every turn, but what does the Federal Leader of the Opposition say? He says, "It is good. Again, if we form a government, we just want to be a government that gets on and does things." That is very unlikely, because Labor has no form in delivering infrastructure across New South Wales. I acknowledge the work that the member for Coffs Harbour has achieved in advocating for his community to ensure that we have more consultation.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind members that a number of them are on three calls to order.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: After the visit to the Tweed, we joined the member for Clarence, opening two new facilities for the Richmond River at the magnificent community of Coraki, where Deb George, who is in the public gallery, teaches. I thank Deb for all her years of service and advocacy for the community. [*Extension of time*]

We are making our boating licence fees work for our boating community, delivering safer, more efficient boating facilities across New South Wales, the inland and the coast. We are making life simpler, easier and more efficient for the people of New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will come to order. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I look across the Chamber at the alternatives. You have no plan. You prefer commentary over construction. Luke, you do not know what you are doing.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. What is the member's point of order?

Ms Jodi McKay: I ask that you direct the Minister to address her comments through the Chair and not across the table.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will direct her comments through the Chair.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: The Leader of the Opposition should do what he did some months ago: He should stand aside while an investigation is going on into the behaviour. You asked the member for Prospect to stand aside; you should do the same during this investigation.

Mr Luke Foley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The Leader of the Opposition rises on a point of order.

Mr Luke Foley: The Minister knows full well that if she wants to make personal reflections she has to do it by substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: That is quite true.

Mr Luke Foley: We would welcome such a debate, but we will move to amend it to talk about you and you and you and you.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. The member for Bankstown will be removed from the Chamber if she continues her screeching. We will wait for Opposition members to come to order. They are tanked up this afternoon. The Minister has the call.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: It is clear we are a government with goals and plans, and we are delivering. The Opposition is full of hypocrites. The Leader of the Opposition asked the member for Prospect to stand down; why does the Leader of the Opposition not do the same?

REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms JODI MCKAY (Strathfield) (15:05): My question is directed to the Leader of The Nationals.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will come to order. I am waiting so that I can hear the member ask her question. Such behaviour is most disrespectful. The member for Strathfield has the call and will be heard in silence.

Ms JODI MCKAY: The Auditor-General reports that only 17.2 per cent of Restart NSW payments were spent on infrastructure projects in regional areas in 2017-18. Will the Minister confirm that he has failed to meet the 30 per cent target for regional areas for four years in a row?

The SPEAKER: Order! If members continue to interject they will miss the Deputy Speaker's valedictory speech and any other opportunity to speak today. They will be out of the House in half an hour if that is what they want. Numerous members are on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (15:06): On one hand, those opposite are saying we are dishing out the money too fast and now they are saying it is not going out fast enough. Let us go to the principles of the Restart fund. The Restart fund says that 30 per cent of those funds will go into regional New South Wales. Of the poles and wires—\$6 billion—and all the other asset sales, proceeds and windfalls that have gone into Restart, 30 per cent go to regional New South Wales. Off the top of my head—correct me if I am wrong—I think it is close to \$9 billion that is now allocated to regional New South Wales. We are investing in that infrastructure that is so important—be it hospitals, schools, road or rail. Those opposite know how it works. Let us take a timeline snapshot and look at what proceeds have left the fund. The question was about 2017-18. If we take a snapshot on a particular timeline, of course that 30 per cent can be skewed. But the allocation cannot be skewed.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: We have allocations made to projects that have not started; we have allocations to projects where we are waiting for Federal funding.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: In many cases, it is main roads in New South Wales. Then we are of course funding the projects that we have already earmarked. The truth of it is that most of the money in regional New South Wales—a vast majority; 30 per cent of it—has been earmarked for projects. So the greatest threat to the 30 per cent is what? It is Labor, because we know what those opposite will do: They will take that 30 per cent and spend it on winning seats in metropolitan Sydney against their major competition, The Greens.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Remember this: We have a fund that we fought for. We made the tough decisions in 2011 and 2015 in relation to poles and wires. We made the tough decisions to bring the budget debt and deficit inherited from those opposite back into the black.

Mr Clayton Barr: There was none.

The SPEAKER: Order! Just because the member for Cessnock is not on three calls to order it does not give him free rein to behave in the way he normally does. Does the member have a point of order?

Mr Clayton Barr: Yes. Standing Order 93 gives me the right to take a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member is so clever. He will take his point of order and stop showing off.

Mr Clayton Barr: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The Minister just said that we should not use snapshots to identify a financial outcome and then he used a snapshot to deliver some fictitious financial outcome in terms of the condition of the finances of the State as at 2011, when those opposite took over.

The SPEAKER: What is the member's point of order? What standing order has been breached?

Mr Clayton Barr: It is Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: Order! What the member for Cessnock said had nothing to do with relevance. There is no point of order. The member will resume his seat.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Members opposite do not have to believe me; it is on the record. What we inherited was deficit. We were elected in May 2011. We got to 30 June and the budget. All the numbers came out and we were in significant deficit to the tune of, I think, \$4 billion. We had a \$30 billion deficit in infrastructure. So debt and deficit are what we inherited.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Now what do we have? We have budget surplus as far as the eye can see, no government debt, cash in the bank, an \$87 billion infrastructure pipeline.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: To put that in context: The Federal Government is spending \$75 billion over the next 10 years. We are spending \$87 billion over four years.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Wyong that he is on three calls to order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: This Government is focused on building the infrastructure that grows jobs—that enabling infrastructure that underpins the economy that then gets matched by the private sector. That is why we can stand here today and say that we have the lowest unemployment rate in the nation, running at 4.4 per cent. The national average is 5.3 per cent. In regional New South Wales unemployment is running at 5.7 per cent—the lowest in the nation. The jobs growth that we have seen in the last 12 months shows significant numbers in regional New South Wales—full-time jobs, real jobs. I just spoke about the importance of jobs in regional New South Wales. A government can only do that when it has a strong economy; a government can only do that when it can control the levers.

The SPEAKER: Order! Labor members will cease their conversations.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: With our Restart fund, I assure members that every single cent that has been allocated under the 30 per cent rule will go to regional New South Wales. Do not forget that on top of that 100 per cent of the \$4.2 billion from the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund will go to regional New South Wales, not to squander but to build transformational and generational infrastructure for generations to come, to build infrastructure on the same principles that the Snowy scheme was built on 60-plus years ago, on the same principles of investing for the next generation. We are thinking about the next generation. We are not thinking about an election. We are not thinking about pork-barrelling out of that fund to win marginal seats.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maitland will cease screaming.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Our plan is a 20-year vision for regional New South Wales that sees hospitals being built, schools being built and, most importantly, the road infrastructure and rail infrastructure underpinning the economy—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Port Stephens is on her final warning.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: —that gives us growth and creates jobs in regional New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Kogarah to order for the first time. Some members are on their final warnings.

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (15:12): My question is addressed to the Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. How is the New South Wales Government improving the child protection system to ensure a stronger, better future for the State's most vulnerable children?

Ms PRU GOWARD (Goulburn—Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (15:12): I thank the member for Holsworthy for her question and note her strong and continued support for improving the lives of vulnerable children in her community. The New South Wales Government strongly believes all children need a permanent and loving home for life. For many years, the Government has been committed to delivering permanency for children at risk. There is no doubt that a child needs a safe and stable home for life. We know that a child achieves better results when they are in a stable and safe home environment. But where children cannot stay safely with their parents or extended family and where restoration is not possible, guardianship or open adoption are the permanent placement options that must be considered.

Children should only ever enter the child protection system when there are no other alternatives and only for a short time whilst permanency options are pursued. I announced today that the Government will reform the child protection system further so that vulnerable children have permanency and a loving home within two years. This could be through restoration, most importantly, guardianship or open adoption. The Government wants to ensure that families are offered alternatives to statutory intervention by the court, such as family group conferencing, before being taken to the Children's Court. This gives parents and extended family a better opportunity to solve the problems that are affecting their children and enable them to stay together.

We would require the court to issue short-term orders instead of the current practice of long-term orders, which have resulted in so many children languishing in foster care for too long. The days of children living in out-of-home care, moving between multiple homes, for more than two years need to be over—and are over. The Government also seeks to streamline the adoption process to make it easier for carers and guardians to navigate the adoption process. We are leading the nation in open adoption. Open adoption ensures that children know their identity and know their parents. It enables birth parents to participate in the adoption process and have access to ongoing information and contact with their children. Open adoption is not like the poor adoption practices of the

past, where children were forcibly and wrongly taken from their parents without knowing their families. We achieved another record number of 140 open adoptions from out-of-home care in 2017-18. In contrast, it was only 45 in 2010 under Labor. Given Labor's appalling record in government, one would think the Opposition would back the Government's approach.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Bankstown that she is on three calls to order. If she continues to interject she will be removed from the Chamber. Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Bankstown from the Chamber under Standing Order 249. The member may return to the Chamber tomorrow.

[The member for Bankstown left the Chamber at 15:16 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Ms PRU GOWARD: One would think the Opposition would back the Government's approach to increasing permanency for children. One would think the Opposition would support reform that sees vulnerable children no longer languishing in care for more than 12 months, with multiple homes to go to. One would think the Opposition would back short-term orders for children. But it does not. We heard the lazy shadow Minister, who has fortunately left the Chamber, on ABC Radio this morning attacking the Government's reforms without even reading the bill. She referred to a "stolen generation." There she was on 2GB saying, "Having an arbitrary figure of two years may not actually be realistic." What a disgrace. It is extraordinary that the Opposition pretends to support the Tune review, which showed that children spent 12.6 years on average in care, but opposes the very reforms designed to ensure permanency and better lives for children.

Labor members should be ashamed. They have never had a plan for permanency and open adoption, they never gave families the option of guardianship, and they have never had a plan for finding a permanent, loving home for children who cannot live safely with their parents. I remind the House that under the former Labor Government the number of children in care tripled between 1996 and 2010, and that included Aboriginal children. Under this Government, the number of children entering care has dropped by 44 per cent since 2015-16. We believe restoration is the best first option. Promisingly, we are starting to see a reduction in the number of children in care. *[Extension of time]*

I conclude by asking: Where does the Leader of the Opposition stand on this? He must now realise that the shadow Minister does not understand her portfolio and is more interested in doing the numbers against him than contributing to policy. At this stage, she really has to go. Meanwhile, the Government will continue its work to deliver a better child protection system for our most vulnerable children, because they deserve nothing less.

LAKE MACQUARIE POLICE NUMBERS

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (15:18): My question is directed to the Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services. Given the Police Association says that an additional 2,500 police officers are urgently required in New South Wales, will the Government deliver those extra police, allowing for increased attention for growth areas such as southern Lake Macquarie and the 24/7 operation of Morisset Police Station?

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services) (15:18): I thank the member for Lake Macquarie for his question. I acknowledge from the outset that he is a wonderful local member who is much respected and admired by his community. I thank him for hosting me recently when we handed over a number of fire trucks to Fire and Rescue NSW and the Rural Fire Service in his electorate. He should be very proud of the work he does there and I thank him for supporting the police and emergency services in his electorate. The member knows all too well—and Lake Macquarie is probably a classic example—that the level of diversity in communities across New South Wales the NSW Police Force has to respond to is probably the highest that any law enforcement agency has to combat across the world. We have the City of Sydney and the differing geographic and demographic make-up of our suburbs. There is diversity across our regional communities, be it the snowfields in one area and the outback in another. There are large regional cities.

That is why the Government supported the New South Wales police commissioner to undertake a re-engineering process for the command structure and governance of policing efforts and the resourcing and deployment of police resources in our communities, which was very successfully completed by Commissioner Michael Fuller, APM, and his executive. As a result, we now have police area commands and regional district commands that are more in line, in tune and in sync with the needs of each of our diverse communities. Lake Macquarie is a classic example—as I alluded to—in that it has a massive body of water, Lake Macquarie. It is a beautiful part of the world and a place that I very proudly called home in 1995 and 1996. It also has significant rugged, mountainous country around it and is geographically isolated in some parts. There are rural areas and metropolitan areas and the like. It needs to be resourced and the policing resources must reflect the needs of the community.

That is what the re-engineering process allows. The Police Association's claim and pursuit of additional resources goes to the other point raised by the member for Lake Macquarie—it is about growth. It is about not only population growth but also growth in the amount and types of challenges that police will face into the future—whether those challenges are technology-based or related to specific community demographics, such as crimes targeted at youth, the elderly or other vulnerable people. We need to get the resource mix right. The first thing I want to make sure everyone in this place understands is that those decisions are not made by me as the Minister or by the Government; they are made—as is right—by the Commissioner of Police. Our job is to ensure that he has the legislation and funding to allow him to employ the quantum of police required.

It was this Government that initiated the re-engineering process and it was this Premier who asked the Commissioner of Police to bring back to her and the Government the number of police that we will need for the future resourcing of the NSW Police Force for communities with varied needs. I can report to the House that in conjunction with the Police Association, which I met with as recently as this morning, work is very nearly completed. The Police Association is very happy with direction that it is going in. I add that since 2011 the Government has introduced—as it committed to—more than 1,000 extra police to the ranks of the NSW Police Force. Since 2011, Lake Macquarie has received 43 probationary constables to meet the area's changing needs. The area now has access to the Raptor North squad to deal with mid-level crime.

I have been very proud to stand next to the member at the opening of two new police stations in the Lake Macquarie electorate and three in the Lake Macquarie area: Toronto Police Station, Morisset Police Station and, in the Swansea electorate area, Belmont Police Station, which the member for Lake Macquarie was also involved with. It is not only about the investment in infrastructure or the equipment used; it is also about—and we recognise this—the human capital. When that work is completed appropriately by the commissioner it will not only talk about numbers and what the figure will be but also talk about where those police need to be and what they need to be doing to make sure that the NSW Police Force, with the support of the Government, can do everything possible to keep New South Wales safe and secure. We have made that commitment. Since 2011 we have kept every one of our commitments, and we will not break this one.

JOBS GROWTH

Mr GLENN BROOKES (East Hills) (15:23): My question is addressed to the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation. What reforms is the New South Wales Government undertaking to deliver a stronger, better future for tradies and to create jobs in New South Wales?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (15:23): What a great question from a great member—the best member ever to represent the community of East Hills. I congratulate him on his outstanding work. I know that people in the public gallery are thrilled to hear that great question from the member for East Hills. I remind the House that before the member for East Hills was elected to Parliament, he was a tradie. He was on the tools, running his own business and getting the job done. He knows how hard it is to be on the front line and running your own business. That is why this Government has introduced the Better Business Reforms.

The 23 reforms will slash red tape, create jobs and cut costs for small businesses and tradies across New South Wales. The reforms will put money back in the pockets of tradies in this State. One of the 23 reforms is our lifetime licensing scheme, which means that tradespeople of 13 different trades will pay approximately \$50 every five years to renew their licence instead of paying up to \$650 per annum. That is putting money back in the pockets of our tradies. Around 27,000 licence holders across New South Wales will save approximately \$52 million. I was surprised to be asked this question by the member for East Hills, but luckily I have the statistics here. He would be interested to know that 600 licence holders in his electorate will save approximately \$1.1 million.

The member for Holsworthy is excited that tradies in her electorate will save approximately \$700,000. Tradies in the member for Miranda's electorate will save approximately \$600,000. Not to be forgotten is the member for Oatley, the little Aussie digger sitting up the back. He is fighting for his tradies, who will save approximately \$610,000. He loves it as much as he loves the new lift at Oatley station, for which he fought hard. But it is not just tradies in the city who benefit—everyone is a winner. Tradies in the bush are also excited about these reforms. The member for Bega is a good country member. His tradies will save approximately \$680,000 as a result of these reforms. The member for Coffs Harbour might even crack a smile for once because his tradies will save approximately \$650,000. Everyone is a winner.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Is the member for Campbelltown feeling left out? Does the Minister have any figures for Campbelltown?

Mr Greg Warren: I appreciate your concern, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. The member for Coffs Harbour smiles a lot. He was smiling before. The Minister is misleading the House.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member for Campbelltown will resume his seat.

Mr MATT KEAN: I thought the member for Campbelltown was concerned that I was neglecting Opposition members and their tradies. The Leader of the Opposition will be excited to know that his tradies will save—

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: Personal reflections of any sort are not allowed under Standing Order 73.

The SPEAKER: That is true.

Mr Michael Daley: —but surely not from this Minister.

The SPEAKER: That was a nasty little barb.

Mr MATT KEAN: It is all good news. Tradies in Auburn will save \$1.6 million because of these reforms. I do not have statistics on the member for Maroubra's tradies.

Mr Ryan Park: Keira?

Mr MATT KEAN: Oh, the member for Keira. I acknowledge the interjection from the member for Keira, the future Leader of the Opposition. His tradies will save approximately \$400,000. That is not too bad. [*Extension of time*].

These reforms are about slashing red tape, slashing costs and creating jobs. On the topic of jobs, we know there is one person in this Chamber who will do anything to save their job, and that is the Leader of the Opposition. He will bully his colleagues. He will even try to sue those in the press gallery just to buy their silence. He will even lie to save his job.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister is being relevant to the question he was asked. Does the member for Port Stephens have another point of order?

Ms Kate Washington: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: I just ruled that the Minister is being relevant. Resume your seat. The Minister has the call.

Ms Kate Washington: Sorry, Madam Speaker, what did you rule?

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Ms Kate Washington: Are you saying that what the Minister is saying is within the remit of the question he was asked?

The SPEAKER: Resume your seat. Do not argue with me. The Minister has the call.

Mr MATT KEAN: This is a good news story. Everyone is a winner because of these Better Business Reforms. Tradies around New South Wales will have more money in their pockets and it will be easier to do business in this State. We on this side of the House believe in supporting small business. We are the party of the tradie, we are the party of the worker and we are the party of the consumer because we put consumers first. The Better Business Reforms is why we elect Liberal governments—to drive our economy, to create jobs, to slash red tape and to cut costs. We want to put money back in the pockets of hardworking residents of New South Wales. The reforms will add nearly \$500 million to the New South Wales State economy. The reforms will ensure that our economy continues to grow. The biggest threat to our economy is those opposite.

Committees

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Reports

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS: As Chair: I table the report of the Joint Committee on Children and Young People, Report No. 5/56 entitled "Prevention of Youth Suicide in New South Wales", dated October 2018.

I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

Duck Hunting

Petition requesting retention of the longstanding ban on duck hunting, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Sydney Metro Pitt Street Over-station Developments

Petition rejecting the current proposed Sydney Metro Pitt Street over-station developments, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

The Star Casino

Petition opposing construction of a proposed residential and hotel tower on The Star casino site, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Globe Wilkins Preschool

Petition calling on the Government to stop the closure of the Globe Wilkins Preschool, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Pride Centre

Petition requesting the Government to work with community stakeholders and commit funds to build a Pride Centre in New South Wales, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Park

Petition calling on the Government to declare a marine park in the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion with sanctuary zones to protect the coastal lifestyle, 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**.

Haberfield Public School Pedestrian Crossing

Petition calling for a crossing guard at the Haberfield Public School Bland Street pedestrian crossing to protect student safety and for an investigation of the air quality around the school, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

Short-term Letting

Petition calling on the Government to give owners corporations the authority to control short-term letting in strata buildings, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

No-fault Evictions

Petition requesting that the Government immediately end no-fault evictions and act to make tenancies more secure, received from **Ms Jo Haylen**.

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

Tocumwal Ambulance Service

Petition requesting a standalone ambulance service for Tocumwal, received from **Mr Austin Evans**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

The CLERK: I announce that the following Ministers have lodged responses to petitions signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Anthony Roberts—Kingscliff Locality Plan—lodged 18 September 2018 (Mr Luke Foley)

The Hon. Melinda Pavey—Coffs Harbour Regional Boat Ramp Precinct—lodged 18 September 2018 (Mr Andrew Fraser)

The Hon. Melinda Pavey—Blue Haven Intersection—lodged 19 September 2018 (Mr David Harris)

The Hon. Matt Kean—Short-term Letting—lodged 18, 19, 20, 26 September 2018, 16 October 2018 (Mr Alex Greenwich)

Business of the House

EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEERS MEMORIAL

Reordering

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (15:33): I move:

That General Business Notice of Motion (General Notice) given by me this day [Emergency Services Volunteers Memorial 2018] have precedence on Thursday 25 October.

This motion deserves priority because it relates to the 2018 Emergency Services Volunteers Memorial Service, which took place on 14 October. This annual event is significant in the emergency services calendar as it honours the sacrifice of those volunteers who have lost their lives helping others. More than 88,000 volunteers make up the NSW Rural Fire Service, the State Emergency Service, the Volunteer Rescue Association and Marine Rescue NSW. They selflessly give their time and skills to protect New South Wales.

Ninety names are listed on the memorial. Fortunately, this year no new names have been added. But as New South Wales enters bushfire and storm season, it is important to remember the inherent danger faced by our emergency services personnel. This motion should be given precedence because this Parliament needs to acknowledge and commend the contribution that our volunteers make in ensuring the safety of communities across the State. Emergency service volunteers are integral to our society. As a community, we take pride in the fact that across New South Wales people still selflessly commit themselves and their families to the service of their communities. From fire and flood to storms, road accidents and other emergencies, the volunteers of New South Wales give their time unwaveringly to serve communities across the State. Their courage and professionalism are a credit to them and the services to which they belong and embody the ideals that all Australians strive to attain.

If this motion is accorded precedence, we will take the time to reflect on the sacrifice given by all whose names are listed and who already are remembered by the memorial. While we pay tribute to volunteers who have lost their lives doing frontline service, we also acknowledge the sacrifice of their families and loved ones who supported them. This year we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the death of three firefighters—Tom Chalmers, who was captain of the Faulconbridge Rural Fire Brigade, and Peter Hawkins and Greg Eley of the Warrimoo Bush Fire Brigade. They all lost their lives in the 1968 north Springwood fires. As we head into yet another season of bushfires, storms and floods, I wish all our emergency service volunteers well. This is an important matter for members to discuss and acknowledge. For the reasons I have stated, my motion should take precedence tomorrow.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (15:36): Under this Government, across Sydney we have seen a developer's picnic—units everywhere without local infrastructure. My electorate is even worse off because there are fewer and slower trains but units are everywhere. Until last year, Granville was a major rail interchange. Five years ago 28-minute express services from Granville to the city were cut. One hundred services a week were cut by the Premier when she was the Minister for Transport. Last year, the lack of services became worse. The new timetable took Granville off the western line altogether and now city services are 43 minutes, but people still cannot get a seat. There has been a 50 per cent increase in travel times in just under five years under this Government, and this flows onto Merrylands and Guildford. Taking a train takes forever.

To make matters worse, since the Government put the toll back onto the M4, 42,000 cars a day have been diverted from the M4 onto Parramatta Road and onto our local streets. Anyone would think that having endured the cuts and an onslaught of cars and trucks, my electorate of Granville would have been spared overdevelopment—not under this Government. This Government has imposed more than 5,000 units between Granville station and the M4. Five thousand units in, and hundreds of train services a week are gone. This is unfathomable, but everything this Government does benefits property developers and anyone else who is trying to make a quick buck. Putting units next to a major rail interchange makes sense, but then cutting the train services and downgrading the station makes no sense at all. The unit blocks are ugly, too. Not all unit blocks are ugly but these are—so ugly that even other developers complain about them. Every time I am at the Granville station someone will point to the bulky 26-storey boxes in East Street and ask me, "Whose fault is that?" Premier, it is yours!

It is no different in other parts of the electorate. The biggest primary school in the State, the Westmead Public School, has more than 1,660 students. It is bursting. More than 100 additional kids have enrolled since February. The Government has known about this for years and done nothing except make Westmead a priority precinct for even more units. Government members tell themselves that kids do not live in units, but clearly they do. At Westmead, enrolments have grown by hundreds every year. Only now is this Government acknowledging the problem and making noises about a new school, but with no site and no funding. Then there are our local pools. This Government demolished the Parramatta pool, which was used by 170,000 people every year and dozens of school students, and will not fully fund a replacement.

The Government also tried through its council administrator to close the Wentworthville "Wenty" pool and the Guildford pool. The Liberals have been trying to close those two pools for years, yet Wentworthville is another one of the Government's dodgy priority precincts, even though units already are being constructed everywhere. But not everyone in Sydney has to put up with what I have described. Mosman Council's population is 30,811 and is forecast to grow to only 32,125 by 2036. With approximately 1,300 extra residents in 18 years, how will the Mosman Council cope? The people of Granville are fed up. The other thing they ask me every time I am at the Granville Station is, "When are you going to get rid of this awful Government?"

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the motion of the member for Port Macquarie have precedence on Thursday 25 October 2018.

Motion agreed to.

Motions Accorded Priority

SNOWY HYDRO SALE

Consideration

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (15:40): It is imperative, not only for this House, but for the people of regional New South Wales that my motion be accorded priority. We are coming to the end of the Fifty-Sixth Parliament, and it is troubling not only to me but also to the people I represent that the Opposition still has not been clear about its plan for regional New South Wales. There have been backflips, money promised and re-promised for different purposes; however, there is no plan. One of the most concerning matters is the Snowy Hydro fund. The reason for this concern is Labor's lack of transparency around its intentions for this fund. In just five months New South Wales will head to the polls and it is time for the New South Wales Labor party to come clean to the people of regional New South Wales.

Debate on my motion will be an opportunity for the Labor Party to make its position clear. The Liberal-Nationals Government has made abundantly clear that the proceeds from the sale of Snowy Hydro will not be squandered. The Government has a clear plan to invest those funds in transformative, big picture projects that will change regional New South Wales for generations to come. This Government will implement a plan that will create more than 260,000 new jobs in regional areas over the next few decades and attract an extra 185,000 new residents to live and work in regional areas. This Government will deliver on large-scale projects that will generate significant economic and social benefits, and alleviate the challenges faced by those who live in the bush. Big picture things such as connectivity, water security, jobs, freight networks and travel connections will change the way that people in the bush live their lives. Government members have been completely transparent about where and how the funds will be used.

Since 2011 members of the Liberal-Nationals Government have been extremely clear on its definition for regional New South Wales—everything that is outside Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong—and the Snowy fund is no different. The fund will use the same Infrastructure NSW definition of regional New South Wales, which is all regions outside Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, which are the types of communities that make up regional New South Wales. They are communities that Government members have been successfully delivering for since coming into government in 2011. Yet the Labor Opposition has been constantly trying to argue that regional New South Wales includes metropolitan cities such as Newcastle and Wollongong. Today Labor members must answer the question: What is Labor's definition of regional New South Wales? They must categorically rule out Wollongong, Newcastle and Campbelltown. The people of regional New South Wales deserve to know what Labor's plan is.

TUGGERAH STATION EASY ACCESS UPGRADE

Consideration

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (15:43): If my motion is accorded priority, I foreshadow it will be in the following terms:

That this House:

- (1) condemns Government for its failure to provide easy access lifts at Tuggerah station;
- (2) congratulates the local community on its strong campaign in support of lifts at the station; and
- (3) calls on the Government to immediately commit funding for the installation of lifts at the Tuggerah station, along with a clear timetable to complete the job. This motion deserves priority because my community demands that action be taken to address this issue. My community can sense the injustice and the maladministration on foot. The people of my electorate can see the money that is being spent on stadiums and transport upgrades for Sydney. They can also see the unmet need on the Central Coast. The truth is those opposite are roting the Transport Access Program. The money is not going where it is needed. It is going where those opposite direct it. We know that because we have the Transport Access Program priority list. In the 2016 list, Narara station on the Central Coast ranked number five and received no funding. Niagara Park station ranked number 15 and received no funding.

Lisarow station ranked number 17 and received no funding. Ourimbah station ranked number 22 and received no funding. Tuggerah station does not even make it on the list. No Central Coast stations on the list received funding. The nearest station to receive funding is Hawkesbury River, and it is ranked number 42. This is a rort. There is no fairness here. People in my community sense the unfairness created by this Government and that is why they are campaigning hard for lifts to be installed at Tuggerah station. To give members an idea of the community's sense of concern over this issue I will read a letter from Helen Terry of Tumbi Umbi which was sent to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure:

Dear Sir,

...

I do use Tuggerah station on a fairly regular basis. I am 65 years old and have in the past broken both my feet and let me tell you that using either the steps or the ramp is an exercise in both fear and pain.

...

I am one of the lucky ones. As long as I cling grimly to the hand rail, I can make it. However, on several occasions I have watched a wheelchair bound customer have to ask the Station Master to push him up and down the ramps because they are too steep and long for him to manage.

...

I hope (and I really do) that this information will be of assistance to you and your government in working out what is really important to the voting public of NSW. We don't need grand monuments and gestures; we need things that will make our lives better and a little easier. Yours faithfully, Helen Terry.

I thank Helen Terry. I urge the House to support this motion. We do not need stadia, we need lifts at Tuggerah station.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the motion of the member for Cootamundra be accorded priority.

The House divided.

