



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 1 August 2019

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 1 August 2019

The Speaker (The Hon. Jonathan Richard O'Dea) took the chair at 10:00.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[Notices of motions given.]

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery a range of guests who are present to watch the introduction of the Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill 2019. I extend that welcome in particular to Aaron Levine, Daniela Gavshon and Agnes Levine, relatives of Judge Aaron Levine, who made the original case law on abortion in *R v Wald* in 1971 that created the common law provisions for lawful terminations. They are guests of the member for Sydney.

Announcements

MEDIA PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY

The SPEAKER: I notify members that today for the commencement of general business notice of motions (for bills) No. 5 I have approved one television camera to be positioned in the public gallery. This camera will capture the second reading speech on the Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill 2019 by the member for Sydney. The vision will be pooled or shared among media outlets. Appropriate conditions have been applied to that approval.

Bills

TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT (RMS DISSOLUTION) BILL 2019

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Andrew Constance, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (10:15): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I welcome anyone who is here for the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. It is great that the press gallery is here to see me introduce the RMS bill. I also thank Hoppy from Channel 9 for coming along. I promise my contribution will be reasonably quick. The Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019 was before the Parliament a month or so ago as a cognate bill to the budget bills to facilitate a machinery government change. I recognise The Greens members in the Chamber and The Greens' engagement with this bill in the upper House. The Government will continue to work with crossbench members in the upper House on this legislation. Disappointingly, Labor is opposed to the bill.

This bill is about integrating transport. It is about bringing Roads and Maritime Services into the agency in an integrated, constructive way. This will enable a better strategic approach to the integration of transport for everybody in the State. With a single transport agency we will not have roads being built in one corner and transport being delivered in another without anybody talking to each other. I note that in progressing these important reforms we have undertaken extensive consultation with the unions and staff. I again reiterate that the bill is not going to change the employment status of Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] staff. They will remain part of the transport service in the same way they are now. I have been advised that the unions have acknowledged this in the most recent consultations between Transport for NSW and the union leadership. On a separate note, I am pleased to advise three RMS awards have been made by the New South Wales Industrial Relations Commission and are now operational. In respect of the two outstanding RMS and Transport for NSW awards there is now an agreement in principle in place with the unions for the finalisation of those awards. I do not want this bill to be delayed any further.

The SPEAKER: Unauthorised use of cameras is not permitted in the Chamber. I ask the attendant to ensure that the photograph taken from the public gallery is deleted.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: We want to get on and merge the agencies to deliver great community outcomes. We are after a fully integrated transport cluster. It is a sensible, logical step. This reorganisation will deliver better planning and service delivery and, as a result, better outcomes. No matter where you live in this State, the Government has made a very clear commitment that, by merging RMS staff with Transport for NSW staff, we can grow the bureaucracy in the bush. We want to deliver more jobs in the country to better plan our transport, logistics and freight movements across the regions.

The critical role that transport plays across our communities in terms of social and economic outcomes is clear. Opportunities to design the government sector in a way that meets the needs of the community are very important. That is what the bill seeks to achieve. Given the Government is investing some \$53 billion-plus in transport and roads infrastructure over the next four years, I am very conscious that we need this integrated model. I reiterate that this is more than any other Australian Territory or State is investing; we are hell-bent on changing the way in which transport is delivered across our community.

At the same time, part of the strategy is to ensure that, as transport becomes a technology business, certainly in planning terms we move towards full automation of our transport fleet. That might happen 15, 20 or 25 years into the future, but we must do the work now to plan for it. Of course, we will continue to put customers at the heart of everything we do. Service mobility is a new way of thinking about the way that people will use transport services in the future. Everybody is starting to use their smartphone applications to plan their trips. We have to get people across the city, which has grown at an astronomical rate. As I have said before, patronage on Sydney Trains in the past five years has increased from 300-odd million passenger trips per year to 420 million passenger trips per year.

People are getting onto public transport, and that is where the investment lies. The Future Transport 2056 strategy, in conjunction with our planning documents, the Greater Sydney Region Plan and the Regional Development Framework, is underpinning growth. By bringing city planning and transport planning together, for the first time we are now able to better plan the way in which people can move in and around Sydney, while also remaining very focused on the regions. I am conscious of the time, but I refer to detailed provisions in the bill. Schedule 1 amends the Transport Administration Act 1988 to give effect to the dissolution of Roads and Maritime Services and to transfer its assets, rights, liabilities and functions to Transport for NSW. This is important. It is why it needs to be in legislation—so there is no ambiguity.

Roads and Maritime Services is currently a standalone statutory authority under part 6 of the Transport Administration Act 1988. The bill dissolves Roads and Maritime Services and transfers the functions conferred on it under part 6—except for division 1A, which is not necessary—to Transport for NSW. There will be no change to the RMS functions that will be exercised by Transport for NSW once the dissolution occurs. This includes functions under the Transport Administration Act 1998, Roads Act 1993, Road Transport Act 2014, Heavy Vehicle National Law (NSW), Passenger Transport Act 1990, Passenger Transport Act 2014, Marine Safety Act 1998, Maritime Administration Act 1995 and associated regulations. Schedule 1 to the bill inserts savings and transitional provisions in schedule 7 to the Transport Administration Act 1988 to deal with the consequences of the dissolution of RMS. This includes provisions to ensure that any Act, matter or thing done by RMS before it is dissolved will be taken to have been done by Transport for NSW.