Ayes50

Noes34

Majority..... 16

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr A.W.
Gibbons, Ms M
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Provost, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Aplin, Mr G
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A
Donato, Mr P
Evans, Mr L.J.
Goward, Ms P
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Marshall, Mr A
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Roberts, Mr A
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Ayres, Mr S
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Davies, Mrs T
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Grant, Mr T
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
McGirr, Dr J
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Petinos, Ms E
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mr R

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
 Barr, Mr C
 Chanthivong, Mr A
 Dib, Mr J
 Foley, Mr L
 Harrison, Ms J
 Kamper, Mr S
 Lynch, Mr P
 Mehan, Mr D
 Piper, Mr G
 Warren, Mr G
 Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
 Car, Ms P
 Crakanthorp, Mr T
 Doyle, Ms T
 Greenwich, Mr A
 Haylen, Ms J
 Lalich, Mr N (teller)
 McDermott, Dr H
 Minns, Mr C
 Scully, Mr P
 Washington, Ms K

Bali, Mr S
 Catley, Ms Y
 Daley, Mr M
 Finn, Ms J
 Harris, Mr D
 Hornery, Ms S
 Leong, Ms J
 McKay, Ms J
 Park, Mr R
 Tesch, Ms L
 Watson, Ms A (teller)

PAIRS

Berejiklian, Ms G
 Lee, Dr G

Cotsis, Ms S
 Hoenig, Mr R

Motion agreed to.

*Bills***CONVEYANCING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018****First Reading**

Bill received from the Legislative Council, introduced and read a first time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a future day.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I welcome Declan to the gallery. It is great to see you.

*Motions Accorded Priority***SNOWY HYDRO SALE****Priority**

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (15:53): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises the Government's commitment to spend 100 per cent of the proceeds from the sale of Snowy Hydro in regional New South Wales.
- (2) Commends Government for creating a vision for regional New South Wales that includes transformative infrastructure funded by the proceeds of Snowy Hydro.
- (3) Calls for the Opposition to rule out spending the Snowy Hydro Fund on essential services such as schools and hospitals, which should continue to be funded through the health and education budgets.
- (4) Calls on the Opposition to rule out spending the proceeds from the sale of Snowy Hydro on projects for Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong.

It gives me great pleasure to lead on this motion today. I have represented the electorate of Cootamundra for just over 12 months, and what an incredibly exciting time it has been for the communities I represent, and more broadly for rural and regional New South Wales. I proudly say that in my short time in this place I have been part of a government that has created history for regional New South Wales. The decision to transfer our share of Snowy Hydro to the Commonwealth Government was an historic win for the bush. From this process, the Government has secured \$4.15 billion for its share and, most importantly, with this deal the Government has secured every cent of that \$4.15 billion for rural and regional communities. That decision has the support of country and metropolitan members on this side of the House.

It is not every day we come across a \$4.15 billion dollar windfall. This will go down as the greatest legacy any government of this State will leave behind. Those precious funds have a powerful legacy and this Government has a vision. Not only will it spend these funds in a way that will build our future but also in a way that will honour the Snowy Hydro legacy. Already there is record investment in regional New South Wales and we are now taking that to the next level. With a careful plan we will transform regional New South Wales in a way never seen. During the Cootamundra by-election in 2017 I made a commitment to the people of my electorate that I would fight to do what is right for my electorate.

I committed to the people of Cootamundra that their needs would always come first. That is what they deserve. However, there is one thing that the people of my communities and of regional New South Wales do not deserve, and that is to be played for fools by politicians. That is exactly what those opposite have been doing—making false promises to the people of regional New South Wales about the use of the Snowy Hydro funds. The Leader of the Opposition has made some generous gestures when it comes to Labor's so-called plan, but it is nothing short of a mess. First, Luke Foley promised that under a Labor government, 100 per cent of the sale of Snowy Hydro would go to the regions. In a media release in May he said:

One hundred per cent of the funds raised will be used to improve ... infrastructure in the areas of Education, Health...

He goes on to say:

That means building hospitals, schools and repairing roads.

The Liberal-Nationals Government already does that. This is business as usual. It has invested record amounts of funding in this area and it intends to continue this investment. Why does it get a mention in the Opposition's Snowy Hydro plan? Because the Leader of the Opposition thinks by continuing to give people in regional New South Wales what they are entitled to, Labor is doing them a favour. But then he backflipped on that idea. In reply to the budget speech in 2018, he said:

A Labor Government will use the proceeds from the sale of the Snowy Hydro to invest in renewable generation across regional NSW, including increasing solar generation on Government buildings.

The Leader of the Opposition has now spent the money twice.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. Hansard is having difficulty hearing and I am having difficulty hearing.

Ms STEPH COOKE: Not only has the Opposition shown it has no ability to manage the Snowy Hydro Fund, it has also shown that it has no clear plan for how the money will be used. The Opposition's track record on visionary infrastructure in regional New South Wales is not a pretty one. In 2009 we saw the closure of the Blayney-Demondrille rail network, otherwise known as the Cowra Lines. Some 174 kilometres of rail infrastructure was shut down despite thousands of signatures and, in the process, the only freight link between the main southern and main western line was severed. This was devastating for the people of my electorate and raises the question of how rural New South Wales could ever trust the Labor Party with the immense opportunity to invest in the vital infrastructure we need for future generations. I call on the Labor Party to rule out spending any of the historic Snowy Hydro money outside Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong and to rule out cuts to existing health and education infrastructure spending in regional New South Wales. [*Time expired.*]

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (15:59): I always like debating with the member for Cootamundra—every now and then she gets lost. That is why she has a map on her car of her electorate, which is unusual. I have never known a member with a map on their car of their electorate so they can be reminded where it is. This motion is interesting. The member for Cootamundra may have been set up. As the federation representative of the staffers in this place I would not say that to the good staff, but I always say to members of Parliament: When staff give them a speech to read and they feel very excited and honoured—

Mr Mark Coure: It's a bit like your office.

Mr RYAN PARK: We do not get speeches written for us. When you are very excited and very honoured, it is always good to check; it is a trap for young players. The problem for the member for Cootamundra is this weird thing called Google. In May 2017 when the sale of Snowy Hydro was announced, the Deputy Premier said he would prefer regional New South Wales receive 30 per cent of all State asset transactions rather than 100 per cent from one sale. He did not want regional New South Wales to get 100 per cent; small problem there. What did Mr Foley do? He was the first leader to commit 100 per cent of proceeds from the sale to regional and rural New South Wales.

Mr Gareth Ward: He ruled out Wollongong.

Mr RYAN PARK: He ruled out Wollongong, Newcastle and Sydney. There is the answer to one of the member's questions. It gets worse for the member for Cootamundra. Then we hear from the Deputy Premier who

very boldly talks about how he is driving up growth, that he is going to deliver all these things in New South Wales and that we should not be spending the funds on schools and hospitals. I have a story for you lot over there. When I speak to people in regional and rural New South Wales, a lot of them like schools, a lot of them like hospitals, a lot of them like renewable energy. I know those opposite hate schools and hate hospitals and hate renewable energy.

Mr Andrew Fraser: Point of order: As we are often reminded by the member for Strathfield, the member for Keira should direct his comments through the Chair.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

Mr RYAN PARK: I will amend this motion and make it clear. I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out all words after "That" with a view to inserting instead:
"this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition on being the first to guarantee 100 per cent of funds from the Snowy Hydro sale to regional New South Wales.
- (2) Commends the Opposition for allocating these funds on the basis of the Chifley principles:
 - (a) creation of jobs and growth of industry in rural and regional New South Wales;
 - (b) decentralisation of population; and
 - (c) generation of new and renewable energy supplies.
- (3) Notes that the Leader of the Opposition has already ruled out that these funds are going to Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong."

You may or may not know Chifley. The last point is that the Leader of the Opposition has already ruled out these funds going to Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. I say again, be very careful when people give you these speeches. It is a little like when someone recommends you put a map of your electorate on your car. Every now and again you just might have to think: This is not a great idea. Every now and again the penny might drop and you think: Hang on; this might be a problem. [*Time expired.*]

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES (Barwon) (16:04): I support this fine motion moved by the member for Cootamundra. It will not matter what members opposite say because they will not be in government after the next election. I put my wallet on the table and I will back the Coalition with whatever is in it. The Coalition will be in government and members opposite will not. In fact, members can double whatever is in my wallet because it will not matter. I will table the wallet and later we can see what is in it.

The point of this motion is that the Government has a plan for regional New South Wales but members opposite do not. The member for Cootamundra said that it would not matter because if the Labor Party ever got near the Treasury benches again it would suck \$4.2 billion out of the health budget, the rural education budget, the regional roads budget, the freight fund, the water security fund and the Restart NSW fund. Members opposite would use that additional funding to prop up some of the projects it failed to deliver in the city and in larger regional centres like Newcastle and Wollongong. The Government will not take advice from members opposite.

The Deputy Premier has made a Cabinet-backed commitment to ensure that \$4.2 billion is allocated and set aside for intergenerational infrastructure. In addition, \$40 million has been set aside to work with local government, communities and industry to establish the best projects and the most appropriate frameworks for that money to be spent. Before the election we will hear about water security, infrastructure, road and rail infrastructure, and improving connectivity for people living in rural and remote New South Wales—particularly in my part of the world and in the electorate of the member for Cootamundra. That is what we want to see.

When the Labor Government first came to office, Broken Hill had a population of nearly 30,000. When members opposite lost government, the population was less than 20,000. The Government has stemmed the tide of that decline and the population is increasing again. It is the same across rural and remote New South Wales: This Government is fixing problems and reinvesting in our community using new money. I point out to members opposite that 78 health facilities have been constructed in New South Wales in the past seven years.

Mr David Harris: It's Federal money.

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: Largely out of our funds. In 16 years, members opposite built four health facilities in the regions. The majority of the facilities this Government has delivered have been constructed in regional areas. The Labor Party did not have the money and it is hopeless in government. Members opposite are envious of the money the Government is putting into our communities. That is why members on this side of the House are behind the Snowy Hydro proposal and why we will do the best for regional New South Wales. [*Time expired.*]

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:07): The problem with the motion moved by the member for Cootamundra and why the Opposition has been forced to amend it is that we cannot trust what the Government says. It committed 30 per cent of the Restart NSW Fund to regional New South Wales, but it has not delivered. It has allocated only 18 per cent of Snowy Hydro proceeds. When members opposite tell us they will allocate 100 per cent of something, we might get something in between. We will certainly not get the full amount.

Mr Gareth Ward: That's not true.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: It is true. They are the Government's budget figures. Is the member for Kiama questioning Treasury figures?

Mr Gareth Ward: Look at the forward estimates.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: It has nothing to do with the forward estimates. We have a government that has conned the people of regional New South Wales by telling them they will get a certain amount that they have never received. It is now trying to con them again. As the member for Keira said, the Deputy Premier's and Leader of The Nationals' initial commitment referred to 30 per cent. Members on this side of the House are finding that the Deputy Premier is regularly changing his mind as a result of our advocacy while travelling around the regions. He listens to what we say and then matches it. New South Wales Country Labor is setting the agenda for rural and regional New South Wales, not this Government. As happened with the Snowy Hydro proceeds, the Opposition was the first to commit 100 per cent to regional areas and to say that it would not spend that money in Sydney, Newcastle or Wollongong.

In fact, the Government has 18 different definitions of regions depending on the department concerned. If we were to continue to look we would find even more definitions. Members opposite cannot use a motion like this to lecture us about where the money should be spent because their definitions are all over the shop. The Government has never delivered the amount it promised. All it can do now is to mimic the Labor Party. I suppose imitation is the most sincere form of flattery. That is what members opposite do; they take the Opposition's position on all major policy issues. They take a policy to the community, they are beaten up at by-elections, and then they adopt Labor's policy and call it their own. They have done that on every major policy issue, whether it be the greyhound racing ban, council amalgamations, or the sale of Snowy Hydro. All they can do is copy the Labor Party. The sooner we have a Labor government making the decisions the better off we will be.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (16:11): In reply: On 2 March this year the Government transferred its share of the Snowy Hydro scheme to the Commonwealth Government for \$4.2 billion. At about the same time, the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government began setting out what it believes should be a 20-year economic vision for regional New South Wales. Our management of the economy, together with securing 100 per cent of the Snowy Hydro proceeds for regional New South Wales, allows the Government not only to have that vision but also to begin funding it. The 20-year vision is a blueprint for future investment. It will direct the Government's future investment and decision-making to promote sustainable, long-term economic growth for regional New South Wales. The projects this fund will support will be the big picture, big ticket items that reflect the legacy of the Snowy Hydro scheme. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. The Government is determined to invest in visionary projects now so that they do not stay on paper but become a reality.

This vision is under attack by the Labor Party, which is eager to get its hands on the Government chequebook. Members opposite want to pull the wool over the eyes of people living in the country, but the Government will not let that happen. The only plan the Labor Party has if it gets into government is to rip existing funding streams out of regional New South Wales. I call on members opposite to rule out taking from Peter to pay Paul. This is not extra funding for regional New South Wales under a Labor government. Members opposite are dangling something shiny hoping that our people will not realise the money is being taken from every other portfolio. As I said earlier, when I was elected as the member for Cootamundra, I made a commitment to my communities that I would always fight for them and alongside them.

There is no way this backhander being offered by the Opposition would ever pass the pub test in my electorate or anywhere else. The few regional members of the Labor Party in this place should think carefully about how they vote on this motion. They should think about the message they want to send to their communities and what level of commitment they are willing to make to safeguard the funding that the Liberal-Nationals Government is providing. I look forward to seeing the Snowy Hydro vision come to life for regional New South Wales and electorates such as mine, which is the fourth biggest in the State. I have a sign with "Cootamundra" on the side of my car not because I do not know how to get around—I have lived in the area my entire life—but because I am proud of each and every community, town and village that I represent, and I am determined to ensure that this Government continues to look after them for generations to come.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I welcome Jeremy to the gallery this afternoon. It is lovely to have him here.

*Motions Accorded Priority***SNOWY HYDRO SALE****Priority**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The original question was that the motion as moved by the member for Cootamundra be agreed to, upon which the member for Keira has moved that the motion be amended by leaving out all words after "That" with a view to inserting instead:

"this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition on being the first to guarantee 100 per cent of funds from the Snowy Hydro sale to regional New South Wales.
- (2) Commends the Opposition for allocating these funds on the basis of the Chifley principles:
 - (a) creation of jobs and growth of industry in rural and regional New South Wales;
 - (b) decentralisation of population; and
 - (c) generation of new and renewable energy supplies.
- (3) Notes that the Leader of the Opposition has already ruled out that these funds are going to Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong."

The question is that the words proposed be left out stand part of the question.

The House divided.

Ayes46

Noes31

Majority.....15

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Grant, Mr T
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
McGirr, Dr J
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Piper, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Aplin, Mr G
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr A.W.
Gibbons, Ms M
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Provest, Mr G
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Williams, Mr R

Ayres, Mr S
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Donato, Mr P
Evans, Mr L.J.
Goward, Ms P
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Marshall, Mr A
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mrs L

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Foley, Mr L
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N (teller)
McKay, Ms J
Park, Mr R

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Scully, Mr P

Bali, Mr S
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Tesch, Ms L

NOES

Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Washington, Ms K

Watson, Ms A (teller)

PAIRS

Berejiklian, Ms G
Crouch, Mr A

Cotsis, Ms S
Hoenig, Mr R

Amendment negatived.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the motion as moved by the member for Cootamundra be agreed to. By agreement between the Whips, there being no intervening debate, I call for the doors to be locked.

The House divided.

Ayes46
Noes31
Majority..... 15

AYES

Anderson, Mr K
Barilaro, Mr J
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Elliott, Mr D
Fraser, Mr A
Grant, Mr T
Hazzard, Mr B
Johnsen, Mr M
McGirr, Dr J
Patterson, Mr C (teller)
Piper, Mr G
Sidoti, Mr J
Taylor, Mr M
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Aplin, Mr G
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
Constance, Mr A
Dominello, Mr V
Evans, Mr A.W.
Gibbons, Ms M
Griffin, Mr J
Henskens, Mr A
Kean, Mr M
Notley-Smith, Mr B
Pavey, Mrs M
Provest, Mr G
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Williams, Mr R

Ayres, Mr S
Brookes, Mr G
Cooke, Ms S
Donato, Mr P
Evans, Mr L.J.
Goward, Ms P
Gulaptis, Mr C
Humphries, Mr K
Marshall, Mr A
O'Dea, Mr J
Perrottet, Mr D
Rowell, Mr J
Stokes, Mr R
Tudehope, Mr D
Williams, Mrs L

NOES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Foley, Mr L
Haylen, Ms J
Lalich, Mr N (teller)
McKay, Ms J
Park, Mr R
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Scully, Mr P
Washington, Ms K

Bali, Mr S
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Tesch, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

PAIRS

Berejiklian, Ms G
Crouch, Mr A

Cotsis, Ms S
Hoenig, Mr R

Motion agreed to.*Business of the House***SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: BILLS****Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations)****(16:23):** I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended:

- (1) To separate the cognate Government Sector Finance Bill and the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill as cognate bills.
- (2) For the Government Sector Finance Bill to be presented to His Excellency the Governor for assent notwithstanding the order of the day for the consideration of the Legislative Council's proposed amendments in the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Bill.

Motion agreed to.*Bills***PLANNING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (GREATER SYDNEY COMMISSION) BILL 2018****Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (16:27): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Planning Legislation Amendment (Greater Sydney Commission) Bill 2018. The Opposition does not oppose the bill because it is more of the same planning and legislative reform that has occurred in the State for at least the past four years but actually in the past two terms of government. The Opposition was the early champion of the Greater Sydney Commission [GSC]; under this Government, it has been treated curiously—if I may put it that way. I do not think it has been allowed to fulfil the mission that both parties had for it. I admire the people who work there. They are doing good work but they are being interfered with up hill and down dale. This bill is evidence of that.

The bill tidies up planning legislation following recent changes to the Greater Sydney Commission, which was taken from the Minister for Planning and placed under the Premier's department. I do not know why that is the case. I would have had more confidence in the Minister for Planning and the Department of Planning to work closely with the Greater Sydney Commission without further interference. We have seen complete and utter hopelessness from this Premier and her department. If they are not mucking things up then nothing is happening at all. The Premier decided to confiscate from the UrbanGrowth NSW Development Corporation, taking from the Minister for Planning and his department and bringing under her own umbrella some of the most important, once-in-a-generation development sites in Sydney and New South Wales, such as the Bays Precinct. There are plenty of them. They will languish in the Premier's department because she and it are hopeless—end of story. I would have had more confidence in the Minister for Planning to keep things ticking over than in this hapless and hopeless Premier and the people who work for her.

Significant planning issues that have beset Sydney and the regions of the Illawarra, Central Coast and Newcastle to a greater or lesser degree have been completely ignored. Overdevelopment is the theme on everyone's lips in Sydney. This Government has lost control of the planning system. There is great inaction in all Planning portfolio responsibilities, with the exception of the Greater Sydney Commission, which has been interfered with since the day it started—whether it be on affordable housing targets or many other issues. The citizens of Sydney see unfairness in the planning system, with rampant overdevelopment in some areas. The Mayor of Ryde, Jerome Laxale, is one of those people battling it every day in Ryde while other areas are getting off scot-free.

The planning system is supposed to offer a regime of certainty and confidence. The citizens do not have confidence in it now and those on the commercial side of the planning system—the development industry—have lost confidence in it as well. A system that enjoys no confidence on either side of the equation has largely failed and needs attention. The amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, which we waited so long for last year, were tinkering at the edges. This is more tinkering at the edges, brought on by the interference of the Premier. About 7 ½ years ago, while in opposition, the Coalition led by Barry O'Farrell promised to return planning powers to the people. Since then, councils have been forcibly amalgamated and developments have proceeded through the Gateway Review System, completely ignoring planning instruments and rendering local environmental plans of all Sydney councils utterly null and void. We have seen development applications go to unelected panels that operate in secrecy.

Far from returning planning powers to the people, the Government has delivered the planning system into confusion. No-one has any confidence in it. There is no certainty for developers, who are scared. There is a 70:30 ratio—70 per cent infill in brownfield areas and 30 per cent in greenfield development. Now the Government has decided—no doubt as a result of an edict from Treasury—that developer levies will be uncapped. The development industry is frightened of the uncapping of the Local Infrastructure Growth Scheme. Under this regime, with a cooling market, borrowing becoming inordinately more difficult and investment funds from international sources not drying up but becoming severely constrained, it claims it will be able to get loans on an uncapped developer levy basis when the scheme comes into being in 2021. The new housing industry in greenfield areas will fall off the cliff.

I was hoping that there would be some redress before the election but, with seven sitting days remaining, the Minister for Planning has instead been forced into yet more tinkering because the Premier keeps mucking around in his portfolio. A Premier who cannot plan, cannot sign a contract for, cannot execute and cannot manage to build a tramline along Anzac Parade cannot be trusted to tinker with something this important to the national economy and to the day-to-day lives of citizens in Australia's biggest city. She should allow the Minister for Planning to do what he has to do and stop tinkering. There are some good aspects to this bill but they are not of any great import. I find it curious the bill discloses the great confusion that permeates the Government's approach to the planning system. Those opposite do not know what they want from it. They do not know what they want the Greater Sydney Commission to be.

The GSC was a high-powered, strategic planning body with teeth that would sit down with councils and make local environmental plans. The Government took that power away from the Minister and gave it to the Greater Sydney Commission. Now presumably because the Premier has the power and she is better at planning than the Minister for Planning and everyone else—not—the commission cannot do that; it is going to lose its planning powers, which will be returned to the Minister for Planning. That is what I mean by confusion. The Minister previously delegated those powers to the Greater Sydney Commission and now they are being undelegated. It seems that the Premier does not have confidence in the people in whom she reposed the planning powers. She has also undermined the GSC by making sure that it does no planning either. What a mess.

The bill is largely inoffensive. It does not offer up any particular solutions. As I said, it has been foisted on the Minister for Planning. In brief, the bill removes references to the Greater Sydney Commission from a number of sections of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act consequential to the Government's changes to the commission's functions. It makes some administrative changes to the appointment of GSC commissioners, providing, for example, in items [3] and [4] of schedule 2 that the appointment of the chief commissioner and three other commissioners are separate appointments whereas previously all four were appointed under one provision. Item [6] of schedule 2 also includes the chief executive officer of the commission and the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet as ex-officio members of the commission. God help us.

The one saving grace is that there are small, sensible amendments to the Independent Planning Commission, which again are required to tidy up some early mess. Last night in the other place my colleague the Hon. Penny Sharpe moved an amendment in relation to changes to the Natural Resources Commission, which was defeated by the Government. Labor is disappointed about that. We have concerns about the Government's removal of the term "scientific basis" in the objects of the Act in favour of "broad evidence basis", and moved an amendment that, as I said, was not successful. We will continue to monitor the effects of these changes. I hope in March to be able to take over the planning system, clean it up and make significant amendments to it, because the citizens of Sydney have had a gutful and this is yet another wasted opportunity.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, Minister for Housing, and Special Minister of State) (16:38): In reply: I thank the member for Maroubra for his contribution. This Government is determined that Greater Sydney will be a world-class, successful and livable global city. To achieve this, the Government has invested in unprecedented levels of infrastructure and a little under three years ago established a new metropolitan planning governance model based on international best practice. International best practice confirms the need to integrate land use, transport and infrastructure planning; establish a strong organisation to coordinate strategic planning; and de-politicise the planning of our great city and build the trust of stakeholders and the community.

Three years ago the Greater Sydney Commission was established through an Act of Parliament as an independent agency responsible for metropolitan planning in Greater Sydney. Since its establishment, the commission has demonstrated that it can build strong, productive relationships with colleagues across the three tiers of government; it is a "listening organisation" that learns from its stakeholders and the community; it can deliver outcomes quickly that are of high quality; and it is agile enough to meet an evolving agenda. Now not only do we have a 40-year vision and a 20-year plan for Greater Sydney—A Metropolis of Three Cities—but also for

the first time in our State's history, land use, transport and infrastructure planning have been undertaken together in the true spirit of collaboration and partnership.

A Metropolis of Three Cities – the Greater Sydney Region Plan, Future Transport 2056 and the State Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038 have been prepared concurrently and at their heart is A Metropolis of Three Cities. Earlier this year our Government adopted each of these plans, bringing to life unprecedented levels of investment in infrastructure. It is also the first time that Greater Sydney has had district plans giving local effect to A Metropolis of Three Cities. The commission has worked side by side with local councils, communities and stakeholders to develop these plans, which are a blueprint for councils to use in updating their local environmental plans.

Collaboration has been central to the way the Greater Sydney Commission does business. Collaborating with key New South Wales government agencies, 33 local councils, health and education authorities and institutions, industry and, of course, the community has made it possible to co-create our region and district plans. The commission has been instrumental in developing new policy initiatives around affordable rental housing, industrial lands and non-urban areas. The commission has also forged ahead with the implementation of the strategic plans through its work in Western Sydney, Greater Parramatta and on the Olympic Peninsula, health and education precincts, and collaboration areas such as Liverpool and Greater Penrith. The commission is also working with colleagues across government to develop a new tool to support the effective sequencing of place-based infrastructure and housing supply.

The next major challenge is the implementation of the strategic plans. The bill reflects the changes required to the planning system to ensure that this Government's vision for A Metropolis of Three Cities is brought to life. We can never forget that we are building a Greater Sydney not just for us but for generations to come. It is only befitting that the Greater Sydney Commission plays an integral role in realising A Metropolis of Three Cities. The bill enables the commission to fulfil its new priorities as it pivots from plan making to implementation. The key drivers of the commission's success are strong coordination; intensive collaboration in critical, place-based projects; independent assurance that key State and local plans and policies are true to the vision; and the Government having access to expert, independent advisers who will tell it the hard truths. The momentum must continue so that Greater Sydney is positioned to be one of the most livable global cities in the world.

I take this opportunity on behalf of the House to thank all those members of the Greater Sydney Commission who have done so much in so short a time to deliver outstanding results and who now move to implementing their strategic plans. In particular, I thank the chief commissioner, Lucy Turnbull, deputy chief commissioner Jeff Roberts and the other commissioners, together with the chief executive officer, Sarah Hill, and all their staff. On behalf of this House, I offer heartfelt thanks for their professionalism, understanding and vision in what they have achieved. This is the bill we need to support the commission and the planning system to continue its great work.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO 3) 2018

CRIMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (VICTIMS) BILL 2018

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) AMENDMENT BILL 2018

First Reading

Bills introduced on motion by Mr Mark Speakman, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (16:44): I move:

That these bills be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Justice Legislation Amendment (No 3) Bill 2018, the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Victims) Bill 2018 and the Government Information (Public Access) Amendment Bill

2018. I will begin with the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill (No 3) 2018. The Government introduces legislation of this kind—that is, bills containing a range of miscellaneous amendments—on a regular basis as part of a program of continuous improvement to Justice legislation. These bills make miscellaneous amendments that are critical for the New South Wales justice system to function efficiently and effectively. Schedule 1 contains the main amending provisions. Schedule 2 contains amendments relating to the retirement age for judicial officers and the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Solicitor General. Schedule 3 contains amendments to the Legal Profession Uniform Application legislation and regulation.

I now turn to schedule 1. Schedule 1.1 amends the Anzac Memorial (Building) Act 1923. As Australia marks the 100th anniversary of the First World War, the New South Wales Government, together with the Trustees of the Anzac Memorial Building, has enhanced the Anzac Memorial in Sydney's Hyde Park. This undertaking has been referred to as the "centenary project" and will be an enduring legacy of New South Wales commemorations. To allow for the enhancement of the Anzac Memorial, the description of the land on which the memorial is built has had to be amended to reflect the increased footprint. In addition, in recognition of our current serving Australian Defence Force members, the trustees have determined to appoint a representative of the ADF as a member of the Trustees of the Anzac Memorial Building.

Item [11] of schedule 1.1 amends the schedule to the Anzac Memorial (Building) Act 1923 to reflect the total land of the memorial following completion of the extension to ensure the trustees are legally responsible for the operation and maintenance of the memorial, including its extension, post completion of the extension. There are also some minor consequential amendments to the Act as a result, in items [1] and [7] of schedule 1.1. Item [3] of schedule 1.1 amends section 3 of the Act to appoint a representative of the ADF as a trustee in addition to the current trustees. Item [6] of schedule 1.1 inserts a new section to allow each branch of the ADF to be represented in the Anzac Memorial Building. The appointment of an ADF representative will rotate after a minimum of two years, but no longer than every three years, between Commander Forces Command, Commander Australian Fleet and Air Commander Australia. It is proposed that the first rotation begin with Commander Forces Command.

Item [10] of schedule 1.1 amends the Act to insert a new section 12 that contains a limitation of liability provision in favour of the trustees. Items [1] and [2] of schedule 1.2 amend section 16B of the Bail Act 2013 in order to ensure that the show cause requirement will apply to an accused person who commits a serious indictable offence while on bail or parole, whether that bail or parole was granted under a law of New South Wales or the law of another jurisdiction. Without the amendment, an accused person may be subject to bail or parole granted under a law of another jurisdiction, commit a serious indictable offence in New South Wales but not be subject to the show cause requirement simply because bail or parole was not granted in New South Wales. This issue has direct consequences for those towns in border locations of New South Wales, where individuals travel between, and commit offences in, multiple jurisdictions.

Item [3] of schedule 1.2 amends section 18 of the Bail Act 2013 in a similar way in relation to the existing requirement for a bail authority to consider whether an accused person has previously committed a serious offence whilst on bail such that the requirement applies whether the bail was granted in New South Wales or another jurisdiction. Item [4] of schedule 1.2 updates cross-references in relation to the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. Schedule 1.3 amends section 41 of the Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987. It will remove the requirement for juvenile justice officers to provide reports to courts on oath when reporting a breach of a good behaviour bond, probation order or outcome plan to a court. This amendment will align and streamline procedures with other community-based orders supervised by Juvenile Justice NSW, including for breaches of parole, community service orders and community clean-up orders where there is no legislative requirement for reports to be sworn at court.

The change will align Juvenile Justice and Corrective Services practice in providing breach information to the court and allow for consistent court registry practices. Schedule 1.4 to the bill amends the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987. Item [2] amends section 55 of the Act to provide that the period of supervision of a juvenile offender on a parole order will be prescribed by the regulations. This amendment does not affect the power of courts to set the non-parole period of a juvenile offender's custodial sentence and the period during which the offender may be released on parole. It will provide that once a juvenile offender has been released on parole, the regulations will prescribe the duration of a supervision condition of the parole order. This period has already been prescribed in clause 95 (2) of the Children (Detention Centre) Regulation 2015 as the lesser of two years or the period that the order is in force and, in the case of detainees who are classified persons, the lesser of three years or the period that the order is in force. This amendment is consistent with the Government's reforms to parole introduced by the Parole Legislation Amendment Act 2017.

Item [3] of schedule 1.4 will authorise juvenile detention centre managers to delegate their functions. Centre managers have a wide range of statutory functions. The new provision will enable them to get on with their

work and promote the effective operation of juvenile detention centres. Centre managers will be subject to the direction and control of the Secretary of the Department of Justice in the exercise of their functions, including delegation of their functions. The secretary's new power will be used to set statewide policies and procedures for the exercise of centre manager functions, including the delegation of functions to staff and the exercise of delegated functions. This is a new safeguard to ensure that centre manager functions are delegated and exercised appropriately. Item [4] of schedule 1.4 introduces a new legislative framework to allow Juvenile Justice NSW to share more information in appropriate circumstances, particularly with other government agencies. The new framework aims to ensure that sensitive juvenile justice information is protected, but at the same time gives Juvenile Justice the capacity to share necessary information to carry out its functions and facilitate the functions of other agencies.

Item [1] of schedule 1.4 omits the current Juvenile Justice secrecy provision in section 37D of the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987, which will be moved to a new section 102, as provided for by item [4] of schedule 1.4, and amended to be more flexible and fit for purpose. Section 37D currently provides that it is an offence for a person to disclose information obtained in connection with the administration or execution of the Children (Detention Centres) Act except in very limited circumstances. The current provision routinely prevents Juvenile Justice from sharing information where necessary for the effective operation of the justice system and the public sector more broadly. For example, providing information about an adult offender who was in Juvenile Justice custody as a child to the High Risk Offenders Assessment Committee for the purpose of assessing whether to make an application for an extended supervision or continuing detention order under the Crimes (High Risk Offenders) Act 2006 does not fall within the scope of the exceptions to section 37D, unless a subpoena or other compulsory disclosure process is followed.

Another example is disclosure for the purposes of the Their Futures Matter initiative. This is a landmark New South Wales Government reform to create a service system that delivers coordinated, wraparound and evidence-based supports for vulnerable children, young people and their families to transform their life outcomes. Section 37D currently prohibits Juvenile Justice disclosing information for the purposes of Their Futures Matter, despite the Privacy Commissioner having made a public interest direction under section 41 of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 to facilitate the sharing of personal information for the initiative. In moving section 37D to a new section 102, a new subsection will be added to provide additional flexibility, so it no longer criminalises disclosures permitted by the Secretary of the Department of Justice or an official policy made by the secretary.

For example, a policy made by the secretary might provide that disclosure of information is not prohibited by new section 102 where a privacy code of practice or a public interest direction has been made by the Privacy Commissioner to enable disclosure of personal information by Juvenile Justice, such as the public interest direction relating to Their Futures Matter. In addition, the current exception in paragraph (c) of the provision will be amended to enable the disclosure of information for the purposes of any legal proceedings, instead of confining it to legal proceedings arising under the Children (Detention Centres) Act. This will make it clear that Juvenile Justice officers will be able to lawfully include information obtained in connection with the administration or execution of the Children (Detention Centres) Act in reports to courts in proceedings under other Acts such as sentencing proceedings under the Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1988, the Children (Community Service Orders) Act 1987 and the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 without having to go through the cumbersome process of being subpoenaed to provide that information.

The Juvenile Justice secrecy provision will continue to prohibit improper disclosure of sensitive juvenile justice information. A person who has obtained information in connection with the administration or execution of the Children (Detention Centres) Act who discloses it in a way contrary to the new section 102—that is, in a way that does not fall into one of the exceptions, is not authorised by the secretary and is not authorised by any official departmental policy—will commit an offence. The offence will remain punishable by up to 10 penalty units or 12 months imprisonment, or both.

Item [4] of schedule 1.4 inserts a new section 102A into the Children (Detention Centres) Act. It will allow the secretary to disclose information to any person, notwithstanding privacy legislation, on a case-by-case basis for specific purposes to be prescribed by the regulations. This will allow Juvenile Justice to disclose information in appropriate cases for purposes such as law enforcement, administering sentences or court orders, and providing services and programs to young offenders. Before making a regulation under the new section 102A, the details of the regulation and the prescribed purposes for which information may be disclosed will be settled in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the privacy commissioner, to ensure they are appropriate. The provision for an information-sharing arrangement with the Commissioner of Fines Administration will be moved to a new section 102B. It will be expanded to allow the secretary to enter into information-sharing arrangements with prescribed public sector agencies to facilitate the regular exchange of information prescribed by the regulations.

Schedule 1.5 makes amendments to the details of the current information-sharing arrangement with the Commissioner of Fines Administration under existing section 102 of the Children (Detention Centres) Act in clause 148A of the Children (Detention Centres) Regulation 2015. The details of any other information-sharing arrangements between the department and a prescribed agency will be prescribed by the regulations following consultation with key stakeholders, including the privacy commissioner, to ensure that they are necessary, proportionate and appropriate. Schedule 1.6 amends the Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013 by transferring the administrative review jurisdiction of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] for the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016 and the Tattoo Parlours Act 2012 from the Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division to the Occupational Division.

Schedule 1.7 to the bill amends the Civil Liability Act 2002 by inserting savings and transitional provisions relating to the definition of "offender in custody" and "offender" in section 26A of the Act. Those savings and transitional provisions were originally intended to be inserted into the Civil Liability Act by schedule 4.8 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Amendment (Sentencing Options) Act 2017 on 24 September 2018. However, due to an inadvertent drafting error in the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Amendment (Sentencing Options) Act 2017, that did not happen. Those savings and transitional provisions are being inserted into the Civil Liability Act by schedule 1.7, with retrospective effect from 24 September 2018.

Item [2] of Schedule 1.8 amends section 61J of the Crimes Act 1900, which relates to the offence of aggravated sexual assault, to create a new circumstance of aggravation that the alleged offender threatened to inflict grievous bodily harm or wounding on the alleged victim or any other person present or nearby at the time of, or immediately before or after, the commission of an offence of sexual assault. This amendment reflects the fact that significant fear and trauma can be caused to victims when threats of the infliction of grievous bodily harm or wounding are made in the context of the commission of an offence of sexual assault. Items [3] to [9] of Schedule 1.8 amend section 545B of the Crimes Act to update the language in that provision. Section 545B of the Crimes Act provides for an offence of intimidation or annoyance by violence or otherwise.

The amendments remove gendered language and ensure that the offence captures an appropriately wider range of domestic relationships, including de facto relationships. Schedule 1.9 amends the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. Item [2] amends the Act to provide inmates with the option of delaying their release from custody up to four days after a sentence expires where there is a good reason, such as a lack of transport to return home, and when the inmate requests or consents to the delay. Items [3] and [4] amend the Act to provide for action to be taken with respect to breaches of a community correction order or a conditional release order that occurred during the term of the order after the order has expired. This will enable courts to hold offenders accountable for breaches where the court learns about the details of the breach after the term of the order has expired.

Item [5] amends section 128C of the Act and provides that the period of supervision of an offender on a parole order will be prescribed by the regulations. It complements the amendment to section 55 of the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987 in schedule 1.4 [2] to the bill, which I addressed earlier in this speech. Again, this provision will not affect the power of courts to set the non-parole period of an offender's custodial sentence and the period during which the offender may be released on parole. It will provide that once an offender has been released on parole, the regulations will prescribe the duration of supervision under the parole order. The amendment is consistent with the Government's reforms to parole introduced by the Parole Legislation Amendment Act 2017. Items [6], [7] and [8] reinsert powers that the State Parole Authority previously had under section 163 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act to revoke an intensive correction order for reasons in addition to breach of the order. Those powers were inadvertently not carried forward when the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Amendment (Sentencing Options) Act 2017 amended the Act as part of the Government's sentencing reforms. Those items correct that unintentional error.

Item [9] extends the powers of community corrections officers and the Commissioner of Corrective Services under sections 163 and 170 of the Act to deal with breaches of intensive corrections orders and parole orders to breaches of reintegration home detention orders. This will provide a statutory basis for Corrective Services NSW to deal with low-level breaches of reintegration home detention orders in the community where appropriate, as well as referring the offender to the State Parole Authority for action under section 168D of the Act, including revocation. Items [10] and [11] will amend the Act to require the State Parole Authority to provide reasons if it makes any decision following a submission or recommendation from the State or the Commissioner of Corrective Services. This will ensure that the authority's reasons for all such decisions are clearly ventilated and facilitate judicial reviews of the authority's decisions by the Supreme Court under section 69 of the Supreme Court Act 1970.

Items [1], [12] and [13] remove references to compliance and monitoring officers in the Act. Schedule 1.12 and schedule 1.21 to the bill remove references to those officers from other Acts and statutory instruments.

Those officers no longer exist, having been transferred to the Community Corrections division of Corrective Services NSW. Outdated references to "probation and parole officers" are also being amended by the bill, given that they are now known as "community corrections officers". Schedules 1.8 [1], 1.12, 1.13 [1], 1.17 [2], 1.17 [3] and 1.21 update or remove references to them in a number of Acts. Schedule 1.10 amends section 63 of the Crimes (Appeal and Review) Act 2001 to ensure the stay provisions apply in both sentencing and conviction appeals to automatic licence disqualification periods imposed under the Road Transport Act 2013.

The recent Court of Appeal decision in *Director of Public Prosecutions (NSW) v Kmetyk (No 2)* [2018] NSWCA 195 has interpreted section 63 to mean that licence disqualification periods arising as a consequence of a conviction are only stayed by a conviction appeal, not by a sentencing appeal. The amendment in the bill removes that distinction and restores the status quo as it was understood previously. This will ensure that licence disqualification periods are stayed, regardless of whether the appeal is against conviction or sentence. The distinction the case law draws between different types of appeals is unnecessary and has the potential to lead to confusion and unnecessary conviction appeals being lodged purely to obtain a stay. It is also difficult for Roads and Maritime Services to implement within existing systems.

It is important to note that these amendments do not relate to offences that are sufficiently serious to warrant a police officer giving a driver an immediate suspension notice under the Road Transport Act 2013. Those matters are explicitly excluded from a stay pending appeal provisions by section 63 (2A) of the Crimes (Appeal and Review) Act. Items [1] and [2] of schedule 1.1 amend the definition of "domestic relationship" in section 5 of the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 by inserting a new provision specifically in relation to paid carers and their dependants. Currently, a relationship between a dependant and a paid carer is treated as a domestic relationship under the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act. This has a number of implications for the dependant, who may be a child or a person with a disability living in residential out-of-home care facilities. Under section 49 of the Act, a police officer must make an application for an apprehended domestic violence order if, relevantly, the police officer believes a domestic violence offence recently has been committed, or is being committed, is imminent, or is likely to be committed.

A domestic violence offence currently includes a personal violence offence committed by a person who has or had a relationship involving his or her dependence on the ongoing paid care of another person. This means that police are very limited in exercising any discretion in relation to applications for apprehended domestic violence orders when responding to circumstances where a dependant is alleged to have committed or is likely to commit a domestic violence offence against a paid carer. The making of such an application against a dependant may have significant consequences, including court proceedings. The amendment will change the definition of "domestic relationship" so that a paid carer and a dependant will be treated as having a domestic relationship for the purpose of any offence committed by a paid carer against a dependant, but not for the purpose of an offence committed by a dependant against a paid carer.

Further, an apprehended domestic violence order will still be able to be made against a paid carer for the protection of a dependant, but not against a dependant for the protection of a paid carer. This amendment recognises the difference that often exists in the power dynamic between paid carers and dependants. The amendment will still allow paid carers to seek assistance in managing the behaviour of a dependant by way of an apprehended personal violence order without requiring the police to apply for an apprehended domestic violence order. It will allow all relevant circumstances to be taken into account, including the dependant's disability or vulnerability, when applying for an apprehended personal violence order on a paid carer's behalf. This will also enable these applications to be referred for mediation. The amendment addresses paid care relationships, including those where a paid carer stays overnight in the course of their employment at a residential care facility, but does not change the current position in relation to unpaid care or circumstances where a domestic relationship exists between a paid carer and a dependant outside of the dependency relationship.

Item [3] of schedule 1.11 inserts a new section into part 13A of the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 to ensure that information shared under that part, which would constitute a protected confidence under the existing sexual assault communications privilege scheme, does not amount to a waiver of that privilege. Part 13A of the Act allows for information sharing between government and non-government agencies in the case of domestic violence. These information-sharing arrangements assist to facilitate access for victims to domestic violence support services and help to reduce or prevent serious threats to the life, health or safety of a victim. Information shared in accordance with part 13A—for example, in the course of developing a safety action plan for a victim—relevantly may include information provided to a counsellor in relation to a sexual assault.

Division 2 of part 5 of chapter 6 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 provides for the sexual assault communications privilege scheme. The scheme protects the counselling records of sexual assault complainants from being compelled to be produced, including by subpoena on behalf of a defendant, and adduced in criminal

proceedings without leave of the court. This is an important protection for sexual assault complainants. The amendment ensures that the disclosure of a protected confidence for the purposes of part 13A of the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act will not result in the loss of sexual assault communications privilege that attaches to the protected confidence. Item [2] of schedule 1.13 amends section 17C of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 to make it clear that courts dealing with sentence appeals may request sentencing assessment reports.

Schedule 1.14 amends section 5DA of the Criminal Appeal Act 1912 to clarify that the Attorney General or Director of Public Prosecutions may appeal against a sentence that was varied or imposed by the District Court, on appeal from the Local Court or the Children's Court if the sentence was reduced because the person undertook to assist law enforcement authorities and the person failed, either wholly or in part, to fulfil that undertaking. Section 5DA of the Criminal Appeal Act already provides for a right for the Attorney General or the Director of Public Prosecutions to appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal against any sentence imposed on a person that was reduced because the person undertook to assist law enforcement authorities if the person failed, wholly or in part, to fulfil the undertaking. This amendment clarifies that the right is available in relation to a sentence that was varied or imposed on appeal by the District Court and reflects the community interest in persons who receive discounts on sentence for providing assistance to law enforcement authorities being held to account if that assistance is not provided.

Items [1] and [2] of schedule 1.15 amend section 179 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to extend the time limit for the commencement of summary proceedings in a narrow set of circumstances. These amendments aim to ensure that where summary charges were laid as backup charges to a related indictable offence in the Local Court or Children's Court, and proceedings were heard in the Local or Children's Court that resulted in a person being found guilty or convicted of the related indictable offence and where following that finding of guilt or conviction the backup summary offences were withdrawn or dismissed, if a person successfully appeals their finding of guilt or conviction in the District Court the backup summary offence or offences can be re-laid outside the existing six-month time frame for summary offences.

Currently, it may be impossible for backup summary charges to be re-laid following a person appealing their finding of guilt or conviction in relation to a related indictable offence to the District Court because the appeal may not be finalised within the six-month time frame available to lay a summary charge. This amendment seeks to resolve this issue by putting a person in the same position that they were in when their matter was first heard in the Local Court or Children's Court. This amendment will not enable a person to be charged with new or different offences outside the six-month time frame. Item [3] of schedule 1.15 amends section 222 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1989 to clarify that a police officer can issue a subpoena on behalf of a public officer where the public officer is the prosecutor in proceedings. A public officer includes the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Item [4] of schedule 1.15 inserts section 275C into the Criminal Procedure Act to give courts a clear power to give directions to enable the giving of expert evidence concurrently or consecutively in criminal proceedings, with the consent of the prosecutor and the accused. This amendment will enable the giving of concurrent evidence by experts—colloquially known as "hot tubbing"—in order to assist judicial officers and juries to understand and engage with expert evidence. It will also streamline the process of that evidence being given in the course of criminal proceedings. Evidence is traditionally given consecutively in criminal proceedings and follows the usual process of examination-in-chief, cross-examination, and re-examination. This amendment will enable expert witnesses to be called immediately after one another.

Item [5] of schedule 1.15 inserts section 280A into the Criminal Procedure Act, which enables a person to whom a subpoena is addressed to redact personal information, being addresses and telephone numbers, from any document or thing produced in compliance with the subpoena unless the personal information is a materially relevant part of the evidence or a court makes an order requiring the disclosure. Similar protections already apply in relation to the disclosure of addresses or telephone numbers of witnesses who appear in proceedings for an offence who make written statements and witnesses proposed to be called by a prosecutor. This amendment will ensure consistency in relation to the protection of personal information. Items [6] to [9] of schedule 1.15 amend the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to extend the existing sensitive evidence protections that exist in part 2A of chapter 6 of the Act in relation to sensitive evidence held by a prosecuting authority to sensitive evidence that is held by a health authority.

Currently, part 2A of chapter 6 of the Criminal Procedure Act limits the disclosure of sensitive information held by a prosecuting authority, including photographs of alleged sexual assault victims or video recordings of a person committing a sexual offence, to an accused person. The existing sensitive evidence provisions protect alleged victims from the fear, trauma and embarrassment of an accused person having a copy of sensitive evidence that may include photographs of their genitals or a video of a sexual assault. In the course of an investigation of a criminal matter—usually a matter that involves an allegation of sexual assault or child

sexual assault—clinical photographs and videos may be created as part of an examination conducted on the alleged victim, often at a hospital. Those photographs and videos will often fall within the scope of the existing definition of sensitive evidence. However, because they are in the possession of a health authority and not a prosecuting authority they can be the subject of a subpoena and are not protected by the existing sensitive evidence provisions. This is the case despite the fact that the same videos or images may be included in a brief of evidence held by the prosecuting authority.

These amendments will extend the current sensitive evidence provisions to sensitive evidence held by a health authority and will enable a court to set aside a subpoena to a health authority insofar as it relates to sensitive evidence. Importantly, these amendments do not change the current definition of sensitive evidence. They do not prevent an accused person from seeing sensitive evidence that is held by a health authority. The health authority must give the accused person and any other person who has been engaged to assist with the accused person's case reasonable access to the sensitive evidence. Item [10] to schedule 1.15 amends section 306M of the Criminal Procedure Act to expand the definition of investigating official, in relation to the questioning of a child, to include a person who is engaged, in conjunction with a police officer, in an investigation caused to be made under child protection legislation of another State or Territory. The Criminal Procedure Act currently provides for different mechanisms for vulnerable witnesses to give evidence in criminal proceedings. One of these mechanisms is the ability of a vulnerable person, defined as a child or cognitively impaired person, to give evidence in chief by way of a recording made by an investigating official of an interview. Section 306M currently defines "investigating official" to mean:

- (a) a police officer (other than a police officer who is engaged in covert investigations) or,
- (b) in relation to the questioning of a child—a person who is engaged, in conjunction with [a police officer], in an investigation caused to be made by the Director-General of the Department of Community Services under section 27 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998.

The definition of "investigating official" does not currently include, in relation to the questioning of a child, persons engaged in comparable investigations to those caused to be made under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act in other jurisdictions in Australia. This is despite the fact that interviews may be conducted and recorded in other jurisdictions in a similar manner and by persons who have a similar role in investigations caused to be made under comparable child protection legislation in accordance with the law and practice of those jurisdictions. Interviews may be conducted with children outside New South Wales for a number of reasons. An example is when a child has moved interstate and subsequently made a disclosure about a sexual offence that occurred in New South Wales. This amendment will ensure that recorded interviews of children conducted by authorised persons outside New South Wales, in accordance with the relevant legislation of the State or Territory where the interview occurred, can be admitted as the evidence in chief of that witness in New South Wales proceedings.

Schedule 1.16 amends section 44 of the District Court Act 1973 and introduces a new part to schedule 3 to that Act. Recent case law has cast doubt on the District Court's jurisdiction to hear matters arising from a commercial transaction. This amendment will remove any doubt around that issuing by ensuring the District Court has jurisdiction to hear commercial matters up to its jurisdictional limit—that is, \$750,000. This amendment is required to provide certainty to practitioners and litigants about whether they should be taking their matter to either the District Court or the Supreme Court. It is important that this amendment be applied retrospectively in order to protect past judgements from the uncertainty of being challenged on appeal on a purely technical basis. Item [1] of schedule 1.17 inserts section 12A into the Drug Court Act 1998 to confer on the Drug Court the special jurisdiction of the Local Court, so that it may deal with applications under division 3A of part 7.4 of chapter 7 of the Road Transport Act 2013. This means the Drug Court will have jurisdiction to lift a person's licence disqualifications at the end of their involvement with a Drug Court program, instead of the Drug Court having to refer the licence issues back to the Local Court to be dealt with separately.

The existing requirements in the Road Transport Act 2013 will need to be met for the Drug Court to make an order removing licence disqualifications. These include that the disqualified person has not been convicted of any driving offence during the relevant offence-free period. The court will also need to consider factors, including public safety, the applicant's overall driving record and relevant personal circumstances, including the person's family and employment obligations. Applicants who have been convicted of a serious driving-related offence in section 221D will be excluded from making an application. This includes offences causing death or serious injury, predatory and menacing driving, and failing to stop and assist after impact causing death or grievous bodily harm. The amendment also enables the Drug Court to make rules about the practice and procedure to be adopted in relation to removal of licence disqualifications.

New section 1.18 amends section 76 of the Interpretation Act 1987 to bring the presumed time for postal service into line with section 160 of the Evidence Act 1995. Schedule 1.19 amends section 210M of the Law

Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 in relation to applications for stock mustering orders to clarify that the Commissioner of Police or a police officer may be represented by a police prosecutor in proceedings for a stock mustering order. Schedule 1.20 amends the Local Court Act 2007 to increase the jurisdictional limit of the Small Claims Division from \$10,000 to \$20,000. This will increase the number of matters that can access the division's more streamlined and less formal processes. Schedule 1.22 amends the Relationships Register Act 2010, which provides for the legal recognition of a couple's relationship, by the formal registration of that relationship.

The amendment in the bill will provide for an optional ceremony to be conducted at the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages when a couple registers their relationship. The inclusion of optional ceremonies as a way of providing formal recognition and a celebration of the commencement of a registered relationship was the sole change to the Relationships Register act 2010 recommended by the statutory review of the Act. This amendment therefore implements the findings of the statutory review in full and is consistent with the existing position in Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. Schedule 1.23 amends the Road Transport Act to ensure the driver disqualification reforms of October 2017 operate as intended. Item [1] amends the operation of the "relevant offence-free period" in division 3A of part 7.4 of the Act to make it clear that, where a person has been convicted of an offence listed in paragraph (a) of the definition of "relevant offence-free period", a four-year offence-free period applies irrespective of whether the disqualification period for that offence has expired.

The 2017 reforms introduced a path to return to lawful driving by applying to the Local Court to have a licence disqualification removed. The reforms contain a safeguard that a person has to wait two or four years after an offence before being eligible to have their licence disqualification removed. An amendment is required to clarify the operation of the "relevant offence-free period". This amendment clarifies that persons convicted of paragraph (a) offences must wait four years before the court can lift any outstanding licence disqualifications. In the case of other offences, the person must remain offence free for two years before outstanding disqualifications can be removed. The Act remains very clear that offenders who have ever been convicted of the most serious driving offences will never be eligible to apply to have their disqualification removed under the reform measures. This includes offences causing death or grievous bodily harm by driving, hit-and-runs, predatory or menacing driving and some other serious driving offences.

Item [3] inserts a transitional provision to accompany the change made in item[1]. Item [2] makes explicit that persons declared to be habitual traffic offenders can apply to quash their declarations, and the court has the power to quash those declarations, following the abolition of the Habitual Traffic Offender Scheme on 28 October 2017. Schedule 1.24 makes consequential amendments to sections 12 and 13 of the Succession Act 2006 following the Marriage Amendment (Definition and Religious Freedoms) Act 2017 of the Commonwealth. New section 12 provides that a will is revoked on the marriage of a testator. New section 13 provides that certain parts of a will are revoked on the divorce of a testator.

The Commonwealth Marriage Amendment Act recognised same-sex marriages and divorces that occurred in foreign jurisdictions as at 9 December 2017. This meant that the will of a person who entered into a same-sex marriage or divorce prior to 9 December 2017 was revoked at 9 December 2017. The bill amends the Succession Act 2006 to ensure that the revocation has effect only where a person executed a will before he or she entered into a same-sex marriage or divorced from a same-sex marriage. Ultimately, the bill will ensure that same-sex couples are treated equally under the Succession Act. The bill also includes a validation clause to clarify that anything done after 9 December 2017 that would have been lawful if this provision had applied at that time is taken to have been done lawfully.

Schedule 1.25 amends the Sydney Bethel Union Extension Act 1908 to divest property currently vested in the individual trustees under that Act and vest it in Sydney Bethel Union Pty Ltd, and provide that the Sydney Bethel Union Pty Ltd is to exercise all the functions that are conferred or imposed on the existing individual Trustees under that Act. This amendment was requested by the Sydney Bethel Union to modernise the Trust and strengthen its governance arrangements. Schedule 1.26 amends the Victims Rights and Support Act 2013 by expressly providing that the functions of the Commissioner for Victims Rights include providing funding to victims groups approved by the commissioner to provide support services to victims of crime, such as services that help victims exercise their rights under the Charter of Victims Rights and other legislation. By giving these arrangements a statutory basis, the Department of Justice can fund organisations that provide support to victims of crimes with the secretary's approval when a gap has been identified, and can set up a competitive grant process.

Schedule 2 to the bill amends several Acts to increase the maximum retirement age for New South Wales judges and magistrates from 72 to 75. This reform will also enable acting judges and magistrates to serve as acting judicial officers by being appointed up to the age of 78 rather than 77, as is the case currently. Judges appointed after these amendments commence will be able to access their pension at 65 rather than the previous threshold of

60, provided they have served 10 years. These amendments reflect trends towards people living and working longer. Experience shows that 40 per cent of judges are retiring at the maximum retirement age.

With that number increasing over time, it is clear the retirement age should be increased so that those who can continue to contribute to the fair administration of justice in New South Wales, do so. These amendments will apply to all judges appointed after these amendments commence and to existing judicial officers who consent to the changes, in accordance with section 55 of the Constitution Act 1902. These changes will also apply to future appointments of Directors of Public Prosecutions and Solicitors General, as they are entitled to a judges' pension, have been treated similarly to judicial officers in relation to their terms and conditions, and should continue to be treated in that way.

Schedule 3 to the bill amends the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014 and the Legal Profession Uniform Regulation 2015. The Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund was established by the Law Society in 1987 to stabilise rising insurance premiums. In 2001, following the collapse of HIH Insurance, the Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund assumed liability for all professional negligence claims that would otherwise have been met by HIH. The last claim against the Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund was finalised in 2014 and there is a declining probability of future claims. The fund currently holds approximately \$88 million. To ensure that these surplus funds can be used more productively, these amendments discontinue the Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund and vest its assets in equal shares in the Public Purpose Fund and the Law Society of New South Wales. As Lawcover Insurance will assume any liabilities relating to professional indemnity insurance that the Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund otherwise would have met, the amendments provide that the Law Society is to subscribe its share of the Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund assets in Lawcover Insurance.