Similarly, a reference in any Act, instrument or document to Roads and Maritime Services will be taken to be a reference to Transport for NSW. The bill also provides for the amalgamation and continuation of the Transport for NSW Fund, established under section 76A of the Transport Administration Act 1998, and the Roads and Maritime Services Fund, established under section 77 of the Act, as a single fund. Schedule 2 makes consequential amendments to the Roads Act 1993 and transport-related regulations that are necessary to give effect to the dissolution of Roads and Maritime Services. As I have said, this is about providing the community with a fit-for-purpose, ready-to-respond agency, which is critical in today's world. We must have the right bureaucratic structure to deliver the right outcomes for our community. That is why a separate, silo-based roads agency is not cutting the mustard when we are trying to get the outcomes that our communities are seeking.

In terms of the politics, I am hopeful that the upper House will pass the legislation this time. I was disappointed that it became an industrial issue because it is not; it is about sound public policy. We have done our best to make sure that the many concerns raised, particularly by upper House crossbench members, get addressed. I recognise that Mr David Shoebridge has been pushing very hard for engineers represented by the Professionals Australia union. We must make sure that there is better consultation with our engineering staff across the agency. That is what Mr David Shoebridge has been seeking to deliver, and I am fairly confident that we can start to address all those concerns. I look forward to the debate in this place. I say to those opposite: This is not about job

cuts; this is not about spill and fill. We are trying to grow jobs for bureaucratic staff in the regions to support the growth of our transport logistics network.

I have never seen so much money being poured into infrastructure in Sydney—we need more staff to help us deliver this program. We are very keen on it. I am grateful that the two shadow transport Ministers are in the Chamber—Jo Haylen with responsibility for active transport and Chris Minns for transport more broadly. We want to bring this together and make sure that it delivers a great outcome for the State. I hope that the Labor Opposition will rethink the importance of having a standalone, integrated transport agency, given current customer and technology trends. I commend the bill to the House and encourage members to support it.

Debate adjourned.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL 2019

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Alex Greenwich, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:26): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill 2019 recognises that the best outcomes in women's reproductive health care are achieved when abortion is treated as a health matter, not a criminal matter, and a woman's right to privacy and autonomy in decisions about their care is protected. In New South Wales it has been a criminal offence to procure an unlawful abortion since 1900, when the Crimes Act was first written. The law has not changed since then. This was a time when women could not vote and, because they could not stand, there were no women in this Parliament. Now not only can women vote and stand for office, but also our State has a female Premier, a female Leader of the Opposition and a female Governor.

A wide range of stakeholders have been calling for decriminalisation and clarity in the law around medical procedures that terminate pregnancies. At the outset, I acknowledge and thank the work of the NSW Pro-Choice Alliance, represented here by Wendy McCarthy and others. The alliance is made up of 72 leading voices in health, legal and community sectors. It developed an agreed policy for a legal framework and principles to guide the preparation of this legislation. In early March I publicly announced that I was drafting legislation. Following this, a working group of members of both Houses formed to look at the best way to achieve reform in line with this policy. The working group included the Hon. Trevor Khan, the Hon. Penny Sharpe and the member for Summer Hill and, importantly, had the oversight of the Minister for Health and Medical Research, who supports the bill.

I acknowledge the 15 co-sponsors from across the Parliament and the State. The bill has more co-sponsors than any other bill in the Parliament's history and it is the first co-sponsored bill to be introduced in the Legislative Assembly. The bill that we have drafted is in line with what all members of the alliance, including the Australian Medical Association [AMA], have called for. The AMA was consulted directly on provisions and has come out strongly in support of the bill. In a statement to all members the AMA stated:

NSW is the last State in Australia to decriminalise abortion and this has placed the women and doctors here under a different and stigmatised legal arrangement to other States. AMA (NSW) has previously recognised that the retention of abortion in the Crimes Act is not appropriate for doctors or patients. We believe the proposed law will ensure access to appropriate care. AMA (NSW) encourages the NSW Parliament to pass the bill.

In our State's twenty-first century healthcare system pregnancies are safely terminated in licensed healthcare facilities and by registered doctors. But the women, doctors and healthcare professionals obtaining, conducting and assisting in these vital healthcare services are operating under an out-of-date law from the 1900s that creates a risk that they are committing a crime with penalties of up to 10 years in prison.

Our Crimes Act still makes it a criminal offence to procure an unlawful abortion. The framework that enables pregnancies to be terminated does not come from the law, but from common law interpretations of what "lawful" and "unlawful" terminations constitute. The courts have ruled that terminations are lawful if they protect a woman from serious danger to her life or physical or mental health, taking into account economic, social or medical reasons. The first ruling to allow for lawful terminations was in 1971 by Judge Levine in *R v Wald*. I acknowledge that today in the gallery we have some of Judge Levine's family, including his daughter-in-law, and his grandson and his wife. I pay tribute to Judge Levine's contribution.