While the likelihood of any future claim being made against the Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund is low, this will ensure that Lawcover Insurance is able to meet any claims if they arise. The amendments also establish a Community Legal Services account within the Public Purpose Fund to hold the divested Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund funds as a dedicated source of funding for community legal centres [CLCs], which provide an invaluable service to the New South Wales community. However, they have often faced funding uncertainty. This affects their ability to provide free legal assistance to those in need, particularly to disadvantaged groups in our community. The Cameron Review of Community Legal Centre Services recommended that the Government identify additional funding for community legal centres. In response to this recommendation, the Government has determined to use part of the Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund surplus to establish a new and separate source of community legal centre funding.

The funds in the Community Legal Services account will remain separate from the remainder of the Public Purpose Fund corpus and be preserved. The interest accruing from these funds can be reinvested, or used towards funding community legal centres, as determined by the Public Purpose Fund Trustees with the concurrence of the Attorney General. These amendments will enable the productive use of the Solicitors Mutual Indemnity Fund's surplus and secure a new source of ongoing funding for the community legal centre sector. They are the result of extensive discussions with the Law Society of New South Wales. I am grateful for the Law Society's vision and collaboration as we have negotiated this landmark arrangement towards providing greater access to justice in New South Wales.

In 2017, I asked the Steering Committee on the Public Purpose Fund, chaired by Geoff Levy, AO, to make recommendations for optimising funds. The two amendments in schedule 3 respond to recommendations made by the steering committee that are designed to expand the Public Purpose Fund's revenue base and strengthen the stewardship of its assets. The amendments in schedule 3.2 amend the definition of "applicable period" in the Legal Profession Uniform Regulation 2015 to provide that law firms must calculate statutory deposits based on the minimum balance in their general trust account over the past quarter, rather than the past year, to reflect what is currently done in Victoria. This will significantly increase the balance of statutory deposit accounts and thereby strengthen the financial position of the Public Purpose Fund.

Items [1], [2] and [3] of schedule 3.1 provide for the appointment of an additional trustee to the Public Purpose Fund with financial and investment expertise. These amendments will strengthen the sustainability and governance of the Public Purpose Fund. Most amendments in the bill will commence on the date of assent. Clause 2 provides that schedules 1.2 [1] to [3], 1.4 [1] and [4], 1.5, 1.6, 1.9 [2], 1.11 [1] and [2], 1.17 [1] and [4], 1.20, 1.22, 1.26, and schedule 3 will commence upon proclamation, so that affected agencies can prepare for implementation. Overall, the bill will improve the operation of courts, law enforcement agencies, and the civil and criminal justice system.

I now move to the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Victims) Bill 2018, which amends the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 and Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Regulation 2017. Division 2, part 3 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act makes provision for the making of victim impact statements during sentencing. The function of a victim impact statement is to inform the sentencing court of the impact of the crime

on its victims. In some criminal proceedings, particularly those for sex offences, the victim may have been required to give evidence during the trial. However, in many cases the making and reading of a victim impact statement will be the only involvement the victim has in the proceedings. As such, it represents an important opportunity for the victims to have their voice heard and share their experiences in a way that can be empowering, validating and often therapeutic.

In May 2017 I asked the NSW Sentencing Council to review victims' involvement in the sentencing process, including the principles courts apply when receiving and addressing victim impact statements, who can make a victim impact statement and procedural issues with the making of victim impact statements. The Sentencing Council's recommendations for legislative amendment aim to improve the victim impact statement system so that victims' voices can be heard and any trauma when engaging with the process is minimised. I thank the Sentencing Council for its report and considered recommendations, which balance the needs of victims and fairness for offenders.

The Government has accepted many of the Sentencing Council's recommendations. The bill implements those that require legislative amendment, including amendments that will: first, enable victims to provide a more complete picture of the harm they have suffered as a result of the offence; secondly, ensure that victims are able to have a support person present when reading their victim impact statement; and, thirdly, where appropriate, allow victims to read a victim impact statement via closed-circuit television [CCTV] or in the absence of the public. Other recommendations of the Sentencing Council will require further consultation to help determine the Government's final position and ensure that the empowerment of victims to have their voices heard during the sentencing process is appropriately balanced with the right to efficient court processes for victims and the wider justice system.

The bill replaces division 2, part 3 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 with key amendments as follows. Proposed new section 26 expands the definition of "member of the primary victims' immediate family" to include a step-grandparent or step-grandchild of the victim, an aunt, uncle, niece or nephew of the victim and, in the case of a victim who is an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander, a person who is or has been part of the close family or kin of the victim according to the Indigenous kinship system of the victim's culture. The definition will also include any person who the prosecutor is satisfied is a member of the victim's extended family or culturally recognised family to whom the victim is or was close, or is a person with whom the victim had a close relationship analogous to a family relationship, or whom the victim considered to be family.

Proposed new section 27 will extend the range of offences for which victims are entitled to make a victim impact statement to include additional offences that are sexual or indecent in nature or involve a violation of privacy, such as voyeurism or distributing intimate images without consent. While these offences may not involve physical or sexual violence, they may nevertheless cause similar personal harms to the prescribed sexual offences for which victim impact statements are currently accepted. New section 27 will also ensure that victims of offences that are taken into account by the court when sentencing for the principal offence under section 33 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act are also able to make victim impact statements.

These offences are commonly referred to as "Form 1" offences, and are generally offences of similar or lesser seriousness than the principal offence to which the offender has admitted guilt, but for which the offender has not been convicted. As the victim impact statement provisions are enlivened upon conviction, victims of such offences are currently ineligible to make statements. This amendment will ensure that more victims are able to have their say, and where a victim of a principal offence has also been the victim of a Form 1 offence, it will allow them to more fully describe the harms they have suffered.

Subdivision 2 of part 3, division 2 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 deals with the preparation of victim impact statements. Under the Act, the particulars that may be contained in a victim impact statement are outlined in the definitions section. Under the proposed amendments, this will now be outlined in a standalone section that significantly expands the types of harms that a victim may discuss in a victim impact statement. Under the existing provisions, only particulars of the actual bodily harm or psychological or psychiatric harm suffered by a primary victim, or in the case of a family victim the impact of the primary victim's death on their immediate family, may be included in a victim impact statement. Under new section 28, a victim impact statement by a primary victim will be able to discuss any of the following harms suffered by the victim or the victim's immediate family as a direct result of the offence: physical, psychological or psychiatric harm; emotional suffering or distress; harm to relationships; and economic loss that arises from the above forms of harm. This will allow victims to give a more complete picture of the harms they have suffered.

Under existing provisions, victims may have somebody else prepare a victim impact statement for them based on information they provide, or have somebody else read a victim impact statement on their behalf. Where the victim is incapable of doing so due to age, impairment or other reasons, someone else may also provide the information contained in a victim impact statement and object to the tendering of a victim impact statement.

However, these provisions relating to how a victim may be assisted during the victim impact statement process and by whom are currently spread throughout division 2 of the Act and the regulations. Proposed new section 30 brings together these existing provisions with the classes of persons who may assist the victim prescribed by the regulation. In addition to a person having parental responsibility for the victim, a member of the primary victim's immediate family and any other representative of the victim, the regulations will also prescribe the victim's carer and any person who is important in the victim's life as people who may assist the victim or act on their behalf, as recommended by the Sentencing Council.

Proposed new sections 30B and 30E will ensure that the same requirements to receive, to consider and to comment on victim impact statements will apply to both statements from primary victims and family victims. Under section 28 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999, a court may receive and consider a victim impact statement from a primary victim, but must receive and acknowledge a victim impact statement from a family member of a primary victim who has died as a result of the offence, and make any comment on it that the court considers appropriate. The bill amends the provision so that in both cases the court must receive, acknowledge and consider a victim impact statement that complies with the requirements of the Act, and make any comment that the court considers appropriate.

Proposed new section 30E implements the recommendations of the Sentencing Council and the statutory review into Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Amendment (Family Member Victim Impact Statement) Act 2014 in respect of the drawing of inferences about the absence of a victim impact statement. The making of a victim impact statement is discretionary, and section 29 (3) of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act states that the absence of a statement does not give rise to an inference that the offence had little or no impact on the victim. The Sentencing Council recommended that this provision be strengthened by specifying that the absence of a victim impact statement did not give rise to any inference about the impact of the offence. The statutory review recommended that the same amendment be made to section 29 (4), an equivalent provision that applies to family victims. This bill implements both recommendations.

Proposed new section 30F makes changes to the way in which the court may deal with victim impact statements that do not fully comply with the requirements of the Act regarding their content. A court may now receive and consider only a victim impact statement that complies with the requirements of the Act, and a victim impact statement may not discuss matters that relate to offences for which the offender is not being sentenced. This can lead to situations in which a victim cannot give a full account of the harm they have suffered such as where the offender has pleaded guilty to a lesser charge or where some of the harm arises from uncharged offences. New section 30F will give courts greater discretion to receive victim impact statements that are not in strict compliance with the Act, while ensuring fairness to the offender in such cases by requiring the court not to consider any matter in a victim impact statement that is not authorised by the division.

Proposed new section 30G will contain new provisions permitting the prosecution to provide a copy of a victim impact statement to the offender's legal practitioner. In practice, this is already occurring in many cases, as it allows the defence to consider any objections to the statement's content, thereby reducing the possibility of the victim being further traumatised by being cross-examined on the content of their victim impact statement, as well as upholding principles of due process. The new section will formalise this existing practice. New section 30G will include arrangements for offenders without legal representation to have only supervised access to victim impact statements. It also adds additional safeguards which prohibit the copying and dissemination of victim impact statements unless done for a legitimate purpose related to the proceedings by the offender's legal representative, and which require their destruction upon the conclusion of sentencing proceedings.

Subdivision 4 of part 3, division 2 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 makes substantial amendments to the way in which victims may read out their statements. Under the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999, victims who are entitled to give evidence during a trial by way of CCTV arrangements, such as victims of prescribed sexual offences, children or cognitively impaired people, are also entitled to utilise such arrangements when reading their victim impact statement. Victim impact statements made by victims of prescribed sexual offences are also able to be read out in the absence of the public, and such a victim is entitled to have a support person present. The bill will expand these provisions so that support persons, and, where reasonably practicable, special arrangements such as CCTV, are made available to all victims when reading a victim impact statement. Victims who are currently entitled to special arrangements when reading a victim impact statement will retain that entitlement.

In the case of all other victims, there will be instances where it is not reasonably practicable for these arrangements to be made. The bill will provide for victims who are not currently entitled to such arrangements to ask the court to make them available, subject to considerations such as the availability of necessary facilities, the reasonable practicability of granting the request and any other matter the court considers relevant. The Mental Health (Forensic Provisions) Amendment (Victims) Bill 2018, which was introduced into Parliament last week,

included provisions that would permit victims to make victim impact statements where there has been a verdict of not guilty by reason of mental illness, or a limited finding of guilt, under the Mental Health (Forensic Provisions) Act 1990. Those provisions are reintroduced under subdivision 5 to ensure consistency with the significant revisions to division 2, part 3 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 made by this bill.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended in its August 2017 Criminal Justice Report that a range of measures be put in place to protect witnesses giving evidence in child sexual abuse proceedings. Many of the reforms recommended by the royal commission had already been adopted by New South Wales before the Criminal Justice Report was released. For example, New South Wales legislation already provided for special measures to be made available to children under the Child Sexual Offence Evidence Pilot. The additional protections to be implemented by this bill will supplement existing protections. Schedule 1 to the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Victims) Bill 2018 amends the Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987 to implement a royal commission recommendation that complainants in child sexual abuse prosecutions should not be required to give evidence on more than one occasion where the accused is a young person.

Currently, where a young person is charged with a child sexual abuse offence—that is not a serious children's indictable offence—the prosecution must conduct a hearing in full in the Children's Court before the court can determine whether the proceedings should be heard summarily or according to law in a higher court. This involves the complainant having to give evidence and be subject to cross-examination. Where the Children's Court determines that the matter should be referred to a higher court to be dealt with according to law, the complainant is required to give evidence again in full at the trial in the higher court. Schedules 1 [2] to [5] amend the Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987 to enable the Children's Court to determine whether a young person charged with a child sexual assault offence should be dealt with summarily or according to law solely on the documents the prosecution tenders and any evidence presented by the young person.

This is subject to exceptions: first, that in the case of certain complainants the court is satisfied that there are special reasons in the interests of justice that the complainant must attend and give evidence orally; or, secondly, that in the case of any other prosecution witness the court is satisfied that there are substantial reasons in the interests of justice that the witness must attend and give evidence orally. The amendments enhance protections available to complainants in child sexual abuse proceedings by ensuring that they are only required to give evidence, and be subject to cross-examination on more than one occasion, in limited circumstances.

New South Wales laws have a range of other protections for some categories of complainants and vulnerable witnesses who give evidence in criminal proceedings and apprehended violence order [AVO] proceedings. These include measures like support persons and giving evidence in closed court or via recording. Their purpose is to reduce the stress and trauma of giving evidence in court, and to reduce the risk that complainants and witnesses will be unwilling to proceed with giving evidence in court. The protections also assist witnesses to give their best evidence. The royal commission commended these types of legislative protections in the context of child sexual abuse proceedings.

The Crimes Legislation Amendment (Victims) Bill 2018 will expand and harmonise some of the available legislative protections to four categories of witnesses: first, complainants and sexual offence, or tendency witnesses in criminal proceedings for prescribed sexual offences; second, child complainants, witnesses and accused persons who are children under 18; third, complainants or witnesses with a cognitive impairment; and, fourth, domestic violence complainants. The bill will enable more vulnerable witnesses to have access to support persons. A support person accompanies a witness while they are giving evidence, providing emotional support during what can often be a difficult experience for the witness. They attend court to make this important contribution on a voluntary basis and are typically a friend or family member of the complainant or witness.

Schedule 5 [28] of the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Victims) Bill 2018 amends the Criminal Procedure Act to enable complainants, witnesses and defendants who are 16 and 17 years of age to have a support person present when giving evidence in all AVO and criminal proceedings. This protection is currently only available to children under 16 years. Schedule 5 [30] to the bill amends the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 so that domestic violence complainants in all criminal proceedings for domestic violence offences, not just AVO proceedings, are entitled to have a support person present when giving evidence. Schedule 5 [10] to the bill amends the Criminal Procedure Act to ensure that, in prescribed sexual offence proceedings, a complainant or sexual offence witness who also meets the definition of a "vulnerable witness"—namely, children under 16 years of age or cognitively impaired persons—is entitled to the same level of assistance from their chosen support person as a vulnerable witness giving evidence in proceedings for other types of offences.

In certain circumstances, support persons for vulnerable witnesses offer an additional layer of protection as they are able to assist with communication difficulties. This is important to ensure that vulnerable witnesses are able to give their best evidence. The bill will also enable more vulnerable witnesses to give evidence in a closed court. Court proceedings are generally open to the public. However, in some circumstances closing the

court is necessary to respect witnesses' privacy, and prevent unnecessary distress to witnesses. Schedule 2 [2] to the bill amends the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 to introduce a presumption for a closed court in all AVO proceedings when children aged 16 and 17 years are involved. This ensures that the protection available to children under 16 years of age in this type of proceeding is extended to all children. In addition, schedule 2 [3] amends section 58 of that Act to provide that the court is to be closed in AVO proceedings where the defendant is under 18 years of age. This is consistent with the approach to child defendants in all criminal proceedings.

The bill will also enable the record of the original evidence of additional vulnerable witnesses to be admissible as evidence in a re-trial or subsequent proceedings. The record of the original evidence must be the best available record. Ordinarily this is an audiovisual recording but may be an audio recording or, as a last resort, a transcript of evidence. Subject to some limited exceptions, the original evidence of complainants in prescribed sexual offence proceedings can already be used in re-trials and subsequent trials. This ensures that the complainant does not have to attend and give evidence in person again. Schedules 5 [13] to [26] of the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Victims) Bill 2018 amend the Criminal Procedure Act to ensure that the availability of this protective measure is extended to a wider range of vulnerable witnesses—namely, complainants in proceedings for an offence of female genital mutilation; sexual offence witnesses in prescribed sexual offence proceedings; children under 18 who are witnesses in prescribed sexual offence proceedings; and cognitively impaired persons in prescribed sexual offence proceedings.

Schedules 5 [7] and [11] amend the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 by inserting two new provisions—namely, new sections 279A and 294CA—to ensure that complainants in prescribed sexual offence proceedings have this special measure available to them in a broader range of proceedings—namely, in related criminal proceedings where they are also the complainant, section 279A; and where they are called as a sexual offence witness, section 294CA. The amendments include important safeguards for accused persons when the prosecution seeks to tender the record of the original evidence. For example, the prosecution must give notice to the accused person that they intend to tender the original evidence in the retrial or subsequent proceedings. The court can also decline to admit the record of the original evidence having regard to certain matters prescribed in the Act, including the completeness of the original evidence and the interests of justice.

Schedules 5 [9] and [12] amend sections 290A and 306A of the Criminal Procedure Act to ensure that some of the protections available to complainants in prescribed sexual offence proceedings are extended to complainants in proceedings for an offence of female genital mutilation under section 45 or 45A of the Crimes Act 1900. These complainants currently do not have access to any of the special measures that are extended to sexual assault complainants, sexual offence witnesses or vulnerable witnesses. This is despite the fact that the nature of the offence means that these complainants are also likely to suffer significant trauma or embarrassment in having to give their evidence in open court or without the benefit of a support person. These amendments will ensure that these complainants have access to a number of important protections. These include the ability to give evidence in a closed court; the ability to give evidence by alternative arrangements, for example by CCTV; the presence of a support person; ensuring that they cannot be directly cross-examined by an unrepresented accused person; and ensuring that a record of their original evidence can be tendered in a retrial or subsequent proceedings, as well as in related criminal proceedings.

Schedule 5 also amends the Criminal Procedure Act to restrict witnesses who can be called in committal proceedings. Committal proceedings are held in the Local Court before a case is committed to the District Court or Supreme Court for trial or sentence. There are two types of tests that are applied by a magistrate when deciding whether a victim or witness should be called to give evidence during committal proceedings: first, the substantial reasons test; and, secondly, the special reasons test. The special reasons test creates a higher threshold to protect certain categories of witness who may experience particular trauma when giving evidence. Some categories of complainants, or victims, can never be called to give evidence in committal proceedings for this reason. These amendments will ensure that there is a consistent approach to certain complainants and vulnerable witnesses in committal proceedings, and increase the current protections in some circumstances.

Schedule 5 [4] amends section 84 of the Criminal Procedure Act to specify that sexual offence witnesses in prescribed sexual offence proceedings can only be directed to attend court to give oral evidence if the court is satisfied that there are special reasons in the interest of justice. Sexual offence witnesses are those against whom it is alleged that the accused person committed a prescribed sexual offence, and so go to the issue of tendency in criminal proceedings. The special reasons test will now also apply to vulnerable witnesses who witness an offence involving violence. Vulnerable witnesses are defined as children under 16 years and cognitively impaired persons. Schedule 5 [6] also amends section 84 to ensure that complainants in an offence involving violence who have been directed to attend and give evidence orally can only be cross-examined on additional matters that were not the subject of the magistrate's original order, if the special reasons test is satisfied.

In addition, schedules 5 [2], 5 [3] and 5 [5] amend sections 83 and 84 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to ensure that the protections available to complainants in certain types of matters listed in sections 83 and 84 of the Act, including offences involving violence and prescribed sexual assault offences, are extended to complainants in Commonwealth offences of a similar nature. The Commonwealth offences will be prescribed via amendments to the Criminal Procedure Regulation to progress at a later date following consultation with stakeholders.

I turn now to the Government Information (Public Access) Amendment Bill 2018. The bill completes the New South Wales Government's response to the recommendations of the Report on the Statutory Review of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and the Government Information (Information Commissioner) Act 2009. The Government is committed to the policy objectives of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009—the GIPA Act for short—which include maintaining and advancing a system of responsible and representative democratic government that is open, accountable, fair and effective. The statutory review concluded that the policy objectives of the GIPA Act remain valid and its provisions generally remain appropriate for achieving those objectives. However, the report also recommended a number of specific amendments to improve the operation of the GIPA Act. The bill now presented to this House gives effect to those recommendations.

These amendments are the result of extensive consultations, including submissions from the public as well as meetings with key government and non-government stakeholders. The first amendment I will address is the use of emails in the application process. Currently, individual agencies must seek the Information Commissioner's approval to receive GIPA applications electronically. Items [6], [7] and [9] of schedule 1 amend section 41 of the GIPA Act to modernise and simplify the access application process by creating a discretionary power for agencies to accept access applications lodged electronically without having to seek the Information Commissioner's prior approval to do so. This will make it easier for members of the public to make access applications and promote the objects of the GIPA Act by facilitating access to government information.

Applicants will still be able to post applications or lodge them at an office of the agency, should they choose to do so. Applications will have to include the applicant's name and a postal or email address for correspondence. This will allow applicants to be contacted via their preferred method of correspondence, either post or email. Item [8] of schedule 1 also amends section 41 to provide a new requirement for an applicant to specify in an access application the name of any other agency the applicant has applied to for substantially the same information. This amendment will encourage inter-agency consultation and streamline administrative processes for finding the requested information. Failure by the applicant to disclose the other agency in an application will not invalidate the access application.

I turn now to partial transfers of access applications. Currently, if a recipient agency holds any of the information requested by an applicant it must process the application with respect to the information it holds, then inform the applicant that other agencies hold the rest. This means the applicant has to make additional applications to other agencies and pay additional application fees. Item [10] of schedule 1 amends section 44 to give recipient agencies the discretion to partially transfer access applications where they determine this is the most appropriate course of action. This is likely to occur where one agency holds some, but not all, of the information. This amendment will permit applicants to receive information more quickly, easily and cheaply. The partial transfer by the recipient agency will split the application into two or more applications. As such, the new provision ties in with existing sections 48, 57 and 80.

Under section 48, the agency that receives a partial transfer will be deemed to have received the application on the date it received the transfer. Under section 57, this agency will have 20 days from that date within which to decide the application. The agency that receives a partial transfer can impose processing charges, but not an application fee, for processing it. The application fee will have been paid with the original application. Under section 80, a decision to transfer an access application is a reviewable decision. In the case of a partial transfer under the new provision, an application for an internal review of such a decision will need to be made to the original recipient agency. However, any substantive decisions made by an agency that received a partial transfer relating to the part of the application that it received will be internally reviewable by that second agency as the relevant decision-maker.

I now turn to proof of identity. Agencies have legal responsibilities to protect the disclosure of personal information. In some cases agencies may need to confirm that an applicant is who they purport to be before providing access to personal information. This might prove difficult for vulnerable applicants, such as young or homeless people who may not have sufficient formal identification. Item [15] of schedule 1 amends section 55 of the Act to provide that agencies may require applicants to take reasonable steps to provide proof of their personal identity before providing them with access to personal information. This will provide more flexibility in proving identity to allow vulnerable applicants to access more easily their own personal information under the GIPA Act.

I now turn to disclosure logs. Presently, agencies are required to keep public disclosure logs setting out the information they have released in response to access applications, and which may be of interest to the public. Applicants and third parties may object to the inclusion of information in the disclosure log and seek review of the agency decision. The report concluded that review of the decision-making process for disclosure logs needs to be clearer. Item [17] of schedule 1 amends section 56 to clarify that when an agency deals with an objection to information in a disclosure log, it must decide whether the reasons for the objection outweigh the general public interest in including the information. Items [28] and [30] of schedule 1 amend section 97 and section 105 to further clarify that the objector bears the onus of proving that the reasons for the objection outweigh the public interest in including the information in the disclosure log.

I now turn to the meaning of "unreasonable and substantial diversion of an agency's resources". Item [21] of schedule 1 amends section 60 to clarify how an agency may decide what amounts to an unreasonable and substantial diversion of its resources under that provision. The new section 60 (3A) is a new provision that provides a non-exhaustive list of considerations an agency may take into account when deciding whether to refuse to deal with an application on the basis of an "unreasonable and substantial diversion" of its resources. The new section 60 (3B) requires the diversion of agency resources under section 60 (3A), on balance, to outweigh the strong public interest in disclosure and the demonstrable importance of the information to the applicant.

I now turn to the interaction of the GIPA Act and court processes. Currently, an agency can refuse an access application if the information requested is already available to the applicant through a subpoena or other court order for the production of documents. Item [20] of schedule 1 amends section 60 to extend the circumstances in which an agency can refuse an access application to include where it reasonably believes the applicant, or someone acting in concert, is a party to current court proceedings and can apply to the court for the information. This prevents the possibility of using the GIPA Act to circumvent the jurisdiction of the court to control its own processes. This amendment will not restrict applicants from gathering material that might be relevant to future court proceedings before those proceedings commence.

I now turn to internal reviews involving multiple parties. The right to seek internal and external review of decisions under the GIPA Act promotes government accountability and transparency. It provides crucial oversight of how agencies disclose and withhold information. The report found, however, that existing review processes can be slow and inefficient, and lead to inconsistent outcomes. At present, two or more potentially competing internal reviews of the same access application could be underway sequentially, creating uncertainty for the parties and duplication of work for agencies. When multiple parties seek internal reviews of a decision on an access application, item [26] amends section 86 to enable agencies to deal more efficiently with internal reviews concurrently. It does this by providing that the period within which an agency must decide an internal review does not start until the period within which any of those parties may apply for internal review expires.

I now turn to inter-agency consultation. While the Government Information (Public Access) Act does not currently prevent inter-agency consultation in determining access applications, the review considered that this should be made clear. Item [14] inserts new section 54A to explicitly allow an agency to consult with another agency to determine whether an overwhelming public interest against disclosure of information exists. I now turn to external reviews by the Information Commissioner. Item [27] inserts new section 92A to introduce a 40 working day time frame within which the Information Commissioner must complete a review after receiving all necessary information. The review time frame may be extended on agreement.

This amendment will reduce the potential for delays and provide more certainty around time frames for applicants. If the Information Commissioner does not make recommendations within the review time frame, no recommendations are deemed to be made. In this case, the original agency decision should be taken as upheld, after which the applicant may seek a review by NCAT. The Information Commissioner must keep agencies and applicants up to date with the review process. I now turn to third parties who seek reviews. Item [29] amends section 100 to require third parties first to seek internal review of an agency decision before they can seek review by NCAT. This change is consistent with a current provision that third parties must seek internal review before review by the Information Commissioner. In both cases, access applicants will continue to retain choice over the forum in which they choose to lodge review applications.

I now turn to external reviews by NCAT. The extent and application of NCAT's current powers under the Government Information (Public Access) Act to ensure independent oversight and effective review of decisions is unclear in some cases. Items [31] to [33] amend section 110 to clarify NCAT's powers and functions with respect to restraint orders. The new provisions provide strong judicial oversight to ensure that applicants' access to government information is only restricted with strong justification. The provisions also promote greater certainty for agencies when managing unmeritorious applications and vexatious applicants.

Item [31] amends section 110 to allow NCAT to order that a person must not make an access application without its prior approval if that person, or someone acting in concert, has made three unmeritorious access

applications to agencies in the previous two years. Item [32] amends section 110 to provide that NCAT may apply certain conditions to such a restraint order, including a specific time period or limiting it to particular agencies. Item [34] amends section 112 to provide NCAT may, on its own initiative after external review, report an officer of an agency to the Minister for failing to exercise a function under the Act in good faith. If the Minister is a party to the proceedings, NCAT may report the officer to the Information Commissioner instead.

I now turn to conclusive presumptions against disclosure of information. Schedule 1 to the Government Information (Public Access) Act provides an exhaustive list of information for which a conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure exists. This list includes Cabinet information and documents affecting law enforcement and public safety. Item [40] amends clause 2 (4) of schedule 1 to the Act to clarify that a Cabinet document containing a combination of factual and non-factual information falls within the definition of "Cabinet information". It is important Cabinet information be regarded as information for which a presumption against disclosure exists in order to encourage free and frank discussion at Cabinet.

Schedule 1 also protects documents affecting law enforcement and public safety, but only where those documents are created by New South Wales agencies. Item [44] inserts a clause 7 (f) into schedule 1 to the Act to extend protection to such documents that are held by New South Wales but created by corresponding law enforcement agencies in other jurisdictions, including outside Australia. This will encourage agencies in other jurisdictions to share sensitive or confidential information for the benefit of public safety. This bill achieves a deft balance between maintaining open access to government information and improving the administrative operation of the Government Information (Public Access) Act for agencies, applicants and third parties. In achieving this balance, the bill meets the Government Information (Public Access) Act's broader policy objectives.

Before concluding, I thank a number of people who have contributed to the development of these bills from the Department of Justice: Larisa Michalko for managing this particularly complex Justice Legislation Amendment Bill (No 3) 2018; Laura Goodwin, Rebekah Hitchenson, Ellie Fogarty and Mark Follett for developing the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Victims) Bill 2018; and Stephen Bray and Robyn Johansson for developing the Government Information (Public Access) Amendment Bill 2018. From my office, I particularly acknowledge Alex Gibson and Sean Robertson for their work on these bills.