There is no clarity beyond this interpretation in the law itself and determining whether each termination meets the common law criteria for "lawful" remains a grey area in the law. This has a number of poor

consequences for women trying to access reproductive health care. The courts can consider any termination that occurs in this State on a case-by-case basis, and assess each woman's personal situation to make a determination. The threat of prosecution of women and healthcare professionals is real. As recently as August 2017 a Blacktown mother of five was prosecuted for self-administering a drug to cause a miscarriage. If the law is left unchanged, the courts can continue to interpret what does and does not constitute a lawful termination with no guidance from the Parliament in over 100 years. The bill finally provides that guidance.

The threat of conviction can obviously create fear and stigma for women wanting an abortion and reluctance by healthcare practitioners to provide services or even advice to women about their options. In turn this prevents many facilities from providing a full range of reproductive healthcare services. This has the biggest impact for women in regional areas, where there are already limited healthcare choices. The law surrounding terminations is no longer fit for purpose and needs to be modernised. Since 1900 safer procedures for inducing terminations, including early medical termination—that is drug-induced terminations—have become available. There has also been a shift in community attitudes with the vast majority of the population supporting access to safe and lawful terminations. New South Wales is now the only place in Australia that has not decriminalised its laws or clarified what a lawful termination constitutes, leaving women in this State with fewer rights to reproductive health care than their counterparts in the rest of the country.

The Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill 2019 will regulate the practice of terminating pregnancies in New South Wales, bringing the law in line with clinical practice, community attitudes and the rest of the country. This bill will provide a framework for lawful and unlawful terminations in a new standalone Act. Provisions in the bill are based on those enacted in Queensland and Victoria, which came out of extensive Law Reform Commission processes, adopting the principles of ready access to early stage terminations and use of current common law provisions with additional oversight than currently exists from a second doctor for later stage terminations.

Specifically the bill will ensure that all terminations are lawful for women up to 22 weeks pregnant on request if performed by a registered doctor. After this, a termination is only lawful if two doctors consider that the procedure should be performed after considering all the relevant medical circumstances and the woman's current and future physical, psychological and social circumstances. The additional provisions after 22 weeks recognise that terminations at this later stage often involve disadvantage, distress, complexities and higher risks to the pregnant woman.

The inclusion of a second doctor provides stronger safeguards than what is currently in place under common law provisions. Twenty-two weeks was chosen with the advice of the AMA and follows the recommendations of the Queensland Law Reform Commission and is in line with the Queensland Act. It is supported by the Royal Australian New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists [RANZCOG]. Also, in line with consultation with the AMA and RANZCOG, these additional requirements are waived in emergencies where a termination might be required quickly to save the woman's life or to save another fetus.

Under this bill, terminations can be performed only by qualified doctors regardless of whether the procedure is surgical or medical. The bill provides for healthcare professionals—namely, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners and other doctors—who can assist with terminations, which includes dispensing, supplying or administering a termination drug. Most importantly, the bill expressly states that a woman cannot commit an offence for consenting to, assisting in or performing a termination on herself.

Women procuring the termination of a pregnancy, doctors performing terminations and healthcare professionals assisting in terminations will no longer be at risk of committing a criminal offence, with all offences relating to the procurement of an abortion removed from the Crimes Act. The bill also expressly abolishes any common law rules relating to the offences for procuring an abortion. However, a new safeguard for women will be introduced through the insertion of a clause in the Crimes Act that will make it a criminal offence for a person who is not a doctor to perform a termination or for a person to assist in a termination not performed by a doctor.

Penalties will be up to seven years' imprisonment. This will protect the community from any potential emergence of backyard abortion clinics. The offence is aimed at capturing people who are exploiting, profiting from or harming women in vulnerable situations. A safeguard has been included in the bill to require the Director of Public Prosecutions to institute or approve any proceedings in court for this offence to ensure that it does not criminalise anyone who is genuinely trying to help a pregnant woman.

As is currently the case, doctors will not be forced to perform or participate in terminations if doing so would conflict with their values or personal beliefs, except in life-threatening emergencies. The right to conscientious objection is already provided for in a number of Australian codes of conduct and ethical standards for health practitioners and these standards are reflected in this bill. The bill recognises the right of doctors to

practise in accordance with their values while providing provisions to ensure that women's health care is not impeded. When a woman seeks a termination or advice about a termination from her doctor, if that doctor has a conscientious objection the bill creates an obligation on them to refer the woman or transfer her care to another doctor or healthcare provider which the doctor believes can provide the service and advice about it.

The existing Medical Board of Australia's Good medical practice: a code of conduct for doctors in Australia states that doctors must not use their objection to impede access to legal treatment, and the Australian Medical Association position statement Conscientious Objection 2019 requires doctors to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the patient's access to care is not impeded. It is well recognised that these codes mean doctors should refer patients to other doctors and services where patients can receive the care they need. This conclusion was made in a recent article posted on the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners website on 28 November 2018 by Doug Hendrie. The Royal Australian New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has emphasised that health practitioners with a conscientious objection owe a duty of care to their patient to refer them to other health practitioners or services where a woman is able to receive the health care she needs.

It is vital that this bill, which seeks to ensure women have access to safe and legal abortions, in no way limits or reduces that access. The termination of a pregnancy is a time-critical procedure in which even small delays can significantly impede available healthcare options including the type of procedure available to a woman, the setting in which that procedure can take place and potential complications. Failure to refer a patient would disproportionately disadvantage women in rural and regional areas who already have limited healthcare choices and who may not know of doctors or facilities that provide a full range of reproductive services, as well as women who experience domestic violence.

Victims of domestic violence seeking to hide both their pregnancy and their wish for a termination from an abusive partner have very limited capacity to find alternative services if their GP refuses to provide a referral. Making a referral is not the same as providing or participating in treatment: It is about ensuring women can access the care they need without obstruction. The conscientious objection provisions in this bill reflect those in Queensland and Victoria, and are consistent with South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. While the bill does not include penalties, noncompliance could have professional disciplinary consequences.

A statutory five-year review has been included to ensure the bill achieves its purposes. The bill is closely based on the reforms enacted in Queensland late last year, which came out of an extensive law reform commission inquiry that assessed over a thousand submissions and involved public hearings. There is no need to duplicate this process given that all the relevant issues have been canvassed. Women, healthcare professionals and the wider community have been calling out for these reforms for many years. The healthcare profession in particular has stated that certainty around the circumstances in which terminations are lawful is needed to protect doctors who work to provide their patients with the best care available. This bill achieves these outcomes.

Evidence shows that the bill will not change the number of terminations performed. The Queensland Law Reform Commission assessment of available data concluded that the rate of pregnancies terminated among women of reproductive age—that is 15 to 44 years—has been declining over the past two decades across Australia. It is widely accepted and recognised by the World Health Organization that unrestrictive laws do not increase the rate of terminations performed and correspondingly restrictive laws do not decrease the rate of terminations performed.

Pregnancies are currently terminated safely in New South Wales by qualified registered doctors in licensed healthcare facilities. This is a medical procedure that is currently inappropriately placed in the Crimes Act. Our laws are out of step: They do not reflect clinical practice, or any need for safeguards or community values. Our current 1900 laws do not provide women in New South Wales with the same dignity, respect or access to safe abortions as women have in Queensland, Victoria and the rest of the country. In decriminalising abortion and regulating this medical procedure, this bill will modernise our laws and give long-called-for certainty to healthcare professionals. It will ensure that women in New South Wales finally have the right to choose without stigma and risk of a potential criminal conviction.

Women have fought long and hard for this reform over many, many decades. My Grandmother Jacqui was one of those women. When I was 10, I clearly remember Jacqui—she did not like being called "grandma"—sharing with me a letter she had written to then United States President George H. W. Bush, outraged at his anti-abortion stance. This was my first experience with any form of political activism. Jacqui instilled in me the importance of women, not politicians, having control of their own bodies. My grandmother passed away this year: She did outlive President George H. W. Bush. Today would have been her ninety-ninth birthday. I dedicate this speech to her. I inherited her quiet determination, and it is with her quiet determination that I will work with all members of this Parliament to see this bill pass. To the women here today and across New South Wales, I am sorry it has taken so long to achieve this reform. Members, let us not delay anymore: Now is the time for the

Parliament to come together to ensure women and their doctors are appropriately protected under the law. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): I thank the people in the public gallery for being here to see and listen to the introduction of an historic bill.

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER AMENDMENT BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 6 June 2019.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (10:47): It is an honour to resume my speech on the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2019. This excellent piece of legislation was introduced by my colleague the member for Keira. I am happy to speak on this bill fundamentally because this bill, and the purpose of the Parliamentary Budget Office, is about transparency and open government. It is also about being able to access the financial implications of projects—I am not sure what could be more important and why any member would vote against it. It does not make sense that anyone would vote against transparency, openness and accuracy in relation to the financial implications for the State.

When I arrived in this Parliament as a newly elected member in 2011 I had the good fortune to sit on the Committee on the Parliamentary Budget Office. The Parliamentary Budget Office had been established by the former Labor Government and the newly minted O'Farrell Government wanted to question the purpose and intent of that office. The committee received hundreds and hundreds of pages of submissions from parliaments all over the globe. These submissions unanimously supported the existence of a parliamentary budget office. Every single one of them, regardless of their political flavour, recognised that such an office had made a significant contribution to their parliaments. Every single one of those making submissions had varying years of experience with a parliamentary budget office. There was not a single criticism of or question about the need for such an office. Business chambers and councils unanimously supported the transparency and openness afforded by such an office.

One wonders on what grounds members would possibly vote against this bill. That is a question that has not been answered in this debate and will likely remain unanswered, as it seems I will be the last speaker. I am very proud to support this bill. The Parliamentary Budget Office is an incredibly useful and valuable tool to any member of any parliament, wherever they have the privilege to serve their people. The Government may well vote against this. It has the numbers in this House and the Opposition may lose the vote. But on what grounds, to what end and for what purpose? What is the Government afraid of? Why does the Government fear transparency and openness? Why does the opportunity to have accuracy regarding our financial statements and records create so much fear and anxiety that the Government needs to hide under the mat or in a dark corner away from a parliamentary budget office? At the recent State election NSW Labor submitted all of its election commitments and promises to the Parliamentary Budget Office and was given a big, healthy green tick. The State Government did no such thing. It was afraid of transparency. The Government may well vote against this bill but doing so will be a blight on its integrity. I support the bill.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (10:52): In reply: I thank all members who have spoken to this very important legislation. I thank my colleague the member for Cessnock and former shadow finance Minister, who assisted in putting this bill together to introduce this important reform to the Parliament. The Opposition believes it is important in 2019 to have an independent, robust Parliamentary Budget Office. The Commonwealth and Victorian parliaments have such an office; it is what MPs across the political divide in the New South Wales Parliament deserve. A parliamentary budget office will ensure that policy proposals, changes in legislation and initiatives put forward by members show fiscal discipline.