I note the efforts of my former chief of staff, Bran Black, and my policy adviser, Lucinda Bourke, for their work on the \$44 million Community Legal Services Account in the Public Purpose Fund, which will be established by the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill (No 3) 2018, if passed. Both Bran and Lucinda are passionate about the community legal centre sector and the services that CLCs provide to more than 50,000 of this State's most vulnerable people every year. The proposal in that bill being introduced today will ensure that this important work continues for many years to come. I commend the bills to the House.

Debate adjourned.

GOVERNMENT TELECOMMUNICATIONS BILL 2018

Returned

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovementioned bill without amendment.

BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT CERTIFIERS BILL 2018

Returned

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Aplin): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovementioned bill with amendments.

Consideration in Detail

Consideration of the Legislative Council's amendments.

Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 24 October 2018

No. 1 **GRN No. 1 [c2018-150]**

Page 52, Schedule 3.3 [9], line 23. Omit "subsection.". Insert instead "subsection, and".

No. 2 **GRN No. 2 [c2018-150]**

Page 52, Schedule 3.3 [9]. Insert after line 23:

- (d) prescribe the fees that may be charged by principal certifiers for particular matters or classes of matters, including maximum fees that may be charged, and

- (e) prescribe the circumstances in which an applicant for certification may request that a different principal certifier be allocated, and
- (f) prescribe the circumstances in which the appointment of a principal certifier may be terminated, and
- (g) prescribe the circumstances in which the appointment of a principal certifier may be revoked or changed by the Registration Secretary, and
- (h) despite paragraph (c), prescribe circumstances in which a principal certifier may refuse appointment, and
- (i) provide for any other matter that is ancillary to the scheme under this subsection.

No. 3 **GRN No. 3 [c2018-150]**

Page 52, Schedule 3.3 [10], line 35. Omit "subsection.". Insert instead "subsection, and".

No. 4 **GRN No. 4 [c2018-150]**

Page 52, Schedule 3.3 [10]. Insert after line 35:

- (d) prescribe the fees that may be charged by principal certifiers for particular matters or classes of matters, including maximum fees that may be charged, and
- (e) prescribe the circumstances in which an applicant for certification may request that a different principal certifier be allocated, and
- (f) prescribe the circumstances in which the appointment of a principal certifier may be terminated, and
- (g) prescribe the circumstances in which the appointment of a principal certifier may be revoked or changed by the Registration Secretary, and
- (h) despite paragraph (c), prescribe circumstances in which a principal certifier may refuse appointment, and
- (i) provide for any other matter that is ancillary to the scheme under this subsection.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (18:12): I move:

That the House agree to the Legislative Council amendments.

I speak to provide the Government's support to amend the Building and Development Certifiers Bill 2018. The amendments that were moved and agreed to in the other place were sensible. They do not limit the function of the original bill. Rather, they increase the scope of the powers to be included in the regulation. The Government is willing to work with any member of Parliament to achieve the best outcomes for consumers and businesses in this State. We are a government that consults, a government that listens and a government that acts. We are a government that puts consumers first. I commend the amended bill to the House.

Motion agreed to.

Matter of Public Importance

PINK RIBBON DAY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:13): Today I discuss as a matter of public importance Pink Ribbon Day. Members will be aware that October is internationally recognised as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time when we reflect on the impact that breast cancer has on our community. It touches many lives. Pink Ribbon Day is a breast cancer awareness and fundraising initiative of the Cancer Council that takes place each year during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Pink Ribbon Day raises funds to support Australian women who are affected by breast and gynaecological cancers. The Cancer Council encourages members of the community to work with their friends, colleagues and family on Pink Ribbon Day fundraisers. I am excited that this Friday I will be able to join with my local community at the Mater Hospital for a Pink Ribbon Day cake stall. The Mater Hospital is known for its breast care nurses and the high quality of care it provides. I am looking forward to participating in that fundraiser and in the Mater Hospital initiative that takes places on top of all its other extensive fundraising activities to support women with breast cancer.

In New South Wales, one in eight women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime, so there are not many people who have not been affected in some way by breast cancer. While breast cancer is much rarer in men—it accounts for less than 1 per cent of all breast cancers—men also need to be "breast aware". Being aware of breast cancer means making healthy life choices to reduce the risks over which we have some control; for women in the target age range of 50 to 74 years of age, attending BreastScreen NSW to have a free mammogram every two years; and for men and women, being aware of the normal look and feel of your breasts and seeing your doctor without delay if you find a breast change that is unusual for you. Breast cancer continues to be the most

common cancer in women in New South Wales. While the incidence of breast cancer is increasing, the rate of deaths from breast cancer in New South Wales has thankfully decreased significantly over the past 10 years.

In spite of all the progress that has been made, breast cancer remains the second leading cause of cancer death in New South Wales women, after lung cancer. The two greatest risk factors for breast cancer are being a woman and getting older. I am already a woman and we are all getting older. We may not be able to do much about those risk factors, but the overall risk can be reduced by making healthy life choices that will also improve overall wellbeing. Some of the things that everyone—women and men—can do to be healthier and reduce the risk of breast cancer and some other cancers, such as bowel cancer, include: making sure we get at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise every day; maintaining a healthy weight, preferably by balancing exercise and eating a variety of nutritious foods; and limiting alcohol consumption.

Unfortunately, a person may still develop breast cancer even if she or he has taken action to reduce the risk. If detected early, survival from breast cancer can be as high as 97 per cent, and treatment will often be less invasive than if the cancer is diagnosed at a more advanced stage. Mammograms can detect cancers before they are seen or felt. Women aged between 50 and 74 years are urged to have a free mammogram every two years at a BreastScreen NSW service. Screening mammograms are the most effective method of detecting breast cancer early in women between 50 and 74 years of age. This is the age group in which the majority of breast cancers are found. Women aged over 74 years can also attend BreastScreen NSW, but it is a good idea that they speak to their doctor about whether breast screening is a priority for them.

There are 46 fixed BreastScreen locations in New South Wales, and the 16 BreastScreen mobile vans visit more than 180 locations across the State every two years. Many BreastScreen centres are accessible to women with a health condition or a disability. The majority of women who have a screening mammogram are reassured that there is no sign of breast cancer. For some women, more tests are needed to check whether breast changes on their X-ray are harmless or due to cancer. This is called "assessment". These tests may include more X-rays, a breast ultrasound, an examination or, in some cases, a needle biopsy. BreastScreen NSW's assessment clinics provide free client-centred services, managed by a professional team of skilled specialists.

I am very happy that we are speaking about Pink Ribbon Day today. Tomorrow morning we have an event in Parliament as well, which the Parliamentary Secretary for Regional and Rural Health, the member for Port Macquarie, has asked me to remind everybody about. One of the co-hosts of the event, the member for Maitland—who is the acting shadow Minister for Women—is in the Chamber. I want to ensure that all members of this place are aware that they can join us at this fundraising and awareness-raising event tomorrow morning in the Macquarie Room at 10.30 a.m. I thank the House for allowing me to discuss this matter of public importance for Pink Ribbon Day during Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (18:18): It gives me great pleasure to talk about Pink Ribbon Day, which is held on 22 October. We all know that the pink ribbon is the symbol for Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which is held worldwide in October. I sincerely thank the member for North Shore for bringing this matter of public importance to the attention of the House today. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in Australia and the second-most common cancer to cause death in women, after lung cancer. Every day around Australia approximately 45 women will hear the words, "You have breast cancer" from their doctor. Having been one of those women, I know that it is pretty hard to hear. In 2014, 16,614 women and 140 men were diagnosed with breast cancer in Australia. Sadly, each year, just in New South Wales, 950 women die of breast cancer.

The good news is that breast cancer mortality rates actually fell by nearly 30 per cent between 1994 and 2007. This is good news for women, as one in eight women are diagnosed with breast cancer by the age of 85 and for men that figure is one in 631—although it is much higher for men with a genetic predisposition. For women with a predisposition to breast cancer, there is an up to 72 per cent risk of developing cancer up to the age of 80—seven out of 10 women. Many women do not know that they carry this gene. As the member for North Shore said, women aged between 50 and 74 are invited to access free breast scanning mammograms every two years via the BreastScreen Australia program. Unfortunately, only some 53 per cent of women in this target group participate in mammograms.

A report released by the Cancer Institute NSW yesterday stated that more than 2,000 women across the State have breast cancer but do not know about it because they have not had a mammogram in the past two years—that is 2,000 women walking around this State with breast cancer, not knowing it. We need to get the screening rates up. Women aged 40 to 49 and over 75 are also eligible to receive these mammograms, but do not receive an invitation to attend them. That is an issue for our community, particularly as we are seeing younger and younger women more routinely diagnosed with breast cancer. As the most common types of breast cancer have very good prognoses for long-term outcomes—especially if they are found early—it is vital that women take the initiative to do this, particularly women with a strong family history of breast or ovarian cancer, because early detection saves lives. Early detection also allows women to get on with their busy lives.

If the cancer is limited to the breast, some 96 per cent of patients will be alive five years after diagnosis—this figure obviously excludes those who die from other causes. If the cancer has spread to the regional lymph nodes, five-year relative survival rates drop to 80 per cent. In Australia, the overall five-year survival rate is around 90 per cent. They are good results. Screening is nothing to be scared of. As a younger women, I was told by many older women that mammograms were very uncomfortable and painful. I have probably had more mammograms than any other person—or even all combined people—in this Chamber over the past 10 years, and they are worth the discomfort. They are not that bad and they do make a significant difference. It is worth it.

I suggest to people to look for other issues and symptoms, including new lumps, a thickening in the breast or under the arm, sores on the nipples, discharge, the turning in of the nipples, a change in the size or shape of the breast, the skin of the breast dimpling, a rash or red swollen breasts. Pain is very rare as a symptom. We also need to be aware of the risk factors that increase the risk of breast cancer, including: increasing age; a family history; mutations in the genes BRCA2—which is the one I have—BRCA1 and another one called CHEK2, which I had not heard of until researching this speech; exposure to female hormones, natural and administered; a previous breast cancer diagnosis; a past history of certain non-cancerous breast conditions; and lifestyle factors that can also slightly increase the risk, which the member for North Shore alluded to. There is also an association with some breast diseases. I join in inviting everyone in Parliament to come to the morning tea that we are hosting tomorrow. We are having a raffle so those who cannot make it can see my office. Let us all work together to eradicate breast cancer.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (18:23): I am pleased to make a contribution to discussion of this matter of public importance recognising Pink Ribbon Day. I start by thanking the member for North Shore for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. It is incredibly important. I recognise the member for Maitland for what she has been going through in recent months. How she has kept her strength and her ability to come to work and do the job is something to be honoured. It is something that many—too many—women go through. I recently had some ultrasounds because I thought there might be something wrong. The nightmares someone can have while waiting for their appointment are confronting. I am sure that the member for Maitland has had a lot of sleepless nights. I pay credit to her for keeping her strength up. Well done.

As we have heard, cancer screening is a life-saving tool for detecting breast, bowel and cervical cancers in people who do not have any symptoms and reducing mortality from those diseases. Every October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, when we acknowledge how many people have been affected by breast cancer. Pink Ribbon fundraisers are a way for everyone to be involved during Breast Cancer Awareness Month and to raise funds for the Cancer Council's work in cancer prevention and support for people with cancer and also for research. Further information and resources are available on the Cancer Council's Pink Ribbon website at www.pinkribbon.com.au. In New South Wales breast cancer accounts for almost 28 per cent of new cancer diagnoses in women. More than 5,600 women and between 40 and 50 men are diagnosed with breast cancer every year in New South Wales. Each year almost 1,000 women and five to 10 men die from breast cancer in New South Wales.

BreastScreen NSW is managed by the Cancer Institute NSW as part of the national BreastScreen Australia program, which began in 1991 and continues to reduce deaths from breast cancer for a substantial proportion of women who participate in it. I was honoured as part of my role as a member of Parliament to open the Liverpool BreastScreen centre. I am pleased to have been involved with the centre and to have made a difference there. The Cancer Institute implements wideranging strategies to increase participation in screening programs, including through engagement with Aboriginal people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. That is why I was so pleased to see the centre open in Liverpool. The percentage of Aboriginal women in the target age group who participate in BreastScreen NSW is now 42 per cent. The percentage of women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities who participate is about 46 per cent. This compares with the overall participation rate for women in the target group of almost 53 per cent. The gap is narrowing.

The Cancer Institute works with community champions in Aboriginal communities and in culturally and linguistically diverse communities, providing training and support so that they can continue to play a vital role in their communities. I acknowledge a friend of mine, Kim Honeyman, who is an absolute superhero. She has been through this and has come out the other end. I saw Kim about two or three days after her diagnosis. Her mastectomy was a couple of days after that, and she took it in her stride. At the time she had three little babies and just said, "I've got to be here; it is what I've got to do." She is my superhero.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (18:27): By leave: I speak in support of Pink Ribbon Day and thank the member for North Shore for raising this matter of public importance. It is important to acknowledge the value of Pink Ribbon Day and what it means not only to those women who have suffered breast cancer but also to the families and carers who are wrapped around that particular person. Once that diagnosis is made, the world

pretty much collapses for the sufferer and everything is put on hold while love, care and support surround them. My wife had breast cancer so I know that early detection is absolutely critical. There is no doubt about it: Early detection is the way to go. If there is a change in the breast—some discolouration, lump or any abnormality—then heed the saying: If in doubt, check it out.

My wife had a small lump that did not feel right. The first diagnosis was that it was fine; it was just a cyst. But my wife's feelings of uneasiness and unrest persisted. The second diagnosis found that it was a cancer. Ultimately, there was an operation and the cancer was removed. Thankfully, the margins continue to be clear. It is a life-changing experience. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have suffered from breast cancer and who continue to fear that back pain, side pain—any pain—could be a sign that the cancer has returned. The mental health, resilience and wellbeing of those who have been diagnosed with and ultimately suffered from breast cancer is super important, as is treatment of the cancer. I thank the member for North Shore for bringing this matter of public importance to the House. Many people have been touched by cancer. I commend the Cancer Council and the organisers of Pink Ribbon Day.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:29): In reply: As I mentioned earlier, pretty much everyone in our community has been touched by breast cancer. It is wonderful to see the awareness raising that has happened in the past couple of decades by organisations like the Cancer Council through Pink Ribbon Day. Members in this place represent ordinary people in the community, and each of us has had our own encounters with different types of cancers, including breast cancer, whether it involves family members or us. I thank the member for Maitland for sharing some of her experiences with her own diagnosis. I thank her for sharing her advice that screening is nothing to be scared of. Regardless of people's concerns and fears, it is worth it in the end. It was also good to hear from the member for Tamworth that his wife's breast cancer has constantly improved margins. While we do not hear that from everyone—there are still tragedies and too many lives are lost—his story reflects the fact that fatality rates across our community are declining. That shows the awareness message is getting through.

When telling their personal stories, both members spoke about early detection and how it saves lives. I thank them for sharing those stories today. I also thank the member for Holsworthy, who shared a personal story about a friend. She spoke of the rapidness with which treatment can take place after screening finds a cancer. Most screenings do not find a cancer but, when they do, treatment can be administered very rapidly in our health system. We acknowledge the work of all the health professionals in this space, particularly the breast nurses who are in many hospitals across the system. They make such a difference to people's lives. I thank the member for Holsworthy for her contribution. She opened the Liverpool BreastScreen centre, and it is wonderful to have those centres in so many different locations.

In closing, I reflect on a Sydney-based organisation that has a lot to do with my community of North Shore—the Sydney Breast Cancer Foundation. I was introduced to the foundation through the Mosman Rugby Club Ladies Day, which has been sold out for the past five years. All proceeds from that day go to the Sydney Breast Cancer Foundation. I acknowledge president Lynn Crookes, Dr Cindy Mak and Sanjay Warriar from the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse. I also acknowledge the West family, Catherine West, Deborah West and Associate Professor Richard West, AM. They are all Mosman locals and are deeply involved in the Sydney Breast Cancer Foundation. This year's rugby lunch raised about \$300,000 and the ladies lunch raised about \$80,000. That is the kind of result communities can achieve when they work together. I thank all members who contributed to the discussion of this matter of public importance.

Private Members' Statements

TRANSQUAL

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (18:33): I welcome to the gallery those people who are here to honour Thomas George, the member for Lismore. What a wonderful man—and I say that as one who sits on the opposite side of the Chamber. Tonight I recognise a company in my electorate that has unfortunately become insolvent because the State Government has not paid it the moneys it owes. The company is called Transqual, which is short for "transport qualifications". It started in the mid-1990s—24 years ago—providing training, services and education in transport qualifications. So the company has been around for quite a long time and has done some wonderful work. Even as recently as this year, Transqual trained the recipient of the State award for transport qualifications. But, unfortunately, the New South Wales Government has been unable to pay Transqual for training hundreds of persons over the past couple of years. I will summarise the problems of Transqual by reading from an email dated 14 February 2017, which states in part:

... Transqual has organised a number of catch up sessions with [Training Services NSW] STS in the last few months, only for all of them to be cancelled at late notice. This has included cancellations in November and December 2016, and no response to a number of invitations in January 2017. Transqual have also invited STS to meetings with major local clients ... only for STS to cancel on the day ...

... issues such as the lengthy turnaround of payment ... [have] significantly impacted our cash flow while the total lack of feedback regarding the audits has exasperated our Compliance team and prevents Transqual from any opportunity for continuous improvement.

I understand Amber has been on leave for some of this time however if you could please update Transqual on the status of who we should be contacting in 2017 in regard to our issues ... that would be appreciated.

That email captures the litany of problems that have occurred. For more than two years the company has been seeking payment for the training it has undertaken on behalf of the New South Wales Government. Transqual trained people from all over the State. I will provide an example of services for which the company has not been paid. Transqual, which is based in Newcastle, might take on a student, a trainee or a number of trainees in, for example, Mudgee, Lismore or perhaps Broken Hill. That is a six-, seven- or 10-hour drive from Transqual's Newcastle base. Transqual's options are to drive out, sign up the person, drive back to base, enter the student's registration into the computer and then drive back out to do the training, return and enter that into the computer.

Alternatively—as Transqual did—Transqual could phone Training Services NSW and say, "We have a student who is approximately a seven-hour drive away. How about we drive out, sign them up, provide some of the training while we are there and then come back and enrol them on the system, then continue their training afterwards, and then we will seek payment?" Unfortunately, one of the bases on which payment has been refused is demonstrated by the alternative example: Training cannot commence before the system has recognised the trainee or student. That is insane and outrageous.

Mr Kevin Anderson: Insane and outrageous?

Mr CLAYTON BARR: That is right—insane and outrageous. This private company is owed \$500,000 by the Government. The company has now become insolvent. Ten people have lost their jobs in a regional company. The company was not a risk of the type referred to earlier today by the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business; rather, this is a company that has operated successfully for 30 years. It is not as though the New South Wales Government was taking a gamble on a Waygu beef company or an oyster company—which is apparently what is done these days. Transqual was a certainty.

For almost two years, the Government has refused to make payment. Transqual made representations to Training Services NSW and asked for feedback. Transqual's company management said to Training Services NSW over and over and over again, "Please call back. Please respond to the email. Please provide the information." I have copies of email after email asking for exactly that. The company is now bankrupt and its owners have had to sell their homes. That has happened all because the New South Wales Government will not pay the company the money owed to it. That is a blight on all members of Parliament. It is completely unacceptable. I will continue to fight for Transqual in this House. The State Government must pay the people it owes money to. [*Time expired.*]

HOLSWORTHY ELECTORATE SERVICES AND EVENTS

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (18:38): It has been a very busy time in the Holsworthy electorate. I draw to the attention of the House recent events that include two funding announcements for local community groups. The Minister for Disability Services, and Minister responsible for youth, the Hon. Ray Williams, MP, visited my electorate to announce support for our local community. The first announcement was for \$3,000 to support young people in Moorebank to gain skills and experience in creative and performing arts and, importantly, to give young people something to do so that they are not roaming the streets on a Friday night but instead are involved in local community groups and engaged in good pursuits. The funding assists the Living Grace Christian Church deliver its unique youth arts engagement program. It is a privilege to see and to know that this funding will bring joy to our local young people and allow them to use important equipment, such as musical instruments.

The CAPAvate program offers free music lessons in guitar, keyboard and percussion, filmmaking, dance and digital storytelling. On several occasions I have had the pleasure of meeting with Pastor Claudio Alosi from the Living Grace Christian Church. He said that this support from the New South Wales Government will allow the program to engage with more young people in the area. That is most important. I am so proud that this Government recognises the importance of engaging young people in a range of creative pursuits. Programs like CAPAvate not only promote cultural pursuits but also allow young people to develop social networks and positive communities. This amazing program promotes creative skills that could lead to diverse career pathways and create a new generation of young artists. CAPAvate is such an incredible program. I acknowledge Pastor Claudio Alosi, the staff and volunteers at the Living Grace Christian Church for their endless work for the community.

Supporting people with disabilities is something I am incredibly passionate about. That is why I was so happy with the funding announcement to support families, carers and individuals living with autism in the

Liverpool area. The funding announcement included another \$3,000 to assist the Autism Advisory and Support Service [AASS] to deliver its one-of-a-kind early year therapy playgroup for children with autism. Autism is a lifelong developmental condition that often affects, among other things, the way an individual interacts with his or her environment and to other people. The program run by AASS allows therapists to deliver tailored support for children in Liverpool, including occupational and music therapy. I cannot begin to thank Ms Grace Fava, the chief executive officer of AASS, for the work she continues to do in Liverpool for families, carers and individuals who are affected by autism. She is a phenomenal lady. Her team is phenomenal as well.

Ms Fava says that the program not only offers therapist services but also provides networks for children and their families to make friends and break barriers that contribute to social isolation. I feel very strongly about creating supportive and friendly environments for those with a disability. This is why I am so lucky to be part of a government that supports families, carers and children affected by autism. The Minister and I were able to hear firsthand feedback about implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS] and listen to the impact it has had on those families and individuals with autism. It was so nice to hear so many positive outcomes from the NDIS and listen to affected individuals voice their feedback and concerns so that we, as parliamentarians, can make the scheme even better.

The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government is contributing more than \$3.2 billion to the NDIS, which will go towards ensuring that people with a disability have choice and control over how they live their lives. I will continue to advocate for disability support and services in the Holsworthy electorate. I thank Ms Fava and her team as well as all the individuals who work tirelessly for those with a disability. Madam Speaker, it is fortuitous that you are in the Chamber because I want to thank you for selecting AASS to receive \$890 from the Parliament's Family Fun Day. I know you met with Ms Fava today. Madam Speaker, the gift was a great thing for you to do. It was also great of everyone involved in Parliament's Family Fun Day to support AASS.

I again thank the Minister for Multiculturalism, the Hon. Ray Williams, for asking me to represent him at the 2018 Fiji Independence Day celebration at Woodward Park in Liverpool. It was incredible to see how much pride all attendees took in their Fijian culture and heritage. Fiji Independence Day is becoming bigger and more popular every year. Across the weekend, there was a chance to enjoy cultural performances and food, a charity dinner and the Fiji Rugby Sevens. The festival is a great showcase of Fijian sporting and cultural talent. The rain hurt last Saturday night, but I am sure that everyone had a great time until the thunderstorms rolled in. I am so proud that our State is home to more than 20,000 people claiming Fijian ancestry, with almost a quarter speaking Fijian at home.

It is important for children to learn their ancestral language. The Liberal-Nationals Government recognises that this is important and provides funding and assistance to help community groups establish community language schools. These schools nurture not just language but also culture that is passed on to future generations. Once again, I thank the Hon. Ray Williams for his visit to the Holsworthy electorate to announce the amazing funding granted to the Living Grace Christian Church and Autism Advisory and Support Services to assist their community programs. I congratulate everyone involved in the Fiji Independence Day in Liverpool for putting on such a great event.

Members

VALEDICTORY SPEECH

The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Lismore and my Deputy Speaker, I say to you, Thomas, very rarely does somebody like you come into this place. You are a man of absolute honesty, integrity and good humour. You have stepped in to take on the role in question time this year when I have been unable to, for various reasons. I will miss you so much. I thank you for your loyalty, your hard work and your cheerfulness. I will miss you.

I welcome former Leader of the Opposition John Brogden, the former member for Pittwater. It is wonderful to see you. I also welcome Russell Turner, the former member for Orange. I welcome all of Thomas' friends, colleagues and family to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr THOMAS GEORGE (Lismore) (18:44): Thank you very much. I rise this evening to deliver my valedictory speech to the Fifty-Sixth Parliament of New South Wales, the oldest Parliament in Australia. Who would have ever thought the son of Christian Lebanese migrants and who was born in the first part of the last century would be standing here in this packed Parliament to deliver his valedictory speech, all the way from Casino in northern New South Wales. That is the opportunity that Australia affords you.

I recognise and thank those who have travelled to be with me on this special occasion, particularly my loving family: Deborah, Stuart, Margaret, Molly and Charlie; Cameron, Emma and Stella-Rose; Brendon, Bel and your family, and Imogen; Dane and Lisa; Whitney, Jack and Rosie; Esther, Paul and Estelle; Raymond and Robyn,

and Barbara. I know a lot of family are watching this speech live, especially my mother-in-law, Jeanie. I include and make special mention of my late parents, Nadim and Nora Gittany—or George. I also recognise Rhonda for her support in the early years of my career. Uncle Tony Frangie, it is lovely to have you here. Frangie was my mother's maiden name and he is the only uncle I have alive anywhere around the world on both sides of the family. To Fahd and all the Gittany family, and the George family, I am so honoured to have you as family.

Valedictory speeches are usually about a member's achievements, but for me this place has never been about bricks and mortar. It has been an honour and a privilege working to better the individual lives of families and the hardworking men and women of the electorate of Lismore, our special and diverse region of northern New South Wales. The Lismore electorate is now 13,000 square metres, covering the local government areas of Lismore city, Kyogle shire, Tenterfield shire and half the Tweed shire. Agricultural industries include dairy, cane, beef cattle, macadamias, blueberries and timber, just to name a few. There is a strong and passionate arts community throughout the electorate. We have the Lismore and Tweed regional galleries as our main galleries and the Northern Rivers Performing Arts facility. We have World Heritage parks, the national parks of Wollumbin, Mount Warning, Boonoo Boonoo, Nightcap and Border Ranges, just to name a few. The Lismore electorate provides education through the development of great skills and is the home of the Southern Cross University.

In many ways my valedictory speech tonight is as much about my experience of this Chamber and what the people of the electorate have given to me over a long and proud career as it is about what I have been able to deliver for the electorate. When I was elected in 1999 at 50 years of age the Richmond River Gun Club in Lismore came to me seeking support. Back then all the members were young and their equipment was old. Now the members and I are old and the equipment is new. I think there is something in that. I know now is the time to retire. I have worked hard all my life and given my life in service to our community and to this great State. In trying to reduce two decades of public life into this speech, I ask the question: Is the Lismore electorate a better place now than when I started?

Ms Gladys Berejiklian: Yes.

Mr THOMAS GEORGE: That was my granddaughter, I think. Not only am I confident the answer to that question is "yes", but also I feel now more than ever the foundation is in place through new infrastructure to allow those who follow me in this important role to focus on projects that create new jobs and new industries and take this great electorate forward. To understand how we have got to this point of strength, I place on record my journey to get here. I went to primary school at St Mary's Primary School in Casino, then Marist Brothers High School in Casino. I have three mates here in the gallery today, Ray Daley, Pat Boyle and Tim Walsh, whom I used to copy off at school. They are here with me today, and I thank them for that.

I worked in the Rural Bank. People will not believe what I am going to tell them now. In those days we never had Armaguard services—I am talking about the early 1960s. As the number one teller in a small town, whenever extra cash was needed I would go to the other bank and give them a bank cheque. They would cash it and give me the notes that I needed. As the number one teller, I had to walk down the street to the bank carrying a pistol and the lady who worked with me carried the bag. I do not know what I was ever going to do with the pistol, but that is what happened in those days. Each six months I got three shots as my training. That is what happened in the Rural Bank in those days.

Then I had the honour of starting George & Fuhmann. Some 44 years later, the company is still going. I learnt to appreciate that starting your own business meant dealing with credit, understanding people, conducting auctions and being a marriage, finance and mental health counsellor. To Paul Fuhmann and Arch Northham, I cannot repay you for the partnership that we have had over those years. The company is still going—probably stronger than ever before because I am not involved with it. I pay credit to them. I was deputy chair of the Northern Co-operative Meat Company in Casino, the largest single employer north of Newcastle. That enabled me to understand the wider supply chain and the international trade. I then became a publican at the Cecil Hotel—the hardest job in my career. They pay you in cash, but you try to convince a person they have had too much to drink. I am on one side of the counter. They are telling me they have not and I am telling them they have. That was part of it.

I then became a member of Parliament, elected in 1999. At this stage I pay tribute to former members, the late Bill Rixon and his wife, Merrilyn. I also recognise and pay tribute to the late Bruce Duncan and his wife, Marlene. Peter Duncan, his son, should be here somewhere in the crowd. I will see him later. I thank you, Peter. I know your mother is doing it tough at the moment; please pass on our regards. In opposition I became The Nationals Whip. When we were elected to government in 2011 I became the Deputy Speaker. One thing I have learned during my career is that sometimes those in the city and the bureaucracy fail to understand how complex small rural communities can be. The removal of a single bed from a rural hospital, the closure of one small business, the loss of a job or the loss of one young life at a black spot will directly affect an entire community.