The bill will improve so many things in the New South Wales Parliament, perhaps most importantly the ability for members to introduce quality policy in a fiscally responsible way that will make a difference to the lives of working men and women and their families across New South Wales. That is the reason many of us are here and one of the core duties of all legislators. I would expect the Government to support this legislation; not doing so flies in the face of the improvements to Parliament that the Premier has previously outlined. This bill is all about improving parliamentary process and policy development. It is all about making sure we get well-costed, well-funded, well-resourced and appropriate policies to make communities across New South Wales better.

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

The House divided.

Ayes40

Noes47
Majority.....7

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Donato, Mr P
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T.F.
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E
Butler, Mr R
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dalton, Mrs H
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Leong, Ms J
McKay, Ms J
O'Neill, Dr M
Saffin, Ms J
Tesch, Ms L
Washington, Ms K

Bali, Mr S
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D (teller)
Park, Mr R
Scully, Mr P
Voltz, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Gibbons, Ms M
Hancock, Mrs S
Johnsen, Mr M
Lindsay, Ms W
Pavey, Mrs M
Provest, Mr G
Sidgreaves, Mr P
Smith, Mr N
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Ayres, Mr S
Bromhead, Mr S
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A (teller)
Elliott, Mr D
Griffin, Mr J
Hazzard, Mr B
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Perrottet, Mr D
Roberts, Mr A
Sidoti, Mr J
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Barilaro, Mr J
Clancy, Mr J
Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr L.J.
Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A
Lee, Dr G
O'Dea, Mr J
Preston, Ms R
Saunders, Mr D
Singh, Mr G
Stokes, Mr R
Tuckerman, Mrs W
Williams, Mr R

PAIRS

Lalich, Mr N

Petinos, Ms E

Motion negatived.

PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION AMENDMENT (NOTIFICATION OF SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF PRIVACY BY PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCIES) BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 20 June 2019.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (11:02): The Government does not support the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2019.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Why?

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: You are about to hear why. I note that the Opposition introduced a bill in almost identical terms in the previous Parliament. The Government opposed that bill on the basis that it had been developed without consulting affected stakeholders, without giving the community a chance to have its say on how a mandatory notification scheme should operate, and without considering the resourcing implications of the

bill, particularly for the Privacy Commissioner and the Information and Privacy Commission. It appears that this bill has also been introduced without any prior consultation with stakeholders.

As I said during the debate on the Opposition's 2017 bill, the Government supports measures to ensure that New South Wales has a strong and robust privacy framework. However, any decision to introduce a mandatory notification scheme in New South Wales must be informed by proper analysis and consultation. The introduction of a mandatory data breach notification scheme is a significant change that would affect hundreds of New South Wales public sector agencies, including principal government departments, statutory bodies, local councils and universities. It would also have significant implications for the Information and Privacy Commission and the Privacy Commissioner, who would be responsible for administering the scheme, including by receiving and responding to notifications.

The Government is aware that the introduction of a mandatory notification scheme was recommended by the former Privacy Commissioner in 2015. However, that does not negate the need to consult the current Privacy Commissioner on the design of the scheme and its resourcing implications for the Information and Privacy Commission. The Commonwealth scheme, the Privacy Amendment (Notifiable Data Breaches) Act 2017, was enacted after more than two years of extensive consultation and development, and the commencement of the Act was delayed for a full year to ensure that affected agencies and organisations would have time to prepare for its commencement.

All affected agencies should be given an opportunity to comment on the design of any mandatory notification scheme before it is introduced. It is equally important that the community receives the same opportunity. One of my colleagues on this side of the House described the bill as Labor's "pink batts for privacy". It is not costed, it has not been consulted on and it has failed to provide the community with an opportunity to have their say. In my contribution to the previous iteration of the Opposition's bill I informed the House that I instructed the then Department of Justice to commence a review of the current voluntary reporting scheme in New South Wales. As part of that review the now Department of Communities and Justice publicly released a discussion paper, which is currently available on both the department's website and the Government's Have Your Say website. The discussion paper seeks feedback on whether a mandatory breach reporting scheme should be adopted in New South Wales and, if so, how the key features of that scheme should be enshrined in legislation.

The discussion paper has been widely distributed and promoted via the department's social media channels. It has also been sent to targeted stakeholders, such as the Australian Privacy Foundation and the NSW Council for Civil Liberties. Submissions to the discussion paper close on 23 August 2019. The discussion paper sets out the key elements of the Commonwealth Notifiable Data Breaches scheme and asks for feedback on whether New South Wales should adopt the same model. It also draws on examples from mandatory notification schemes in other jurisdictions, such as Canada and the European Union. One of the key aspects of the scheme that will be subject to consultation and stakeholder feedback is the "trigger" or threshold for notifying data breaches.

Under the Commonwealth scheme entities are required to notify the Australian Information Commissioner and affected individuals of "eligible data breaches". A data breach is eligible when the following criteria are met: First, there is unauthorised access to or disclosure of personal information by an entity, or information is lost in circumstances where unauthorised access or disclosure is likely to occur; second, a reasonable person would conclude that it is likely to result in serious harm to any of the individuals to whom the information relates; and, third, the entity has been unable to prevent the likely risk of serious harm with remedial action. In contrast, the Opposition's bill would require a public sector agency to notify the Privacy Commissioner and affected individuals when there has been or is likely to be a "serious violation of an individual's privacy". This means that the reporting threshold would not be linked to harm.

The Opposition's bill also states that a public sector agency causes a serious violation of an individual's privacy if: First, the agency contravenes an information protection principle or a privacy code of practice that applies to the agency or discloses personal information kept in a public register; and, second, a reasonable person would conclude that the contravention or disclosure has resulted or would be likely to result in a serious violation of or interference with the privacy of an individual to whom the information relates. This is also a departure from the Commonwealth scheme, which requires unauthorised access to or disclosure of personal information and not a contravention of any Australian Privacy Principle. It is unclear why the Opposition has opted to depart from the Commonwealth approach in relation to those matters. The Government will wait to hear from stakeholders as to whether the Commonwealth provisions should be adopted, and, if not, what alternative approach should be taken.

The discussion paper released by the Department of Communities and Justice also seeks feedback on whether there should be exemptions from the requirement to notify. The Commonwealth scheme provides exemptions in the following circumstances: first, where information is held jointly with another entity, in which case only one entity is required to notify; second, where notification would be inconsistent with a Commonwealth law that prohibits or regulates the use or disclosure of information; and third, where the CEO of a law enforcement

body believes on reasonable grounds that notification would be likely to prejudice an enforcement activity. The Opposition's bill also departs from the Commonwealth scheme in relation to these matters. For example, the bill does not include any provisions to avoid duplication where information is held jointly by more than one agency. This could result in affected individuals receiving multiple notifications about the same breach, leading to confusion and unnecessary duplication.

Law enforcement exemptions under the Commonwealth scheme are also much clearer. They require the CEO of a law enforcement body to hold a reasonable belief that notification would prejudice a law enforcement activity. However, the Opposition's bill simply states that a law enforcement agency is not required to notify a breach if doing so would prejudice an agency's law enforcement functions. It is not clear in the Opposition's bill who would make this decision and on what grounds. The discussion paper also seeks stakeholder views on how long agencies should be given to notify data breaches. The Commonwealth scheme requires entities to take all reasonable steps to investigate within 30 days of becoming aware that there may have been an eligible data breach. Once the entity has reasonable grounds to believe there may have been a breach, the Australian Information Commissioner and affected individuals must be notified as soon as practicable. However, the Opposition's bill requires that notification must be given to affected individuals no more than 15 days after the agency first became aware of the circumstances that gave rise to the serious violation of privacy. Again, it is unclear why the Opposition's bill departs from the Commonwealth scheme in this regard.

The discussion paper seeks stakeholder views on other key features of the Commonwealth scheme, including, first, the content and method of notification, and second, the compliance and enforcement powers that should be conferred upon the Privacy Commissioner to support the scheme's operation. Now is an opportune time to consider whether the provisions of the Commonwealth scheme should form the basis of a New South Wales mandatory notification scheme, as the Commonwealth scheme has now been in place for around 18 months. In May 2019 the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner released a 12-month insights report on the operation of the scheme. The report found that the number of data breaches notified by entities increased significantly in the year following the scheme's introduction—from 159 to 1,132. The report concludes that this increase in notifications demonstrates that the Commonwealth scheme is delivering greater transparency and accountability. However, it also identifies some areas for future improvement, particularly where data breaches relate to information that is held jointly by multiple entities.

The report notes that in those situations entities can be uncertain as to who is responsible for notifying and responding to breaches. Insights such as these are invaluable in helping to ensure that any notification scheme introduced in New South Wales strikes the right balance between affording agencies discretion and ensuring that appropriate legislative guidance is provided. The Government also looks forward to receiving stakeholder feedback on the discussion paper generally. This will ensure that any decision to introduce a mandatory notification scheme in New South Wales is based on expert guidance, as well as input from the community. Once submissions on the discussion paper have been received, the Department of Communities and Justice will consider the feedback received and provide advice to the Government on whether the introduction of a mandatory scheme will, first, secure better outcomes for individuals affected by privacy breaches; and secondly, drive more robust privacy management by agencies. The department will also quantify the resources that would be required to support the introduction of a mandatory scheme.

In the bill's second reading speech, the member for Liverpool stated that the bill is consistent with a scheme already adopted by the Coalition Federal Government. As I have pointed out, this is not the case. The bill departs from the Commonwealth scheme in a number of material respects. The Government pointed out a number of these differences when the Opposition's 2017 bill was introduced. However, it appears that no adjustments have been made. The Opposition also states that it is not necessary to consult the NSW Privacy Commissioner on the bill on the basis that the previous Privacy Commissioner recommended that such a scheme be introduced in 2015. The Government disagrees with that position. All affected stakeholders, including the NSW Privacy Commissioner, public sector agencies and the community should be given an opportunity to comment on the introduction and design of any mandatory data breach notification scheme that is introduced in New South Wales. For these reasons the Government opposes the bill.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (11:15): As Labor's shadow Minister for Better Public Services, I am proud to support the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2019. I commend my hardworking colleague, the shadow Attorney General and member for Liverpool, for bringing the bill to the House. The purpose of the bill is simple: If there has been a serious breach of a person's privacy and that breach involves a public sector agency, that agency should be compelled to notify the person of the breach. This is common sense. We live in a world that is interconnected. We are constantly required to share our data with public sector agencies and private companies in order to participate in our modern economy. In general, we trust the organisations we share our data with and we

assume they have the technology and internal protocols that will protect it. Also, we assume that there are laws in place to protect our data and ensure it is not used in a way we do not intend. Frankly, that assumption is misplaced.