Through my involvement on local boards and committees, I have found when it comes to making change rural New South Wales needs people in its corner who are empathetic. We had a promotion at Casino Beef Week, where I am now a life member, which promoted the industry. Tourism is still going strong in Casino. Up and down the coast I have been involved with the chamber of commerce, the Westpac Rescue Lifesaver Helicopter Service—and I see Richard Jones here tonight as well as Peter Duncan—Our House cancer accommodation in Lismore, where I am a director, Southern Cross University, Lismore, and the Mingoola refugee settlement. Sometimes people on the other side of politics do not think we on this side care. Let me tell you if you want to see a program that will touch anyone's heart, watch *The Field of Dreams* on the ABC. I worked with the community to relocate refugee families to Mingoola, where the school was closed in December. Working with the community, we reopened that school with six families that had nine children. Now there are 11 children at that school and they are enjoying life in rural Australia.

I have also been involved with the Zgharta Association, where my mum and dad come from. Eva Mouward, I thank you for the award that I received last year. The Australian Lebanese Historical Society—John Koory, Mounira Saad and Angela Melick have spent hours interviewing me and I think they are releasing a book later tonight. To Anthony Ball and everyone associated with ClubsNSW, Sydney Markets—we ran the fruit shop; it feels like going home. The Australia Livestock and Property Association—where I was made a life member 20 years after I left that industry. I thank Andy Madigan, Brendon, Wade and Michael Wright for being here tonight. The Minerals Council—Stephen Galilee, I cannot thank you enough for your support. Through adversity in BusNSW I came to meet some very, very good friends that should be here tonight—Frank D'Apuzzo and Peter and Geoff Ferris—

Mr John Sidoti: Good Italians.

Mr THOMAS GEORGE: He said "Good Italians." You are talking to a Lebanese now, mate, be careful. We had an adverse problem at Lismore but we worked our way through the issues and we have become very strong friends, and I am very proud to stand up here and say that. Government departments, I could go on with government departments but I am restricted, I have been told, and I think you all want to get home. The one department I have had a lot do with is the Department of Health. I do not know whether Brad Hazzard is here, but Sam Sangster heads up Health Infrastructure in that department. I thank him and his team for the redevelopment of all the hospitals and multipurpose services in the electorate of Lismore. I have had the pleasure and privilege of being the chair of Tourism and Transport Forum and the Parliamentary Friends of Lebanon. I have worked closely with Royal Far West, and Lindsay Cane is here tonight. We had a lovely dinner last night at the Lions Club Gala Dinner. I am very proud to stand here as the member for Lismore because the Lions Club started in Australia in Lismore some 70 years ago. I was awarded a Melvin Jones Fellowship. Steve Bromhead and Warren Latham, you did a fantastic job last night in raising something like \$50,000 at the annual Lions dinner.

The Australian Lebanese Chamber of Commerce does a fantastic job. Joe and Chad Khatter, it is lovely to have you here. The Royal Agricultural Show Society—I see Rob and Tina Vickery here. It is great to have you here because it is an association we have had all our lives through stud cattle and the show. The Lebanese media and media in general, Anwar. And I know that Grant Goldman is watching this at home. He is doing it pretty tough at the moment but, Grant, it is lovely to have Manel here. We are thinking of you. Stay positive and we are right behind you. To the Lebanese Rugby League World Cup side, I had the honour of being one of the patrons. To John Georges and the board, I say thank you.

Mr John Sidoti: How did they go?

Mr THOMAS GEORGE: They nearly beat us. The Nationals—Larry Anthony, the Federal president, and Ross Cadell and the team, I will talk more about you later, but thanks for being here. While I have always tried to be a man of conviction, in this modern age of social media, loud voices and vocal opinions, it is very hard for any of us to avoid having doubts. Through those periods, when it felt like the tide was against me, I was so thankful to have my family and faith as an anchor. I pay tribute to Bishop Anthony Tarabay from the Maronite church and Bishop Greg Homeming, bishop of the Lismore diocese. In recognising the two bishops, I recognise everyone who represents the Catholic and Maronite religions in those areas.

As a means of reflection, I dug out my inaugural speech, which I delivered to this Chamber on 29 June 1999—that is back in the last century. I am proud to say in the years since that not only have we been able to deliver on the vast majority of promises and issues highlighted in that first speech but we also have made sure that the infrastructure is in place so that never again do they become an issue. Some of the achievements are the Lismore Base Hospital redevelopment, where we have finally secured the last \$280 million for stage 3A and stage 3B. I sit in the chair and hear members going crook about their hospitals. I have a story that will be hard to beat. In 2010 in the Lismore Base Hospital, a patient had to dial 000 to get the nurses to come and see him. While it made headlines in the paper, it was an indication of what we were going through in those days with the hospital

in Lismore. That was at the same time—and it was a tough, difficult time—that the North Coast Area Health Service cut 400 nursing jobs from that area.

Over 20 years all hospitals and multipurpose services in the electorate have been redeveloped, rebuilt or expanded or are in the process of. Woodenbong to Legume Road has been a problem since the 1980s. I know it well, because as an agent when I travelled to Warwick each Tuesday and Wednesday I would cross this road. The Tenterfield heavy vehicle bypass; the Tabulam Bridge; New England Highway; the Bolivia Hill realignment; TAFE Lismore, which was completely refurbished following Cyclone Debbie; Connected Learning Centres at Tenterfield and Murwillumbah—Murwillumbah has just started—Service NSW at Murwillumbah and Tenterfield are to be built in the near future.

First, I want to recognise Peter Petty, Mayor of Tenterfield. When I first became the representative of Tenterfield, it had the impression it was the last town in the State of New South Wales because it is right on the Queensland border. I have worked with council, the Government has worked with council and we have turned that around. Tenterfield is now the number one town as you come into New South Wales. I am very proud of that, Peter, and I know that you are too. Fire and Rescue NSW, police, emergency services and the environment. The Pacific Highway has led to greater access to the region, and the regional sports hub for Lismore, which was once a dream, is finally happening.

Parliament is a tumultuous place. As Deputy Speaker I have celebrated it at its very best and, at times, mourned it at its absolute worst. Working alongside you, Madam Speaker, has been an honour and a privilege. In particular, I recognise that this year has been a difficult year for you and your family. The behaviour we have had to moderate—while always lively—has been a great challenge. At times decent debate has been taken over on both sides by interjections and name-calling. It feels political ambition and self-interest sometimes stalk the halls of power more often than hard work and integrity. In saying that, I have always tried to appreciate that regardless of the party and the people they represent, all members of this place work hard to represent the people and the needs of their electorates.

Throughout the years, in opposition and in government, it has been the strength of the Liberal Party and The Nationals in coalition that I believe has allowed this State and me to reach our full potential. When I first entered Parliament, several members took me under their wing and supported me while I learnt the process of government. During my career, I have tried to be an elder and a role model to many members and staff, offering support and advice where appropriate. While all of my colleagues over the years have left an impression on me in various ways, I wish to pay tribute to past leaders. It is good to see John Brogden here. I acknowledge also Barry O'Farrell, Andrew Stoner, Mike Baird and Troy Grant. I do not know whether I did the wrong thing by Troy, but I was one of those who encouraged him to think seriously about coming into this place. Troy is stepping down, but he has left his mark. Tony and I wish you all the best for the future. I wish the other retiring members all the very best. May they be blessed with health and happiness. I cannot name all the Ministers because the list is too long. I have named a few people now and I am in trouble.

Fellow members and staff, it has been a privilege to work here and to be with you. When Gladys Berejiklian was elected—I think in 2003—she and I sat on the Opposition benches and I was her mentor. I was trying to teach her something, but I soon realised she was too smart and that she would not be sitting with me for much longer. It was only weeks before she moved to the Opposition front benches. I soon learnt that she had dedication and honesty. Her understanding of principles and management was a special trait. Her experience in the business world prior to coming here left no doubt she would go all the way. Gladys, thank you for the opportunity I had to mentor you—and I am pleased it has paid off. If members had listened to me instead of objecting to my calls, they could all have done so well. To the Deputy Premier, you have been a great leader and a great friend. I have admired your energy and drive for regional New South Wales. You have never shied away from making the tough decisions. I know you refer to me as "Papa", but that is an endearment coming from you given your background and mine. We always respect our elders, and you should never forget that.

The Nationals of today is very different from the party I joined in 1969. I was elected to this place in 1999, and as I look around the Chamber and the party room I see only a few faces that were here when I started: the member for Coffs Harbour, the member for Liverpool and the member for Wakehurst. I am almost the last of the class of 1999. Don Harwin was elected to the upper House and we are the last two of that group.

I believe that The Nationals is the only true voice for regional New South Wales and Australia. Its family values and traditional roots run deep—well below the dairy farms and cattle paddocks of the Northern Rivers. I thank The Nationals—Larry Anthony, the Federal President; Bede Bourke, the State President; Ross Cadell, the State Director; and the membership of our party—for having the foresight to adopt a community preselection process involving 3,700 members of the community voting to endorse Austin Curtin as The Nationals candidate for the electorate of Lismore in the 2019 election. In recognising that, I pay tribute to everyone associated with The Nationals during my 20-year career.

I now have some special thank-yous to offer. First, there are Luke, Brigid, Michelle and Jane. I did not appreciate what they did until I had to step into the Speaker's chair for some weeks. They were there every minute of the day, whether it was 8.00 a.m. or 11.00 p.m. I thank our two Whips: the member for Camden and the member for Myall Lakes. I acknowledge the member for Cabramatta. It is great to see him back. I thank Rebecca and Anthea for all they do. A few people were here when I came into this place in 1999. I am not the oldest person here. Rebecca was here, but she was in catering.

I thank the Clerks. Again, until I stood in for the Speaker for some weeks, I did not know how much they did. I knew they were in the House to provide support, but I did not know how much they did outside the House. Helen and Les were both here when I came into this place in 1999. There is a message in still being here when I am going. The message is that they were a lot younger when I came here. In thanking you two, I recognise everyone in the Clerk's office. I will single out Lisa Gelzinnis, from Hansard. Lisa is a Casino girl and I have known her family for a long time. When I came into this place she was here and it was lovely to see a face from home. In recognising you, Lisa, I recognise everyone in Hansard.

I recognise Peter Tuziak and Ian Delahunty. Peter was also here when I came to Parliament. In recognising them, I recognise all the attendants. I acknowledge the Security section, the Parliamentary Library, IT, Members' Services, Property Services and the Legislative Assembly Table Office. John Hatfield is Sydney's number one Roosters supporter. Some of them were here when I arrived. I will name four people in catering because they were also here when I arrived: Carlos Andrade, Garry Chan, Charlotte Page and Andrew Fitzpatrick. In recognising them, I recognise everyone in catering. They are great when you are away from home, like The Nationals often are. Geoff even gets his Ice Magic to pour on his ice cream.

I thank Selma, who has been my office cleaner on the twelfth floor since I arrived. I have a little angel on my computer that she gave me about five years ago that keeps an eye on me. There is one other person who has impressed me by the way he has done his job. I refer to Brad Howarth. Brad cleans up out the front every morning. Every time I walk past I thank him. I do not know whether members have ever had to rake up leaves, but it is the worst job in the world. He is out there every morning because the trees drop leaves every day. I thank all the cleaners.

Last but by no means least is Team George. Where do I start? I will mention my staff before I mention my family. Bronwyn Mitchell has been in my electorate office for 24 years—I have been there for only 20—and she is only 40. She has been the backbone of the Lismore electorate office for that long. Bronwyn, you have been dedicated, you are honest and you honour your beliefs. You have always been sympathetic. It does not matter who the constituent is, you are sympathetic. People walk into our office crying and they walk out smiling. In no small way is that a reflection of the work that Bronwyn has done. I thank her. I had the pleasure of nominating Bronwyn for a Rotary award, which she is getting tomorrow night. Sadly, I will not be able to be there, but I know that Deb will be there.

I acknowledge Frangi Spilsbury. When Frangi came to our office she was a breath of fresh air. Her no-frills style has certainly contributed to a caring atmosphere in our office. I thank Frangi because she keeps me on my toes. Every time I walk into the office she has a file full of invitations. I think she must go out and get invitations from everybody. She will not let me out of the office until I have sat down with her, and I am scared of her. Well done, Frangi.

Kristopher Wall has taken me to another level with his media skills. If he had been with me for the past 10 years I do not know what I would have achieved. He trained me in how to handle situations. We all think we are experts but it took Kris Wall, a young bloke, to show me. He has a great future in politics—not as a politician; I am talking about a role in the media. Don't get too keen! He is a Walcha boy who came down to the coast, and I am thankful that we ended up together. His work is greatly appreciated.

I acknowledge Dylan Butcher. Dylan is only a young bloke. I went to his twenty-first birthday the other night. I had to introduce myself because the people there thought that I was the bloke who worked for Dylan! His experience, at such a young age, has opened my eyes and taught me a lot, especially in the area of social media. I thank him for everything he does. Those four staff members make up a great Team George, which makes me very proud. It must be recognised that when a politician retires, it is the end of a cycle for his staff members too; their futures are uncertain. So I thank them for what they have contributed to the Lismore electorate office.

As much of an honour as it has been to serve in this building, it has not been without a personal toll. Politics is a bruising sport, and my family, my colleagues and I felt every punch that was thrown during the 2015 election campaign and during the debate over coal seam gas. Despite that negativity, I felt that I was always able to hold my head high thanks to the love and support of those around me. Stuart and Margaret, Molly and Charlie suffered with us. When coal seam gas was an issue, Stuart was working for the gas company and it was bedlam for both families. It was tough, but Stuart and Margaret and their two children can, with the love and support of

the family, hold their heads up high as they now own the Clydesdale Motel & Steakhouse. I advise anyone listening: if you ever want a good steak go to the Clydesdale Motel & Steakhouse in Casino. I am very proud of all of them for achieving that.

I acknowledge Brendon, Bel and Imogen and their family. I know that Brendon has had some hard times, but look at him now! We are so proud of Brendon, Bel and the family. He has come back stronger than ever. I will remember standing in the foyer here one day; it was after a rally had been held out the front of Parliament House. It was a bikies' rally. The media were out the front trying to get photos, but one newspaper photographer picked up on my son, in here, giving me a cuddle. The accompanying article said, "You should have seen that." With the love that I have for my boys and they have for me, nothing will ever split us up. I am so proud of them.

I acknowledge Cameron, Emma and Stella-Rose. Cameron has really tested my loyalty in the past 12 months. He got to the pinnacle of racing in New Zealand and has now taken over as chief executive officer of the Warriors. He has done a fantastic job, a job that his family is very proud of. He has achieved so much in such a short time. The other day I did not know whether to back the Warriors, Australia or New Zealand, or even Lebanon. I am so proud of Cameron, Emma and Stella-Rose. I thank them for coming all the way from New Zealand. All of my brothers and sisters are here tonight. I simply thank all of them for the love that they gave us during the tough periods back in 2015. I thank them, especially, as well for being here tonight.

Last but certainly by no means least, I acknowledge Deborah, my beautiful wife. She is my rock, my friend. She has been a stalwart. She felt, more than I did, every punch during the tough times, and that is probably why I kept going—to cover up my feelings so that she could be strong. I cannot find the right words to thank her. Deb, you have been there all the way. I know you would love to get rid of the security cameras at home so that we do not have to worry any more, but we will leave them there for a while and see how things go. I am so proud of Dane and Lisa and also Whitney, Jack and Rosie. I know that they are watching tonight too. We are very proud of them.

It is fair to say that all any of us truly has, now and when we leave this Earth, is our reputation. If I have managed to leave any legacy in this place I hope it is this: I have always stood by my convictions. I have backed my decisions even when the loudest voices were saying they were wrong. I have never rejected anyone, regardless of their beliefs or their problem, from an interview at my office. That was difficult at times, but with Team George in the office we made it happen. I hope that at the end of this journey my small contribution has in some way contributed to making the region a better place for our future and the future of generations to come. I will finish today with a heartfelt poem about me that my granddaughter Molly wrote and presented to me on Father's Day last year:

I get asked are you related
And I get a big grin on my face.
People say nice and bad things about you
but I never listen
No one really knows you like they think they do.
You put your heart on your sleeve
For your community.
Some people appreciate what you do,
You try to make everyone happy
And you do.
No one really knows you like I do.
Your name is the Hon. Thomas George
But to me you're Grandpa.
You have always been there for me
And I try to always be there for you.
I hope after you retire you have no regrets,
Because really you did everything you could
Even with people doubting you,
Every step of the way.
You impress me every day.
Every time I see you on TV
I smile with a grin from ear to ear
I pass your office and see your face
Everyday someone will ask me
Does he even have time for family?
I will always say yes he has an important job
But he always puts family first
We have a lot of good memories
And I am happy I got to have those experiences with you
So I guess what I'm saying
Is that you have done everything you could for the Northern Rivers
I am proud of you and all your accomplishments;
Even though sometimes I don't show it.

You're a politician,
But first you are my Grandpa.

Thank you friends, one and all. God bless.

Members stood in their places and applauded.

The SPEAKER: Thank you to the friends and family of the member for Lismore. We can see from the number of people in the Chamber and galleries this afternoon just how loved and respected Thomas is by everybody.

Private Members' Statements

DUBBO ELECTORATE ROYAL VISIT

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Minister for Police, and Minister for Emergency Services) (19:29):

I pay tribute and give thanks to the Dubbo community, the wider Western Plains region and the staff from the Dubbo Regional Council, and I offer my congratulations on their successful and triumphant hosting of the royal couple in Dubbo last week as part of their royal tour. It was an enormous privilege for me and my wife, Toni, to welcome His Royal Highness, the Duke of Sussex, and his lovely wife, the Duchess of Sussex, to Dubbo, where their impact on our community was profound and significant. At a time when our community was reaching out for a level of inspiration, comfort and encouragement, Their Royal Highnesses provided it in spades.

For a long time our community has suffered a stigma and a reputation that has not always been positive. The royal tour gave our community the opportunity to showcase the real Dubbo and the region and put us on the international map. We are best known for the character of the people in our community and that was on vivid display for the world as the media descended on our region and showcased the very best of Dubbo. Their Royal Highnesses made their way from the tarmac across to the Royal Flying Doctor Service. No-one will quickly forget Luke Vincent, the five-year-old student from Buninyong Public School, and his embrace of His Royal Highness and Her Royal Highness. It was captured in a Warren Brown cartoon that is now world famous. From there, they had the opportunity to genuinely engage in and appreciate the wonderful service that the Royal Flying Doctors have from the base in Dubbo to the south-east section and across remote and regional New South Wales.

I had the opportunity to show them a fifth-generation family, the Woodleys, from an area called Wongarbon on the south-east of Dubbo. Their area was drought-stricken, but they are innovative and resilient to the core. It was a unique opportunity for the royal couple to see the real Australia and the real struggles that we face. His Royal Highness made his way to Victoria Park where he was greeted by up to 15,000 people, who stood in torrential rain to hear the words of a man who inspired everyone there and everyone who heard him. To share his personal story and encourage people to seek help at their deepest and darkest times was inspirational. The calibre of the young man that is Prince Harry is a great credit to his late mother, Diana, Princess of Wales, and his wider family. He inspired and will continue to inspire many, as he is doing through his Invictus Games concept.

The students at Dubbo College Senior Campus also had the opportunity to meet and welcome His Royal Highness before the royal couple made their way back to Sydney. It was a historic event for our city. We put on our best country charm. Their Royal Highnesses were shown the wonderful organisations and people who are the essence of our community, and what they do and contribute. It was a magnificent and triumphant festival. I pay special tribute to the staff at the Dubbo Regional Council for making it all possible and coordinating it so well.

We had kids from Circus West, some on stilts—it was like a royal court of entertainment. We showcased the Taronga Western Plains Zoo and the wonderful initiatives in our social justice area. Everyone of prominence was there—mayors and representatives from around the region—to do their bit to showcase our area. Such was the vibe and vigour of the event that it was a real privilege to be part of. The odd jester was in the area, and we brought out the village idiot as well. It had everything. It was a magnificent, landmark event for our city, something that I am and will always be enormously proud of. It was an event that showcased Dubbo for all the right reasons, as it should be every single day.

CAMDEN ARTIST NOLA TEGEL AND MAX TEGEL

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (19:33): Today I speak about a viewing of a wonderful art collection of two historical Camden properties, Maryland and Birling, that I recently attended. Renowned local artist Nola Tegel was asked and commissioned by Arnold Vitocco and David Hazlett to capture the magic of these two properties on canvas. The historical property Maryland is an outstanding complex of early homestead and farm buildings and is especially significant for its completeness as a group and its excellent state of preservation. The integration of the buildings, garden and magnificent settings includes many early buildings in good repair as well as buildings of special architectural interest.

The winery and store may be the oldest winery buildings in Australia. For more than 130 years the property has been in continuous occupation by only two families, who have had long associations with the surrounding district. The gardens, landscape and outbuildings illustrate the diversity of functions associated with early agricultural activity in the Camden area and all are virtually intact. The buildings include the main building, four domestic outbuildings, kitchen, meat house, workshop, guesthouse, upper gatehouse, wine store, winery, farm outbuildings, barn, stables and workers cottage.

Birling was the 1,000 acres granted to colonial magistrate Robert Lowe in 1812. According to the 1814 muster, Robert Lowe employed seven assigned convicts, a figure which increased to 21 by the 1822 muster and dropped to 12 by 1828. The important archaeological site was part of the administration of the convict system in New South Wales during a formative period of British colonial expansion. Birling also contains a locally significant homestead and setting of the 1930s. The site can be viewed from the Maryland homestead. Both these magnificent properties were captured in their true history by the wonderful talent of Nola Tegel. Nola created more than 60 works to preserve the history of Maryland and Birling on canvas for posterity.

Nola is a renowned artist who also assisted Camden Council in establishing the new art gallery in the historical Macaria building in the Camden township. I acknowledge Nola and her husband, Max, for their wonderful philanthropy, not only in providing the Baker Art Gallery for Macaria but in everything they do for the Camden community. Such people are Max and Nola that we would not know the half of it. They are extremely generous individuals. Camden and surrounds is a much better place for having them within our community.

Macaria was previously used by Camden Council as an administration building. In my former role as mayor, it was my office. It is a lovely old building. After council moved to their new premises in Oran Park it was decided to convert the building to a public art gallery displaying the works of local artist Alan Baker. Macaria was the former schoolhouse and residence and was built by Henry Thompson in 1859-60. It was planned to use the building for the local school teacher William Gordon, who was under the patronage of Thompson, but it did not eventuate. It later became Camden Grammar School and was eventually bought by Camden Council. Macaria has a reputation of being haunted. Many stories are told in Camden about experiences of so-called ghosts in the building, especially around a few beers in one of the local pubs.

I cannot commend Nola and Max Tegel enough for everything they have contributed to our community. At the viewing of the 60 works created by Nola I had the opportunity to speak to her. She said she spent more than two years in a labour of love to create those paintings. She was very proud of the works, just as we as a community are extremely proud of all her work and all that she and Max do. I commend Max and Nola and thank them for their wonderful contributions to our community.

PORT OF NEWCASTLE CONTAINER TERMINAL NEWCASTLE CYCLEWAYS

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (19:38): I congratulate Thomas George on an outstanding valedictory speech—a most inspiring and wonderful speech from a man of great knowledge and history. Today I speak about the Port of Newcastle again. As members may be aware, for the past few years I have been speaking about and will continue to fight for the Government to remove the cap on the number of containers that can be shipped through the Port of Newcastle. I am also aware that the new Port of Newcastle chairman, Roy Green, and new chief executive officer, Craig Carmody, share my frustration with the Government's dodgy anti-competitive cap on the port and also share my vision for the Port of Newcastle to operate in an open market without the shackles placed on it by this Government.

We all share the vision that once the current contract has been ripped up and the current cap removed the Port of Newcastle will be able to establish a container terminal and stimulate the creation of jobs, investment and diversification. What I did not realise all this time was that I had another supporter in the Deputy Premier, John Barilaro. Mr Barilaro has been reported as saying that he "absolutely" believed that western district farmers and primary producers would "benefit from a container port at Newcastle". Then in question time yesterday I found out that not only John Barilaro believed but that another colleague in the Cabinet, fellow Nationals member of Parliament and Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, Melinda Pavey, was on board. In question time I asked:

Given the comment by the leader of The Nationals that farmers would benefit from a container port at Newcastle, what action will the Minister take to drop the anti-competitive arrangements that are making it economically impossible to establish a container terminal at Newcastle?

Minister Pavey responded:

Our Government is absolutely 100 per cent supportive of the Port of Newcastle and growing its capacity ... I am also aware of the Deputy Premier's support of growing the capacity of that terminal. I agree that we need to do what we can to increase the amount of container traffic going through that terminal with new markets.

With the support of The Nationals, I would be happy to continue this conversation with the Deputy Premier and the chief executive officer of the Port of Newcastle. Now that we are all in agreement and on the same page, let us put an end to the endless frustration of farmers and business owners in New South Wales by removing the cap on containers coming into Newcastle. It is only the Liberal Party that stands in the way of Labor and The Nationals on this issue.

On another issue affecting Novocastrians, I note that last Wednesday 17 October was National Ride2Work Day. This occasion drew to my attention and that of many local constituents who work in the Newcastle central business district [CBD] the fact that they simply can no longer ride to work. Prior to the light rail being built there were grand plans of a cycleway going down the heavy rail corridor along with parks and other grand visions. What we have is proposed development on the light rail corridor, no cycleways and some parks. How and where do the cyclists go?

I note that in May 2017 the New South Wales Government released the Newcastle City Centre Cycleway Network Strategy. I also note that the Government has failed to deliver any cycleway improvements in the Newcastle CBD. I call on the Government to invest in cycleway infrastructure in Newcastle. Cycling infrastructure in Newcastle is either non-existent or woefully inadequate. The expansion of cycling infrastructure in Newcastle and surrounding suburbs needs to be prioritised. The retrofitting of high-quality cycling facilities in Newcastle's urban environment will take cars off the road, increase local productivity and interconnectivity and improve the livability of Newcastle and its surrounds. As we all know, the benefits of cycling also include increased cardiovascular fitness, improved joint mobility, decreased stress levels, strengthened bones, decreased body fat levels, and prevention or management of disease.

Newcastle City Council's 2012 Newcastle Cycling Strategy and Action Plan identified a number of key works to be undertaken, operating under the assumption that the commitment to cycling undertaken by the Government would be adhered to. Unfortunately it has not been adhered to and funding for active transport at the State level has been significantly reduced. Newcastle City Council has recently submitted applications for funding, which have been unsuccessful. Nomination as a priority cycleway attracts more support under funding schemes. We need more money for cycleways in Newcastle.

SIBOS 2018 FINTECH CONFERENCE

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (19:44): On Monday the Premier toured Sibos 2018, a FinTech conference. Over its 40-year history, this is the third time the Sibos conference has been hosted in Sydney, bringing global peers together to discuss world trends in the financial services industry. More than 100 of the biggest banks in the world, including the four big Australian banks, and global tech companies such as IBM, Microsoft, Google and my former employer, KPMG, are participating in the conference. The themes of the conference this year are: how data, artificial intelligence and robotics are driving service innovation and business model renewal; new paradigms and technologies for information sharing to tackle financial crime; tackling the widening cybersecurity challenge in the digital economy; and adapting to evolving geopolitical and regulatory priorities.

The New South Wales Government is proud to support Sibos and the FinTech industry and has made it very clear that it supports emerging technology and innovation generally. That is best demonstrated by Sydney's flourishing start-up ecosystem and the \$35 million investment in the Sydney Startup Hub, which opened recently. We all know that Australia generates its income from mining-related exports, manufacturing, telecommunications, and, notably, banking. Ranked fifth in the 2017 Index of Economic Freedom, we are known for our sophisticated financial services sector and strong economy, and here in New South Wales we are doing our part to support that. It is a pivotal time for the country's economic direction, which is being shaped by new realities. How does Australia revamp itself to remain competitive and what role does New South Wales have in that?

I am immensely proud to say that in Manly we are taking our talent and skills to the world. For example, some of the world's biggest and most impressive renewable energy and technology companies and FinTech leaders call Manly home, including Wirsol, Edify Energy, Solar Choice and LanternPay, to name a few. The ecosystem of entrepreneurs based in the electorate of Manly continues to gain momentum, and I specifically acknowledge the work of the Manly Innovation Hub. The Manly Innovation Hub supports the community in launching new enterprises, focusing on women, young adults and the over-50s. The hub's mission is to positively impact the social and economic fabric of our community. It seeks to support innovation; strengthen the local economy; build relationships between businesses, education institutions and the start-up ecosystem; and support high-growth businesses to create sustainable jobs on the northern beaches.