Over the last decade massive data breaches have occurred in the form of hacks and leaks. In 2010 Chelsea Manning managed to steal hundreds of thousands of secret reports from the United States Army. In 2013 Edward Snowden copied as many as 1.7 million documents from the United States' National Security Agency. In 2013 a data breach at Yahoo! exposed the data of around three billion people. In 2016 the data of more than 87 million Facebook users was harvested by political campaigning firm Cambridge Analytica. Last year the Marriott hotel chain admitted that the data of around 500 million guests had been breached. Just last month the United States credit reporting agency Equifax was forced to pay a settlement of \$650 million after the data of 147 million customers was breached.

I refer to all of those data breaches to show that, unfortunately, such breaches are a common occurrence. Technology has evolved so that it has never been easier to amass huge amounts of data. It is often easy to access data inappropriately and transmit it without authorisation. Data breaches can occur by accident and also as a result of malicious intent. Regardless of why data breaches occur, people have the right to protection when they do. However, people cannot protect themselves if they are unaware of the breach. Currently people share a wide variety of personal information with New South Wales government agencies such as Service NSW, including health and medical details. Unfortunately, New South Wales does not currently have a mandatory scheme for data breach notification. In 2017 the Federal Parliament passed the Commonwealth Privacy Amendment (Notifiable Data Breaches) Act 2017. That Act amended the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 to establish a scheme to notify people of data breaches.

The bill that Labor has introduced in this place is modelled on the legislation introduced by the Federal Liberal Government. By requiring notification of data breaches, it is hoped that there will be a stronger culture of compliance with data management protocols. It is also hoped that organisations will invest in cybersecurity in order to protect themselves from hacking. The bill is common sense, but unfortunately the Attorney General has said that the Government will not support it. The Attorney General has provided a number of reasons for the Government's refusal to support the bill but he failed to justify its position. The Government should not refuse to support the bill just because it has been introduced by the Opposition. Sometimes governments and oppositions have really good ideas. The shadow Attorney General is a very considered, learned, intelligent and forensic person, and I have enormous respect for him. He does not introduce bills willy-nilly.

The Attorney General should look at this again and reconsider his position, because it is really important legislation. The Minister for Customer Service is responsible for the private information of millions of people in New South Wales. We learnt during question time and through the media that before the last election the Minister's office leaked the private information of hundreds of citizens. This represents a breach of trust. Those citizens do not know that their information was leaked. I cannot believe the Minister is still in charge of this area of data, because private information is sacred to people. Every day we provide credit card and other information to all sorts of agencies—public, community and private organisations. We may authorise our information to be included on things like petitions. We know that that is public information. Service NSW has information about millions of New South Wales citizens.

The Government's refusal to support this bill is an indication that it is happy to go along with a lackadaisical approach that allows people's information to be disclosed without those citizens knowing their information privacy has been breached. That is why I am calling on the Attorney General to reconsider his position. This matter is very serious because New South Wales government agencies hold a lot of information about all aspects of our lives—legal and medical aspects and the services we use. Any breaches of our private data should be taken very seriously. I urge the Attorney General, who is also a very learned, considered person—although not as learned and considered as the member for Liverpool—to consider reversing his position and support the bill.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (11:23): I support the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2019. I speak with a little apprehension after hearing my colleague the member for Canterbury talking about the learned people in this Chamber. I thank my colleague the shadow Attorney General, and member for Liverpool for introducing the bill. It is timely, as our privacy protections date from 1988. When I came to this place I expected the New South Wales Government to have a legislative agenda that included bills such as this, and was surprised to find it did not. Bills are not simply pieces of legislation; they represent the public policy priorities of the government of the day, which has a duty to represent the public policy priorities of our society and policies that are redolent of the times. This bill reflects a real problem confronting society.

Public policies are designed to give effect to ideas that will improve the lives of the people. This bill, if enacted, will do just that. The problem is that a public sector agency that causes a serious violation of the privacy

of an individual by contravening an information protection principle or a privacy code of practice, or by disclosing personal information kept on a public register, is not required to notify the individual concerned or the Privacy Commissioner of the contravention or disclosure. It is left to a voluntary code of notification. The bill is designed to fix that problem by addressing four gaps in the current policy and legislative framework by amending the Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998, also known as the PPIP Act.

The bill defines how a public sector agency causes a serious violation of an individual's privacy. It provides the criteria or matters to be determined if privacy has been violated in a serious manner. It makes it mandatory for public sector agencies to notify an individual about any serious violations of their privacy. It makes it mandatory for public sector agencies to notify the Privacy Commissioner about serious violations of an individual's privacy. It also contains a range of measures arising from the four operative inclusions in the Act. A current example of what can only be characterised as a serious violation and a lack of requirement to notify in the public domain is the recent leaking of motorists' personal data sourced from Revenue NSW.