The hub will bring together a diverse range of organisations and talents in a concentrated manner to spark innovation, ignite collaboration and provide access to skills, funding, networks and leadership. Occupants will reflect locally established and emerging businesses, local and State government entities and not-for-profit organisations and educational institutions and will represent a range of sectors beyond advanced manufacturing,

including trades, the internet of things and FinTech. I congratulate the hub's foundation team: Greg Twemlow, James Archer, Paul Reid, Jonathan Hvaal, Edith Hurt, Quintra Rijnders, Adam Vidal, Julija McDowell, Gabbi Stubbs, Izzy Whitelock, Dimitry Rytsk, Charlotte Rimmer, Megan Campbell and Mitchell Filby.

The hub and its team will be participating in the upcoming Spark Festival, which is Australia's largest event for start-ups, innovators and entrepreneurs. The New South Wales Government, via Jobs for NSW, is a lead sponsor of the Spark Festival. This is the first time that Spark will make its way to Manly, and that is due to the good work of the Manly Innovation Hub. I commend the efforts and energy of the Manly Innovation Team; they have my continued and full support.

POLITICAL LIFE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (19:48): I have made a number of private member's statements in this House—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Too many.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST: —and I have always been appreciative of the support and assistance of the Assistant Speaker from Coffs Harbor. Tonight—and I am sure many members will agree with me—we heard a very significant valedictory speech by the member for Lismore, Thomas George. When I first came into this place in 2007 I had a number of mentors. This is not a valedictory speech, by the way.

Mr John Sidoti: It could be.

Ms Yasmin Catley: It sounds like one.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST: I appreciate the support of the member for Swansea, the member for Drummoyne and the Assistant Speaker. The member for Lismore has been fairly legendary during my time in this place. I had my moments with Thomas in the earlier days. If I dared mentioned the word "Murwillumbah" I was summoned to the leader's office. Mr Assistant Speaker, I look forward to your valedictory speech. I am sure it will be entertaining. This place is hard. Whether we are on the Opposition benches or the Government benches, this place is tough. It takes a toll on us all personally and on our families.

I feel honoured to have served here with some of the legends of Parliament. Without being political, after 12 years I still hold the strong belief that regardless of whether we are on the Opposition or Government benches and regardless of our party affiliations, we come here for the right reasons. Members come here to make their communities better, and it is tough. There are 93 electorates in the State of New South Wales and we are all fighting for better hospitals, roads and maritime services and more police—whatever the issue is. We are all fighting one another to deliver. Unfortunately, it is a fact of life that we cannot deliver everything and we cannot please everyone. The member for Lismore showed us tonight that one of the things that keeps us strong and is a constant whether we are in opposition or in government is our families. That is a lesson I learned the hard way to begin with. When I first became a member of Parliament, I tended to focus on the job and everyone else's issues and pushed my own family life aside.

All of us in this Chamber can learn a valuable lesson from what the member for Lismore said today, which is that what keeps us strong when we go home at night after a not great, ordinary or bad day is the love of our families. We must reflect on that because it keeps us going. We need to pass on a special thanks to our families, partners, kids and friends, who stand behind us on those hard days. No-one in this Chamber has never gone home feeling really bad and like the whole world was against them. Tonight the Chamber paid special tribute to the member for Lismore and to all members in this place, their families and their friends. It is a tough gig; there is no kidding about it. Some of us—not you, Mr Assistant Speaker—are facing an election. Elections are never easy and we question ourselves all the time. But we are trying our best for the people of New South Wales, whether we are a member of the Labor Party, the Liberal Party, The Nationals, The Greens or—

Mr John Sidoti: Anyone else.

Ms Yasmin Catley: All the others.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST: Anyone else and all the others. We all try our best in this place but it is hard. We have successes and we have failures. We are supported by the good people of New South Wales and by our families and friends. My private member's statement tonight pays tribute to our friends and families, who support us through difficult times.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I remind the member for Tweed that the House is hearing private members' statements, which normally are about a member's electorate, not his or her private life.

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (19:53): Innovation and the technology evolution are driving an army of change—changes in our economy, changes in our industries and changes in our workforce. We know that we must help our young people prepare for the working future, where the pace of change could see them in a dozen different careers throughout their working lives. Indeed, we already know that many of the jobs that students will fill today will no longer exist tomorrow. How do we prepare young people for this fast-evolving environment? On this side of the Chamber, we believe government has a responsibility to ensure there is choice, and that means genuine pathways that provide choice and opportunity.

We believe we have a responsibility to help young people transition between education and employment and to ensure they arrive at their roles as job-ready employees with the soft and hard skills necessary to achieve. Those needs may vary from role to role and those skills may depend on the interests and aptitude of every individual, but that is why we must ensure that there are economically viable and geographically accessible options available to every young person. That includes access to TAFE. If we do not provide those opportunities, we destroy the dreams of our young people and put many of them at a great disadvantage when they are most vulnerable.

Recently a young person was presented to my office. His name is Ethan and he is 16 years old. His parents told me about problems he was having with TAFE. Ethan's dreams risk being shattered. He is passionate about computers and technology, which led him to enrol in a certificate II course in computer assembly and repair. He wishes to pursue his dream career of becoming a computer repair technician. All appeared well early in the year when Ethan enrolled to study this course at the Newcastle TAFE campus. The day before the course was due to start, TAFE contacted Ethan with the news that his much anticipated course would not run in Newcastle due to low enrolment. I repeat, he was called only the day before.

Not to be deterred, Ethan showed great tenacity and spent a week searching and inquiring about options at other locations. After lodging an expression of interest, Ethan was accepted into the course at the Ultimo campus. This meant that he had to travel from the Swansea electorate to the Ultimo TAFE campus twice a week. Like many other young students, Ethan relies on public transport to attend his face-to-face classes on campus and he was prepared to catch the train from Wyee, which is just south of Swansea, to the city. That is close to a three-hour journey each way. This young man deserves some credit.

But Ethan faced another obstacle: his course had a face-to-face component of only 12 hours, which fell just short of the transport concession requirement of 16 hours of face-to-face teaching. This meant that Ethan was not entitled to the concession and had to fork out more than \$25 per week on public transport fares. Ethan works 10 hours a week at McDonald's. Any member would acknowledge that those fares represent a fairly big chunk of his income. I wrote to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure in early August to plead Ethan's case. I asked that he be granted an exemption. Through no fault of his own, he was unable to complete his certificate locally.

Regrettably, in August I received a response from the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Infrastructure who advised me that the appeal had not been successful and that Ethan's circumstances could not be accommodated under the existing criteria. Why are we putting barriers in place that stop people from getting the experiences they desire? If they have to come to the big smoke then they have to come to the big smoke, but these opportunities are not being provided locally in regional areas, and unfortunately this young kid cannot afford to travel to TAFE in Ultimo.

I plead again with the Minister, if he is listening, to look at this case again and give some credit to this kid who has shown such tenacity. This situation is a reflection of the Government's chronic underfunding of the TAFE system, which has resulted in declining enrolments and classes axed. That is the result we are seeing in the Hunter area and on the Central Coast. Other parents have contacted me about their children and the long distances they now have to travel to get to university at both the Newcastle and Callaghan campuses. We are now putting barriers in the way of kids learning. We must ensure that the pathways for children to be educated are free, flexible and to their advantage.

NORTHERN BEACHES HOSPITAL

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health, and Minister for Medical Research) (19:58): I will reflect on the incredible opportunities that are about to come to the Northern Beaches community next week. On 30 October, our new Northern Beaches Hospital will take its first patients. It has been a long journey. When each patient arrives from Manly Hospital they will find the most amazing hospital with the most incredible staff. On the 31 October there will be a parade of ambulances transporting patients from Mona Vale Hospital to the new Northern Beaches Hospital. The Northern Beaches Hospital will provide an incredible range of services to the Northern Beaches community, many of which have never been available. In 2004 four members

of Parliament—three of whom are no longer here—signed a memorandum of understanding that appeared on the front page of the *Manly Daily*. We talked about the fact that it was time to have a new hospital and we agreed that there would continue to be a hospital at Mona Vale with complementary services. Next week that is what we will have.

Sometime after that, I had the pleasure of attending the site with former Labor Premier Morris Iemma, who was and is a very good mate of mine. I called Morris and asked him to come and have a look because I was having difficulty getting his Government to focus on finding a site for a new hospital. A few months later, the site was agreed upon. I took him to that site, and I thank him publicly and openly for the work he did. Obviously there was not a lot of money coming from the Labor Government because it had some fiscal problems and perhaps it had other priorities. I will not say much more about that but I thank Morris Iemma for his work in helping to identify the site. It took the Liberal-Nationals Government that was elected in 2011 to really make a difference. Land that had been bush was suddenly a building site. CPB Contractors were on site, and I thank them. Each one of the men and women who worked on that site were incredible.

In the past few years, I have visited the hospital probably close to 100 times. I have seen it when it was all bush and I have seen it when the bush was being cleared and readied for the first preparation work. I saw it during the first concrete pours. I was in and out when the floors started appearing, and it has been like a miracle. It has been incredible. Our entire hospital is now complete. I thank HealthScope and in particular Deborah Latta—this has been her baby as well. Deborah has previously worked for the public health system but on this occasion was working for HealthScope. She brought an incredible level of energy and commitment to providing a new hospital. Our new hospital has 488 beds and more than 1,300 staff. Although Manly and Mona Vale hospitals have had wonderful staff, they do not have the best physical layout and for all of my life neither of them had magnetic resonance imaging [MRI] services.

Our new hospital has two MRI units—one is 3 Tesla and the other is 1.1 Tesla. Those MRI units will provide the opportunity for Northern Beaches residents to have MRI scans, which was previously impossible in a public hospital environment unless we went well outside our area. I thank the Federal Government, Minister Greg Hunt and the Treasurer for recently agreeing to grant an MRI licence to our Northern Beaches hospital. It is one of two in New South Wales; the other is in Mount Druitt Hospital, which certainly needed one. Next week we will celebrate receiving our first patients. I thank the staff from Manly and Mona Vale hospitals, who at times have found it a challenging transition but who are now looking forward to it. Recently one doctor described our new hospital as being like Disneyland for doctors. To all of our staff who have joined us on this journey, I express my thanks for giving it a go. We are about to embark upon the most magnificent health facility the Northern Beaches will ever see.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (20:03): I compliment the Minister for Health on his work, particularly in his locality. As a Minister, he is busy servicing all other regions across Sydney. On Sunday I had the privilege of his company at the launch of building works at Concord hospital, with which I know the Minister had a special affiliation.

Mr Brad Hazzard: It was \$341 million.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It was \$341 million. When he became the Minister for Health, we were arguing about a \$150 million commitment in this term of Government, which meant \$1 million of planning money potentially in 2019. When the staff were given a commitment of \$150 million, they were over the moon. Mr Hazzard came in with another \$191 million in excess of what they expected, which in essence brought forward a scheme of additional works. I commend the Minister for all his work in health, and my community thanks him.

MANILLA COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY INC.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (20:04): I draw to the attention of Parliament the great work being done by the people of Manilla in the Tamworth electorate. That great community has formed a group called the Manilla Community Renewable Energy Inc., comprising a group of people from the Manilla area who see the potential of renewable energy. This group is taking steps towards making Manilla self-sufficient when it comes to energy. The group intends to build a community solar farm. By creating a community-owned renewable energy company, local residents will benefit from the economic, environmental and community building aspects of the project as well as create a model of sustainable regional development.

The Manilla Community Renewable Energy Inc. has gained the support of more than 100 local residents and support for the company it is building. On Saturday 20 October at Molly Mays in Manilla, Emma Stilts, who is the chairperson of the Manilla Community Renewable Energy Inc., set up the Manilla 100 Mile Night. More than 90 people enjoyed a great feast at Molly Mays in Manilla, featuring honey, pork, vegetables, herbs, cheeses, bread, fruit, eggs and condiments that were all sourced from within 100 miles of Manilla. The guest speaker was

an energy transition hub senior adviser from the University of Melbourne, Simon Holmes a Court, who gave a great lecture on renewable energy. He focused on the first-ever community-owned wind farm, which is the Hepburn Community Wind Park Co-operative near Daylesford in Victoria.

The Hepburn farm has two turbines that produce 4.1 megawatts which powers Hepburn. The turbines were named Gusto and Gale by a local girl. As part of the first-ever community-owned wind farm, Simon Holmes a Court told the Manilla community about how they too could achieve sustainable energy. He talked about the dedication, passion, belief and patience required to set up a community-owned renewable energy project. The night was set up with the help of Sustainable North West, the Tamworth Regional Landcare Association, and Northern Inland Regional Waste. I thank Stephanie Cameron, who is the Chair of Landcare. As the Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Landcare, it gives me great delight to join with the groups I have mentioned and with Emma Stilts in supporting the push by the Manilla Community Renewable Energy Inc. to see how we can go about producing sustainable and renewable energy for the benefit of the people in Manilla.

Local investors pay for the purchase, installation, operation and maintenance of the solar farm. It will produce cheaper renewable energy at a fixed rate. This high-visibility community project has significant marketing opportunities and is a platform for community education and tourism. It contributes significantly to locally owned infrastructure with long-term financial and economic returns. I congratulate the Manilla Community Renewable Energy Inc., Emma Stilts, and everybody else who is part of the sensational push to create a source of cheaper renewable energy at a price that is acceptable to both consumers and the environment.

MURRUMBATEMAN FIELD DAYS

Ms PRU GOWARD (Goulburn—Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (20:09): The town of Murrumbateman in the rapidly growing Yass valley region is in the heart of my electorate of Goulburn. On the weekend of 20 and 21 October I was lucky enough to attend the fortieth annual Murrumbateman Field Days. The field days began in October 1979 in response to the growing number of small hobby farms surrounding cities and towns in New South Wales. The idea was introduced by an officer from the Department of Agriculture in Yass as a way to showcase the latest in small farm machinery and supplies to a growing and captive audience. It is certainly a fascinating exhibition. After increasing from 23 exhibitors in 1979 to more than 400 exhibitors today, the Murrumbateman Field Days are a great day out for farmers, would-be farmers and the whole family.

The field days are a lot of fun and offer a chance for stallholders to showcase our local talents and businesses. I held a stall to chat with my constituents and offer my assistance where possible. We were lucky enough to finally get some rain on Saturday. Indeed, several tents were blown down in the downpour. I particularly thank Gordon Allen, who is recovering from a serious illness; Grant Pearce, who stayed with me for the full two days; and David Winterflood and Nick Tyrrell for their assistance. Nick and our Federal candidate for Eden-Monaro, Fiona Kotvojs, helped put up the tent. Catriona McAuliffe pulled it down. I thank them. I must also praise the Murrumbateman community for their great organisation of the event. Literally thousands of visitors pass through and it is growing in popularity year after year.

Murrumbateman is certainly flourishing. Its close proximity to both Yass and the Australian Capital Territory make it an ideal spot to raise a family. The New South Wales Government recognises its potential and in June this year committed to building a school for the 3,000 families that call the town home. A school in Murrumbateman will mean that many children will no longer need to endure long or interstate commutes to Yass or the Australian Capital Territory for their education. The community has continuously lobbied for a school and I am proud to be part of this Government that is finally making it a reality.

The Barton Highway upgrades are also a significant investment for the betterment of the township. Many a time in Parliament I have spoken about the Barton Highway, which is a 52-kilometre stretch of highway that links our communities in the south and west of the State. It is a main thoroughfare for freight and it links our growing region with the nation's capital and its now international airport. The Australian and New South Wales governments are working together by providing \$400 million over four years to duplicate the Barton Highway to make the journey more efficient and safer for the 12,500 vehicles that travel on the road each day.

The Murrumbateman community is part of the Yass Valley Council local government area. The mayor, Councillor Rowena Abbey, and the general manager, Sharon Hutch, are a powerful duo who also know the potential for Murrumbateman. Their strategic vision and exceptional leadership are the driving forces behind the council's success. An example is the recent announcements for the NSW Stronger Country Communities Fund through which the Yass valley community was allocated \$828,000, with \$200,000 secured for lighting at the Murrumbateman Recreation Grounds. We know that sporting facilities are the heart of small towns, so it is an important investment for the rural community.

Yass Valley Council also received \$450,000 to upgrade the lighting at Walker Park and \$178,129 to resurface the Joe O'Connor Park netball courts. Those facility improvements will make the Yass valley region an even more attractive place to work and raise a family and they are truly welcomed at a time when rural communities are doing it tough. I am very proud to be the local member for the region and represent its people. I know that the Government's continuing investment in our regions will ensure that we have happy and strong economies that are part of the powerhouse that is New South Wales.

MINGARA ATHLETICS TRACK

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (20:14): Members in this place represent electorates containing the whole cross-section of our society and its views. Our aim should be to represent the interests of our communities to the best of our abilities. We also represent political philosophies that differ, and our view of the role of government and the role of the State in people's lives. The challenges for us all are to choose a balance between the two and to get that balance right. When an important local issue in the community's view also aligns with the political philosophy of the local member, then the member is in a very strong position indeed. My Labor colleagues and I found ourselves in just such a position when the Liberal-Nationals Government attempted the privatisation of Wyong Hospital just over two years ago. The community opposed it and Labor opposed it. The privatisation was defeated.

Most people would agree that there are local issues that should be set aside from politics. The need to fund local sporting facilities comes to mind. It should be beyond politics. We should be trying to work together for the best outcome for our community. One such local sporting facility on the Central Coast is the Mingara athletics track located at Tumbi Umbi in my electorate of The Entrance. The Mingara Recreation Club maintains the track and it does a fantastic job. The track is used by the whole community. Most Central Coast schools hold their annual athletics carnivals there. People from across all of the electorates on the Central Coast use the track. Fourteen sporting groups from across the coast use the track. It is open to the public every day for anyone in our community to make use of. The Cancer Council Relay for Life is held there, raising more than \$400,000 each year for cancer research. Christmas Under the Stars is held there, and \$20,000 a year is raised for The Salvation Army at that event.

I was pleased to support the addition of a grandstand at the track in 2016 using Community Building Partnership funding. That project was also funded by the Commonwealth and Mingara Recreation Club under a fine example of community corporation in the best interests of the community. However, the track is getting on. It was built in 1999 and the surface has an expected life of 10 years. It is now a little over 18 years old and it needs repair. The Central Coast's queen of athletics Margaret Beardslee says an upgrade of the running track at Mingara is ridiculously overdue. The estimated cost to resurface the track is more than \$400,000.

I was keen to support the project and earlier this year encouraged the Mingara Recreation Club to apply for a Community Building Partnership grant. I acknowledge Sarah Fermen, the sports and community manager at Mingara for her great work supporting the community with grant applications, as well as funding from the club to support our community. Mingara duly applied and, given the cost of the project, I also wrote to all of my colleagues on the Central Coast seeking their support. I sent emails to the members for the electorates of Wyong, Swansea, Gosford and Terrigal. The email was in these terms:

Dear colleagues, As I have earlier advised (26/6/18), Mingara have made application to resurface its Athletics Track.

...

Mingara has asked for (\$200,000, partial). Mingara will cover the balance of the works which will cost \$400-425,000. I propose that each Central Coast member contribute \$25,000 and I will contribute \$100,000.

From the Community Building Partnership funds available.

Premier & Cabinet advise that this course of action is possible. Each member will need to advise P & C that they wish to allocate \$25,000 towards project CBP18-1084.

Please advise if you have any further questions otherwise I look forward to your earliest advice and agreement. It will be a great example of Coast MPs working together for our region.

The members for the electorates of Wyong, Swansea and Gosford have agreed to contribute Community Building Partnership moneys from their electorate should Mingara's application succeed; however, the member for Terrigal has declined. He has now launched a petition regarding the resurfacing of the track, which he referred to today in this place in a community recognition statement. It is extremely disappointing that the member for Terrigal has chosen to make this community facility a political football. He had the opportunity to support the community using Community Building Partnership money available to his electorate to support the many schools from his electorate who use that track. The member for Terrigal has chosen to play politics instead of representing the best interests of the Central Coast and his community. He has not got the balance right. He has done our community a huge disservice. He is a hypocrite.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! If the member for The Entrance wishes to attack another member of this place, he should do so by way of substantive motion under Standing Order 73.

Mr David Mehan: I will do that tomorrow morning. Thank you for your advice, Mr Assistant Speaker.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I hope you do and that you do not use private members' statements to attack another member.

Mr David Mehan: It was about a facility in my area.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: It was still attacking another member.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (20:19): With regard to the Community Building Partnership program, this Government has allocated \$330,000 to many community infrastructure projects. I remember that only a couple of years ago most electorates received \$200,000, with some receiving up to \$300,000. This Government is allocating \$130,000 more than was allocated two years ago. There are solutions to funding problems. Yes, communities must work together, but surely it does not come down to one member not contributing for whatever reason. Three of the members had agreed to contribute and I believe the member for The Entrance just needed to dig a little deeper to find out the reason for the member for Terrigal not agreeing to participate. That is exactly what I did in the recent round of Community Building Partnership program when I reached agreement with the member for Strathfield that we both contribute a substantial amount of funding for a joint project. In the interests of encouraging members of the adjoining electorates to contribute to projects, the member for The Entrance is unlikely to be successful if he keeps attacking members in the way he has done tonight.

NEW ENGLAND SINGS!

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and Assistant Minister for Skills) (20:20): Tonight I share with the House details of an amazing biennial event staged in Armidale and involving more than 900 students from 31 schools across the New England and Northern Rivers region. This place is no stranger to this event, as I waxed lyrical about the 2016 performance in this very place two years ago. This is the largest choral event in Australia, with 12 performances on the program. Of course I speak of the wonderful New England Sings!, which celebrates its tenth anniversary in 2018. Last Sunday I joined a full house at the University of New England's Lazenby Hall to experience the New England Conservatorium of Music's [NECOM] 2018 New England Sings! performance, which was exceptional.

This is entertainment on a vast scale. It features more than 900 choristers ranging in age from kindergarten to year 12 from 31 schools across New England and the Northern River, accompanied by the 80-piece Armidale Symphony Orchestra, instructed by almost 60 teachers and staff, backed up by a committed team of accompanists, directed by five accomplished conductors, and performing original works and world premier works by professional Australian and international composers. That is not to mention the many supporters, coach drivers, parents and volunteers who made the magic happen, not only during last weekend's two sold-out performances but also during the regional workshops and rehearsals.

In the past, New England Sings! has won an Australasian Performing Right Association [APRA] Award and I predict that NECOM director Russ Bauer will be looking for some more space in the trophy cabinet after the wonderful performances last weekend. I commend Russell Bauer—Rusty, as we know him—and the NECOM, which includes the chair, Greg Moin, and board members Cathy Archer, Alana Blackburn, Lorraine Coffey, Brett Constable, Caroline Downer, David Gee, Matthew Minter, Bronwyn Pearson and Peter Westbrook. I pay special tribute to the wonderful staff of NECOM. Corinne Arter led the event and directed the event from start to finish; she is a superstar and I do not know how he pulls the event together. She was ably supported by Sophie Williams, Kate Thomas and Nicola Price.

Two renowned composers were featured over the weekend. Dan Walker composed the primary choir's commission work *Fire and Light*. Felix Riebl created the secondary choir and orchestra's commission *Angel and Gloria*. Both works were sublime, but I must say I have never before heard a work of the quality of *Angel*. It was exceptional. Works were conducted with passion and precision by a team of conductors led by Mark O'Leary, Russ Bauer, Leanne Roobol, Constance Dunham and Rowena Teege.

While it is impossible to mention every student, I will mention all of those schools in my electorate that took part: Armidale High School, Ashford Central School, Duval High School, Glen Innes High School, New England Girls' School, O'Connor Catholic College, PLC Armidale, The Armidale School, Armidale City Public School, Ben Venue Public School, Kellys Plains Public School, Martin's Gully Public School, Newling Public School, Ross Hill Public School, Sandon Public School, St John's Junior School, St Joseph's Primary School Glen Innes, St Mary's Catholic School Gunnedah and Armidale Waldorf School.

I also compliment the NECOM Minisingers, NECOM Cantilena, the New England Singers, the New England Chamber Choir and the Side-by-Side Choir from Armidale High School, whose performance brought a tear to everyone's eye. The Armidale Youth Orchestra, the Armidale Music Teachers' Association, the Armidale Symphony Orchestra, the Armidale Pipe Band—yes, there were also bagpipes because the finale was John Farnham's *The Voice* and we had the authentic bagpipes—and the Armidale Drama and Music Society, all worked seamlessly to give music to the voices. What an entrancing concert it was. I feel very privileged to have been among the audience to share such an uplifting and inspirational afternoon of entertainment. The talent that abounds in our regional areas is astounding, in the Northern Tablelands in Armidale in particular. It is because of the wonderful teachers and the wonderful instruction students receive from world-accomplished people. I congratulate them one and all.

HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN RIVER CATCHMENT FLOOD MITIGATION

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (20:25): The electorate of Riverstone lies within the catchment of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River system. This catchment also includes the electorates of Wollondilly, Camden, Mulgoa, Penrith, Londonderry, Mount Druitt, Hawkesbury, Castle Hill and part of Baulkham Hills. Broadly speaking, all the areas north and west of Prospect drain into this river system, while the area to the south drains to the Georges River and the area to the east to the Parramatta River. More than 500,000 people live within the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley downstream of Warragamba dam right now. Prior to the 2011 election the North West Growth Centre was planned and commenced by the previous Labor Government, which predicted that an additional 200,000 people would be housed in the region over 25 years. The growth centre covers areas that fall within the current boundaries of the electorates of Riverstone, Londonderry, Castle Hill and Hawkesbury.

Since 2011 the Liberal-Nationals Government has continued the planned progressive release of land for urban development in the North West Growth Centre. Eight separate precincts have been placed on public exhibition in turn, with submissions invited from all interested parties. To the best of my knowledge, no submissions opposing the development in these precincts have been received from NSW Labor. None. Zip. Zilch. Not a peep. Yet Labor now pretends that the development of the North West Growth Centre, which was and still is its policy, is a reason to oppose providing sensible flood mitigation protection to the hundreds of thousands of people already living in the region, and especially to those whose homes were built in times past when the planning level was lower or did not exist at all.

Over the years, the community and various levels of government have learned more about the risk posed by flooding in the region. This led to successive upward adjustments to the flood planning level—the lowest contour at which new housing development can be approved. It also led to strengthening and raising of the wall of Warragamba Dam in the 1990s and the construction of the auxiliary spillway, which is designed to allow water to pass around the dam wall rather than over it if the water level rises to a point that would threaten the integrity of the dam. This is anticipated to occur only in a flood equal to or greater than a one-in-750 chance per year event. If that ever occurs, a huge volume of water will surge around the dam wall at the same time as the floodgates are already spilling at maximum capacity, resulting in a massive surge of the water level downstream. There would be immense damage to private and public property and infrastructure and to the environment downstream of the dam. But most seriously, this surge in water levels poses a significant risk to human life if people cannot be evacuated in time.

It is not just a flood of that rarity that poses risk to life. If a flood the scale of the Brisbane 2011 one-in-120 year event were to occur in the Hawkesbury-Nepean today, it would force the evacuation of about 64,000 current residents. The approach taken for the most recent precincts released to development on land above the traditional flood planning level—the one-in-100 chance per year level but below the level of the probable maximum flood [PMF]—has changed. Now the number of dwellings in the range between the one-in-100 year event and the PMF is being capped to match the evacuation capacity of the road network in the region to ensure that in the event of a rare, large flood all residents will be able to evacuate to high ground.

To facilitate this approach, only lower density development zones are being located on this land, with zones for medium or higher density development being placed above the PMF. The Liberal-Nationals Government has also changed the State Environmental Planning Policy [SEPP] covering the North West Growth Area to control the total number of dwellings built. Under Labor the SEPP mandated a minimum yield of dwellings per hectare, rather than a traditional minimum lot size, which would produce a ceiling on development. Labor's SEPP actually told developers a minimum number that must be achieved, not a maximum number that would be permitted. This has been fixed.

The Liberal-Nationals Government has adopted a prudent, responsible approach to development in the Hawkesbury-Nepean region to ensure that everyone can evacuate to high ground in time of flood and to locate homes where risk is minimised. Nevertheless, the investment in raising the Warragamba dam wall will provide the only way to protect the roads, bridges, railways, public and community buildings, electricity, water and sewer

infrastructure worth billions of dollars that is necessarily located across the region. Raising the wall will also vastly reduce the damage to private property caused by major floods and add valuable extra time to safely evacuate everyone from areas where they would be at risk. The people of Western Sydney deserve this protection.

TRAIN GUARDS

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:30): Tonight I thank the commuting community and the mighty Rail, Tram and Bus Union [RTBU] for the long and strong campaign to keep guards on our trains. Guards play a very important role in the safety of commuters on trains, in particular for people with disability. For example, a guard will inform staff at the station I want to get off at that I may need a ramp. Guards keep an eye out for families with prams and kids, as well as for the oldies who use our trains. They are an additional safety point and provide human vigilance. Whilst a guard cannot physically keep an eye on everyone who uses our trains, it is reassuring to know that a human being is looking out for the general public who travel on our trains. They also help in emergency situations. They are trained in first aid and can move a train to the next station if there is an incident involving a train driver.

We have fantastic guards at Gosford and Woy Woy stations. Twice in the last 12 months they have helped people who have been caught between the platform and a train. They were responsible for keeping things in place, calling an ambulance and helping those travellers to safety. The guards I know are very important to me. Tonight I also acknowledge Martin Stewart. Last Monday he travelled from Victoria to talk about the importance of guards on trains. Martin, who is visually impaired, campaigned fiercely before Melbourne removed its guards. He realises the important role guards play in looking out not only for the safety of people who are visually impaired but also for all train travellers. One day Martin, when he was travelling with his wife and young child, thought he was stepping into the doorway of a train. Instead, he had stepped between the platform and the train. At that time, there were no guards on trains in Melbourne. A lady saw Martin fall and she raced to tell the train driver. Unfortunately, she did not get to the driver in time. The train departed the station. She then ran back, distressed, screaming that someone had been killed.

Martin shares the story of how people looking down saw him twitching on the train line. A couple jumped down to help him. One person bandaged his arm and another his leg to stem the loss of blood and keep him alive. Martin has indeed lived to tell the tale—a blind guy with an arm and a leg amputated—and he is still campaigning to keep guards on trains for the safety of all train travellers. In New South Wales we have been engaged in a hard fight to get the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure to keep our guards on the trains. Earlier this week, thanks to Martin, the efforts of our community and the voice of the RTBU, it seems that the Minister may have agreed.

However, we now have another problem. The new intercity train fleet will soon be arriving. The carriages could have been built at A. Goninan & Co. Ltd in Newcastle, which would have provided employment to locals—people in the Hunter, on the Central Coast and in Newcastle—who are skilled in the industry. But the job was outsourced to Korea. The anticipated cost of the intercity train fleet was \$2.8 billion; the actual cost is \$3.9 billion. That is a blowout of more than \$1 billion—imagine the difference that that amount of money would have made to our communities—and the train carriages do not fit the tracks.

The Minister is now saying that the Government will retrofit trains designed to have no guards to accommodate guards to look after the people of New South Wales. What will be the additional cost blowout when the Minister delivers? This is the same Minister who closed a perfectly good train line that was only 10 years old, travelled 13 kilometres underground and cost \$2 billion to build. Train travellers are now bombarding my electorate office with their concerns about a 17-minute trip that has blown out to 40 minutes. The complaints keep rolling in.

Members talk about the Sydney light rail. There is a 14-month delay and the anticipated cost of \$1.6 billion has blown out to \$2.1 billion, which is a further \$500 million. This Government needs to listen to the people of the Central Coast. The 4.44 a.m. and 5.08 a.m. trains from Gosford have only four carriages. Commuters tell me that they do not want these new trains, which have fewer seats, more standing room and backward-facing seats do not have the wi-fi promised by our Federal member. I again congratulate our train-travelling communities across New South Wales for speaking up about passenger safety. I commend the guards for fighting so hard to convince the Government to keep guards on the trains. It cost Martin Stewart an arm and a leg to convince the Minister that we need guards on our trains. Now let us see the Minister deliver.

NORTHCONNEX

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (20:35): Areas of public policy that involve technical matters are ripe for scare campaigns, as the environmental consequences of the NorthConnex tunnel have demonstrated. In early 2015 an approval was granted for the tunnel, following an environmental impact statement [EIS] process with community consultation and well before I became the endorsed Liberal candidate for the seat

of Ku-ring-gai. When the scare campaign about pollution from the tunnel started in 2014, the Government asked the independent NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer to appoint international experts to assess whether the NorthConnex EIS predictions about air quality were correct. In 2014 the Chief Scientist appointed Professor Peter Sturm, from Graz University of Technology in Austria, and Dr Ian Longley, from the National Institute of Atmospheric Research in New Zealand, to review the NorthConnex EIS conclusions. In the second of their two comprehensive reports dated 2 December 2014, which were released to the public, Professor Sturm and Dr Longley concluded:

In the areas where additional pollution can be expected—particularly along M1 North of the tunnel portal [i.e. Wahroonga and Waitara] ... the change in air quality is likely to be very small ...

Air pollution in Wahroonga and Waitara in particular and in Sydney in general is very low by international standards. For example, data presented by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage shows that fine particulate matter—that is, PM 2.5—in Sydney is well below and only a fraction of the levels of international cities like Rome, Berlin, Madrid, Amsterdam, New York, London and Paris. The overall addition to the pollution of Wahroonga and Waitara from the tunnel ventilation outlet will be minimal. As shown in volume one of the EIS, outlet emissions will contribute only about 1 per cent of the PM 2.5 in Wahroonga and Waitara. The 1 per cent addition is so small that it is within the calibration error of the measuring equipment.

I am advised by scientists that the NorthConnex ventilation outlet is not a chimney or stack and that it will push air out of the tunnel at speeds of up to 50 kilometres an hour through a 20 metre-high ventilation outlet. The air will go high up into the atmosphere, rapidly disperse and not concentrate in any one place. That is better for our children's health than the exhaust pipes of trucks and cars presently passing at chest height near our local schools. To ensure the predictions within the EIS verified by the international experts are made out, the infrastructure approval for the tunnel has some of the most stringent conditions in Australia.

First, there will be 12 months of air monitoring at various sites, including near Waitara Public School, before the tunnel is operational. This air monitoring will start shortly. Secondly, air quality monitoring will continue to take place for at least two years after the tunnel is operational. Thirdly, the air quality to be measured includes the small particulate matter, or PM 2.5. Fourthly, the results of the air monitoring will be fully transparent and will be published on a website in near real time. Fifthly, if the air quality is not within the specification of the approval, the tunnel can be shut down. Rectification works necessary to reopen the tunnel are at the full cost of the operator and not the Government.

The ventilation outlets have been designed taking into account local weather conditions. A sophisticated computer model was used to generate a full year—or 8,760 hours—of location-specific meteorological data at more than 14,000 locations around NorthConnex. The model modifies measured official meteorological data from Lindfield, Terrey Hills, Richmond RAAF Base, Prospect and Sydney airport to account for the influence of local terrain. The model includes still-weather conditions and temperature inversions. Some opponents of the tunnel have called for filtration of the ventilation outlets. However, based on the review of the Advisory Committee on Tunnel Air Quality, appointed by the NSW Chief Scientist, I am advised by scientists that the filtration of the NorthConnex ventilation outlet at Wahroonga would have an impact on total PM 2.5 levels of only one-quarter of 1 per cent but would consume the equivalent of the energy used every day by 5,000 homes.

Recently it has been wrongly suggested that the NorthConnex in-tunnel air quality will be similar to smoking 20 cigarettes at once. The scientists point to the fact that these critics have wrongly taken a 24-hour average and applied it to the six minutes that people will be in the tunnel, grossly overstating their air quality conclusions. Trucks that are diverted off the Pacific Highway from North Sydney into the Lane Cove Tunnel, M2 and NorthConnex will avoid 31 traffic lights and the tunnel will allow traffic along Pennant Hills Road to avoid 24 traffic lights, substantially reducing air pollution as a consequence. The NorthConnex tunnel will provide substantial public benefits. It will permit traffic to proceed from North Sydney to Newcastle with only one traffic light or from Newcastle to Canberra without a traffic light. The NorthConnex project is a great example of this Government providing essential infrastructure for our State's people and its economy.

BONNYRIGG HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (20:40): I draw the attention of the House to a fantastic education institution in my electorate of Cabramatta, Bonnyrigg Heights Public School. Currently Bonnyrigg Heights Public School has more than 1,100 students enrolled. Unfortunately, their learning facilities are not up to scratch. The school has 27 demountable classrooms to cater for the demand from local families and their children. If members just think about that for a second: 27 demountables in a primary school equates to almost 700 students being educated not in proper classrooms but in infrastructure that, according to teachers and students, is away from the main teaching areas and makes them feel like second-class citizens.

This Government can say what it likes to defend demountables but, at the end of the day, demountables are temporary accommodation. Our students need fully furnished classrooms in buildings to maintain basic levels of literacy, let alone high levels of academic excellence. Twenty-seven demountables in a school the size of Bonnyrigg Heights Public School equates to almost two-thirds of the school population being housed inadequately. The New South Wales Department of Education's report in 2016 on demountable accommodation in schools stated:

Demountable buildings allow the Department to provide flexible accommodation solutions for peak enrolment periods and to meet changing enrolment patterns; meet emergency needs that may arise as a result of fires or natural disasters; and temporary needs arising from capital works or maintenance projects in schools.

Even in the department's own report there is no mention of demountables being intended for permanent use. I am a realist; I know the education sector is struggling to provide sufficient classrooms for students under this Government's stewardship. Overcrowding at schools is well documented. But what does the Government have to say to principal Daryl McKay and the staff and students at Bonnyrigg Heights Public School, who were told in April this year by Infrastructure NSW that their school would be upgraded? I am advised that planners, surveyors and arborists were sent to the school to prepare plans for this supposed upgrade.

When the budget came around, there was no money to be found for Bonnyrigg Heights Public School—no feasibility planning, no money set aside for the future. Instead, the principal got a phone call telling him that everything is cancelled and that the department will revisit it in 2019, probably after the State election. It just shows where a school such as Bonnyrigg Heights Public School and an electorate such as Cabramatta sit on the list of priorities of this uncaring Government and whichever of its puppets runs at the next State election. Our students deserve the best education possible and Bonnyrigg Public Heights Public School deserves more classrooms and the upgrade that it was promised.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (20:44): Since 2011, this Government has built or upgraded 65 schools across the State. A further 165 new schools or major upgrades are currently under construction or in the design and planning stages. There is funding for more than 3,500 new classrooms, providing 81,500 additional student places. This Government has provided more than 5,100 additional teachers since coming to office.

STRONGER COUNTRY COMMUNITIES FUND

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (20:44): I take this opportunity to talk to the House about the wonderful Stronger Country Communities initiative that the New South Wales Government has provided to regional and rural areas of New South Wales. This was possible through good management and because The Nationals are in government. In my electorate I was fortunate recently to make a number of announcements—and there are more to come. The Upper Hunter shire—where I was the mayor before my election to Parliament—received \$2.2 million in the recent round of funding from the Stronger Country Communities. The projects funded include an upgrade to the facilities at the Wilson Memorial Oval, worth \$526,000. When I announced funding of \$243,570 for a field upgrade for Scone Park I was accompanied by the Men of League, who were at Scone and the Upper Hunter doing their drought tour.

Also as part of the Upper Hunter package there will be an upgrade to Harrison Oval, at \$137,600; the Merriwa Skate Park upgrade, at \$291,329; the Gundy Soldiers Memorial Hall restoration, at \$59,515; the Amaroo Park toilet facility, at \$88,028; Jefferson Park facility upgrade at \$124,229; the Merriwa Oval upgrade at \$261,000; the Merriwa Showground facilities upgrade at \$185,00; the Scone Gymnastics Centre refurbishment, at \$164,370; and the St Andrews Reserve Arena, at \$154,841. The Government was also able to offer partial funding for the Upper Hunter Swimming Pool shade sails, at \$24,685.

In addition, I announced \$1.3 million for the Singleton local government area as part of the Stronger Country Communities fund. That will go towards a number of projects, including an upgrade to the entry of the police citizens youth club premises; shade for the Singleton Swimming Pool marshalling area; a disability toilet and ramp construction for the Scout hall; the Civic Centre audio upgrade; and \$539,000 for the restoration of the Singleton Historical Museum. Those who have been around for a while will know that I have been fighting to get rid of the flying foxes in Burdekin Park in Singleton. After 14 years, I was able to facilitate the bureaucratic process—which was a nightmare for so long—so that the flying foxes are no longer a problem. The animals did a lot of damage to the Singleton Historical Museum but the Government was able to provide \$539,000 to fix it.

The Government also provided funding for an upgrade to the Lake St Clair wastewater system and for the Singleton Riverside Park community kitchen, which is a wonderful project. The council is building a new riverside park, including a full kitchen in which young people can be trained to be cooks and chefs. The cost of fitting out the kitchen was \$127,245. The Government also provided partial funding for an upgrade to the irrigation, fencing and seating at Howe Park. In Muswellbrook, where my office is located, the Government has provided \$1.5 million for the Muswellbrook local government area, including for the Highbrook Park soft-fall

replacement, additional field drainage for the Denman Recreation Area, and \$900,000 for a learn to swim and therapy pool.

Funding will also be provided for the Karoola Park regional netball courts and improvements to the Highbrook Park spectator area, along with funding towards the upgrade of amenities at the Weeraman Oval. These are all wonderful facilities in the Muswellbrook shire. At Gloucester, which is also in my electorate and is part of the MidCoast Council area, \$655,000 went towards the Gloucester grandstand. I have pushed for the grandstand project for quite some time—certainly since my election to this place—and recently I was pleased to be able to deliver those funds to the community on behalf of the Government. In the coming weeks I am looking forward to making more announcements in the Liverpool Plains and Dungog shires. There is wonderful news to come for those communities.

MOUNT KEIRA SUMMIT PARK

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (20:59): I raise in the House a very important project and one that I have spoken about on a number of occasions in this House: the iconic Mount Keira Summit Park and the upgrades that I am negotiating with Wollongong City Council and the Aboriginal community. For those who do not know, Mount Keira Summit Park is a most picturesque location, with views of the beautiful Pacific Ocean—or the Tasman Sea, as the locals call it—where people look directly from the high plains of Mount Keira over the city of Wollongong and out to the Tasman Sea and the Five Islands. Mount Keira is an important Aboriginal location and the upgrade project needs to include a place for a strong Aboriginal experience and educative program to ensure that future generations understand the importance of Mount Keira to our First Peoples.

At its next meeting, Wollongong City Council will consider the new management plan for the park. The plan will include a set of guidelines for the activities that will occur in and around this very significant community area. Some of the upgrades include improved tracks and lookouts—which I have been calling for since I was elected—the reinstatement of the important and culturally sensitive Five Islands lookout and new trails, including a high ropes course; upgrades to the car park, picnic areas and toilet facilities; and food and beverage services. Many people in the Illawarra enjoy rock climbing and abseiling and recognise the importance of art sculpture and commemorative plaques, particularly around Aboriginal cultural activities, and the opportunity to attract group tours and functions. Camping and hang-gliding will not be permitted, and dogs will not be allowed in this sensitive area.

This is an important project for the people of the Illawarra and a project that I have lobbied for since my preselection because I recognise that this part of the Illawarra escarpment has been neglected for too long. With my colleague Mr Paul Scully, the member for Wollongong, I was proud to announce that if Labor is elected in March 2019 we will commit \$5 million to Wollongong City Council to upgrade the Mount Keira Summit Park. We believe it is an important investment that will enhance one of the most iconic lookouts on the eastern seaboard. The lookout has the potential to be world class. However, it needs a strategic focus that goes beyond the funding provided by Wollongong City Council to cement it as an iconic destination for both tourists and locals to enjoy.

I acknowledge the work of Wollongong City Council and particularly the work of Destination Wollongong, led by Mark Sleight, who continues to be a strong advocate for upgrades to Mount Keira Summit Park. Mark has worked closely with me over a number of years to get the ball rolling for this project and has put a lot of policy focus on and committed funding to the site. I also acknowledge the important Aboriginal community, who are custodians of the land and have a significant link to the land and the Five Islands as a part of the Dreamtime story of Jirrar.

This is a very important project; we want to get it right. I commend the Labor Opposition and the Leader of the Opposition, Luke Foley, for the commitment of \$5 million. With this commitment, Labor, if elected, will ensure that that part of Mount Keira is greatly enhanced to the benefit of everyone. Most importantly, we will be able to showcase not only a very important Aboriginal landmark but also an important cultural and historical landmark for the people of the Illawarra and the electorate of Keira, which gets its name from our beautiful mountain.

CENTRAL WEST RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (20:55): I speak about passenger rail services for Orange and the greater Central West. Government members have talked a lot about their commitment to regional New South Wales. However, it is rarely followed up with action. The lack of investment in critical infrastructure across regional New South Wales is stifling the potential growth of our regions. One of the greatest examples of critical infrastructure requiring significant investment is passenger rail. The announcement of the Inland Rail project was welcome news to me and my constituents. The project announcement proves that rail is just as important now and in the future as it has been in the past. However, that project, which passes through my electorate of Orange,

requires a direct and improved connection from the rail hub at Parkes with the eastern seaboard to capitalise on its potential.

Our population is ageing and readily accessible passenger transport services are increasingly important for people to access metropolitan Sydney. It is equally important to de-congest our roadways, which are being placed under increasing strain. The issue of safety is not insignificant. The road toll in regional New South Wales is unacceptably high and the danger of long-distance travel on country roads is a serious issue. That aspect supports the need for safe long-distance travel on modern passenger rail where danger is nil to negligible. Connectivity between regional New South Wales and our State capital is essential and it is what the people of regional New South Wales need and deserve. We now live in a global society and the people of regional New South Wales require access to the ports for leisure and business. Equally important is their access to Sydney for specialist medical services, which the people of my electorate require every day of the year.

Decentralisation is as important to the bulging metropolis as it is to the regions desiring to grow. Regular and reliable passenger rail services are an attractive feature to those considering relocating to the regions and also providing confidence to businesses looking to establish west of the Great Dividing Range. Passenger rail transport has proven to benefit regional tourism. The annual Parkes Elvis Festival is a fine example of how popular rail transport is to access events because train tickets allocated to transport passengers to this event were sold out almost as soon as they went on sale. Tourism is necessary and relied on to boost regional economies and fuel growth. It has been often said that decentralisation and transport infrastructure is like the chicken and the egg: which comes first? It is a fair comment. Although rail infrastructure largely exists, it needs the investment to improve it so that modern passenger rail fleets can travel at their potential speeds and capabilities.

An updated passenger timetable is required to establish the needs of my community. A survey needs to be undertaken to identify the travel needs of the people of the Orange electorate and the broader Central West. The Minister has advised me that a survey will take place after the delivery of the XPT replacement fleet. However, that ought to be undertaken now to provide my electorate with a service utilising the existing fleet until it is replaced. The XPT replacement fleet requires delivery in the very near future and consideration needs to be given to tilt technology to allow high-speed travel and food and sleeping services to attract and to cater to customers. These features have been standard across much of the world for many decades, and it is now time we lifted our game here.

Significant investment requires to be made to straighten the tracks west of Bathurst to increase efficiency through high speed travel and reduction in travel time. A seamless express service connecting Parkes to Sydney and requiring no change of trains is desirable to attract patronage. Presently, the Bathurst Bullet needs to be stabled in Orange, which would enable passengers from my electorate to depart for Sydney early in the morning so that they arrive in Sydney early enough to take part in business and other activities and make full use of the day. Recently I undertook an electorate-wide survey in which the respondents identified improved passenger rail services as one of their high priorities. It is essential for the Government to invest in improved passenger rail services for the people of the Orange electorate, the greater Central West and all of regional New South Wales for future growth and prosperity.

SURF LIFE SAVING CENTRAL COAST

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (20:59): Going to the beach is a huge part of the lifestyle and economy of the Central Coast. We live in the most beautiful part of the world and have 41 beaches. It is no wonder more than a million people use our beaches every season. Keeping those people safe is an army of volunteers and professionals from our 15 surf clubs. They ensure that our patrolled beaches are safe places for families to enjoy with the peace of mind that if something goes wrong someone will be there to help. Weekend patrols started a few weeks ago. I was honoured to be on the first shift as a member of patrol number one at Soldiers Beach Surf Life Saving Club. It is important to understand the essential role that our patrols play and to reflect on the efforts that have been made in previous years.

Last year all 15 Central Coast surf life saving clubs excelled during the lifesaving season, ensuring there were zero drownings on patrolled beaches. Each patrolling member can be extremely proud of that amazing effort. Patrol statistics across the coast list members performing 18,000 preventative actions, attending to 1,600 first aid cases, performing 1,100 rescues and volunteering more than 93,000 hours to keep the one million beachgoers safe on our Central Coast beaches. This commitment is an absolute credit to the dedication of the members and clubs on the coast. The Soldiers Beach Surf Life Saving Club is the only surf club remaining in my electorate as The Lakes Surf Life Saving Club moves to the Swansea electorate.

Patrol members did great work last year and I will take a moment to give some statistics on their efforts. They provided 6,205 volunteer hours, reached 516 members, hosted 120,000 plus beachgoers and performed 128 rescues and 61 people received their bronze medallions. There were 227 nippers, 275 first aid cases and

2,267 preventative actions and 74 awards and certificates were given. I know everyone involved in our club is immensely proud of the work they have done and I am confident that we will have another good year this year making sure beachgoers are safe.

It is important to remember that surf lifesavers also have roles during the off season. Surf Life Saving Central Coast continues to provide aquatic rescue services in support of police during emergency call-outs. Our lifesavers perform an invaluable role in the community and I am looking forward to working with other surf lifesavers this season to keep people safe. I make special mention of the following members of the Soldiers Beach Surf Life Saving Club. Richard Field, who patrols every single weekend, is a former paramedic. Richard is always ready with a joke. Recently in a new book written about Central Coast surf clubs, he described his former occupation as "deckhand on a submarine". It took the author several days before he realised that Richard was having him on. Richard is great with the young kids and teaching them about surf lifesaving and aquatic life. He is a stalwart of the club.

I have had the pleasure of being vice captain to patrol captain Dennis Williams for nearly six years and we have patrolled together for more than 10 years. Dennis is heavily involved in the education program of the club and bringing young people through. Dennis makes sure we are on the ball. Our patrol is well attended because Dennis shouts all the young people chips and gravy and more recently chips and aioli. It means our patrol is always popular. Jim Buckton is the club president, which is quite a challenge. It is not just because of the patrol efforts on the beach but also because a lot of surf clubs, such as ours, have commercial operations. The commercial operations are sometimes more testing than looking after the people in the water. Jim has done a wonderful job of navigating the club through a difficult time over the last few seasons.

I make special mention of Coral Raymond and Jacquie Godier. They are retiring from their roles at the club. Coral was the secretary for more than 10 years and Jacquie was the caretaker at the club. Their service to the members of the club and to the community has been amazing. They are retiring and moving further north to be closer to family members. I wish them both well. They are fantastic individuals and encompass everything that we like about volunteering in New South Wales. I pay tribute to their efforts in supporting our surf club.

PUNCHBOWL STATION EASY ACCESS UPGRADE

WILEY PARK ROAD WIDENING

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (21:04): I raise an issue tonight that I have raised a number of times before in this place, that is, easy access at Punchbowl railway station. Punchbowl station has well over 950,000 patrons every year. By all measures, it meets the requirements for an easy access upgrade. Before I was elected to this place, I was a local school principal and I used to spend an enormous amount of time at the station to ensure that the students got to school on time and travelled home safely. I also ensured that the students helped people who were struggling up the stairs. At the station there are three flights of stairs. I would get the students to help the elderly, people struggling with shopping and parents with young children.

Punchbowl railway station is a busy station and the issue of easy access is raised with me repeatedly. I have written to and met with the Minister. At first the response was that it was not required, but now the discussion is about the Sydney Metro Southwest. The south west metro is not a priority for my community. We do not want it because with the metro comes overdevelopment and a lack of social infrastructure. I am on record saying I have major concerns about it. We see the metro as a ruse to bring in 34,000 units. I am not against development but I am against development that has no sensibility.

It is clear to me that my local community is effectively being held to ransom. They are being told they will not get easy access until they get the metro. Even based on the Government's proposal, the metro would not be available for another five or six years. In this day and age, everybody recognises the need for easy access. But my community will not get the easy access upgrade unless it gets the metro. That is a major problem. The proposed infrastructure projects do not include new schools, hospital upgrades, road widening or public spaces. This Government is so obsessed with overdevelopment that it wants to whack in 34,500 units, and when that happens my community might be lucky to get an easy access upgrade.

About three weeks ago I met with a young lady in my electorate office. I will not mention her name. She is in a wheelchair and has serious disabilities. She told me that she had to catch buses, and occasionally she catches buses from Punchbowl railway station. She said she understands that a lift is not available and if she needs to get from point A to point B a bus is her best option. It broke my heart when she told me that she would wait for a bus but sometimes the bus that arrived was not designed for people with wheelchairs. Effectively, this young lady is prevented from undertaking study or getting a job. We are talking about people's quality of life.

The case is valid for an easy access upgrade at Punchbowl station. I am pleased that other stations are receiving easy access upgrades but it is hard to justify that Punchbowl station does not receive an easy access

upgrade when there is such a need and given its high patronage. This issue has been ongoing for a long time. For the Government to effectively say to my community and communities along the proposed metro line that they will not get an easy access upgrade unless they get the metro is wrong. This Government talks about helping the most vulnerable in the community. People in my community cannot afford to catch taxis all the time. They simply want to be able to get to work or to their studies and an easy access lift will enable them to do this.

I want to talk briefly about another local issue in my electorate at Wiley Park. The Government is proposing a road widening at King Georges Road and Canterbury Road. When I heard about the project, it sounded fantastic. It would improve traffic flow in the area, which is a disaster at the moment. However, I found that the widening will improve a trip by 32 seconds, and it comes at a cost of sacrificing 22 native trees. Many of those trees are indigenous scar trees, which have important cultural heritage. I implore the Minister to work closely with the council and the local community to find a resolution to this issue.

CANCER COUNCIL NSW SAVING LIFE 2019

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (21:09): I congratulate the Cancer Council of NSW on the launch of its Saving Life 2019 campaign. I attended the launch on Sunday 21 October at the Uruguayan Club in Hinchinbrook. The aim of the Saving Life 2019 campaign is to call upon the Government to take action to reduce incidences of cancer. Its focus is on reducing the risk of young people being diagnosed with cancer by raising awareness about the unhealthy effects of smoking, bad eating habits and bad exercise habits. In 2018 more than 130,000 were diagnosed with cancer. I was one of them. Sadly, 45,000 people died this year as a result of cancer. Fortunately I was not one of them. Cancer has not only a physical effect but also a mental and emotional effect.

I want to thank the doctors, nurses and staff at Liverpool Hospital who treated me earlier this year. I underwent several weeks of radiation therapy and seven chemotherapy treatments, which were physically and mentally disturbing. Patients feel like giving up and think they would be better off dying but when they look at their family, partner, children and grandchildren they steel themselves and make sure they get through the treatment. It is terrible for young children who get cancer. We may understand why older people get cancer but not young children. One wonders what they did to get cancer and to have to undergo this treatment. I would not wish cancer on my worst enemy. It is terrible to go through.

Organisations such as the Cancer Council do a great job raising awareness. Those in the research field do a great job poring over samples to try to find a cure. Our medical staff and the treatment they provide are amongst the best in the world. This all combines with the terrific news that the number of new cases is decreasing and the rates of mortality are declining. However, there is still much more work to be done. I honestly believe that together we will be able to one day beat cancer.

Joining me at the Saving Life 2019 campaign launch were my good friend and parliamentary colleague Guy Zangari, the member for Fairfield; Ms Denise Daynes, Community Relations Officer for the Cancer Council NSW; Ms Lillian Carroso, President of the Uruguayan Club, which has made its venue available for use for many wonderful causes over the years; and Ms Sinila Radivojevic, Ambassador for Cancer Council NSW. Usually the word "cancer" has such negative connotations that it brings down the mood of a room but with the presence of all those who were in attendance there was a combined energy in the room about the task at hand and the importance of what the Cancer Council's Saving Life 2019 campaign can and will achieve.

I was diagnosed with cancer after a doctor looked down the back of my throat with a camera and found little bubbles. As soon as I saw the look on his face I knew I had a problem. He said the bubbles should not be there and that I required treatment and he sent me off to start radiation therapy. A diagnosis of cancer not only affects the sufferer but also everybody around them. Every day 120 people hear the words "you've got cancer". Those words alone can be devastating. The time has come for us all to step up and provide funding to help people with cancer and to help doctors and scientists find a cure to cancer. Let us get rid of this scourge.

The Cancer Council is calling on the next New South Wales Government to commit to reducing the impact of cancer in our communities by protecting workers and patrons from second-hand smoke in pubs and clubs by banning tobacco vending machines and introducing a tobacco retail licence fee; removing junk food marketing from government-owned properties; and funding public lymphedema services across New South Wales. As a cancer survivor, I support any change that reduces the risk of anyone having to go through what I went through.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I concur with the private member's statement of the member for Cabramatta. My wife is a 30-year survivor of cancer. She started the Cancer Council shop in Coffs Harbour. The Cancer Council does a fantastic job. These days it does not do so much in the retail space but it definitely does a lot in the research space and in fundraising. I fully support the private member's statement of the member for Cabramatta.

Mr Nick Lalich: I hope she lasts another 30 years.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: So do I.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 21:16 until
Thursday 25 October 2018 at 10:00.**