I use that example not to delve into the circumstances of the matter but to illustrate a case in the public domain that can be characterised only as a serious violation of individuals' privacy and the law not compelling those who caused that violation at least to notify them and the Privacy Commissioner. Good manners dictate that people should be notified in any case. The individuals concerned should have the right to know of such a serious violation; their right to know should not be subject simply to a voluntary code, as occurs under the current New South Wales policy and legislative framework. If Parliament had passed the Opposition bill that was introduced in 2017 by my colleague the shadow Attorney General the serious violations I have mentioned may not have occurred.

A mandatory code can compel people to give greater thought to how they handle personal information and has been shown to sometimes prevent violations. Further, the individuals concerned would have had the right to be notified—a right they do not have now. The Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998 governs the protection of personal information, along with the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002. These are the principal Acts that frame our limited right to privacy—one that is not fully developed in common law but is contained in the Bill of Rights 1689, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, along with a raft of other legal instruments that inform our legal culture.

We live in a time where the privacy of the individual is all but gone. This is an age when our kids get a digital footprint early and have it for life, as do we all—especially those in public life. If anything printed about us is untrue and a lie it is not easy to have it removed. However, we are not talking about that issue, although we should discuss the right to have Google and others correct what is printed about us or removed. It is one of the many debates I do not see on the legislative agenda in this place. It is said that conservative governments tend to shy away from making codes of behaviour mandatory for ideological reasons, whilst Labor governments, or progressive governments, tend not to shy away from such action for ideological reasons. It is more than that—it is for practical and ethical reasons and to give effect to good policy that we frequently have to make things mandatory. In this case, the protection of the people of New South Wales is overdue and that includes the people in my electorate of Lismore. It is, at its core, a security matter and that is an obligation of all governments no matter what political persuasion.

Since this amending bill was introduced the New South Wales Government has issued a discussion paper called "Mandatory notification of data breaches by New South Wales public sector agencies". The stated reason for this is that it is in response to the Commonwealth's now mandatory notification obligations and its stated purpose is to seek feedback as to whether New South Wales public sector agencies should be required to report data breaches to the NSW Privacy Commissioner and, if so, how the scheme should operate. The stated purpose should clearly add "and to notify the individual concerned as per the media release and as mentioned further in the discussion paper", but the "purpose" of the Government's discussion paper does not say that on page two.

What often happens in parliaments—and I see it in this place—is that we get into a debate about whether yours is better and bigger than mine. I concede that is where we are at with this bill. It is clear by the Government's issuing of the discussion paper after this bill was recently introduced and by it being introduced in 2017 by the Commonwealth Government—a conservative Government also making it mandatory—that the time has come to change the law to make sure that it is mandatory to notify the individuals concerned and the Privacy Commissioner. Having made the comment in the debate about, "This one is bigger and better", I have seen a situation play out over many years where the Government does not want to yield because the Opposition brought a bill in. Either way it seems we are going to get the legislative changes that the public desire and deserve. I thank my colleague the shadow Attorney General and member for Liverpool for bringing this important bill to the House. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (11:32): I thank the member for Lismore for her comments, particularly about the nature of the debate and the way it seems to be conducting itself in "a mine is bigger and

better than yours" sense. I think she has hit the nail on the head. I boldly predict that the Government will have very similar—if not identical—piece of legislation brought before the House once it goes through the process of a discussion paper. That leaves people wondering why on earth it cannot support this bill now. The answer is that it was introduced by the member for Liverpool and not by the Attorney General. We will be back here within a matter of weeks or months debating an almost identical bill for almost identical reasons. The reason is simple: Data protection is a live issue in the community. The protection of people's private information is a live issue and of great concern to many people out there, not least of all those caught up in the data integrity breach recently perpetrated by the Government. Just generally there is a greater collection of big data.

This bill essentially extends the provisions of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1988 [PPIPA] to cover State-owned corporations, otherwise known as SOCs, if they are not already covered by Commonwealth legislation. In my contribution to the debate I emphasise the need for this bill, which has been introduced by my colleague the shadow Attorney General. More importantly, I recognise that the bill does not come from thin air—the member for Liverpool has not plucked it out of the ether and tried to jam it in and make a big deal of an issue. The provisions of the bill have been recommended in a number of places. In fact, the shadow Attorney General tried to pass similar provisions through this House in 2016. He introduced a bill on 17 March 2016 and provided a fine second reading speech on 23 March 2016. But, for his troubles, the bill was smothered by the nature of the standing orders in this place.

Many people outside of this place might not know that the way this place operates is that the Opposition gets only an hour every sitting week, if it is lucky, to propose or debate legislation that it has initiated. If the bill gets to the floor, it is slotted into a long line of other bills which take precedence, until it is dispatched by a vote and defeated—or passed, hopefully—on the strength of the Government, or it lapses. By introducing this new bill, the shadow Attorney General has signalled that he is indefatigable. As I mentioned, the provisions in the bill have been recommended by other parties, including the Information and Privacy Commission NSW and the NSW Law Reform Commission. The bill clarifies an historical anomaly where SOCs were previously exempt from privacy provisions in the principal Act to create a level playing field between SOCs and other commercial operations.

In February 2015 the former New South Wales Information and Privacy Commissioner identified the existing anomaly quite clearly in the report, under section 61B of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, which says:

Despite the significant amount of personal information held by NSW SOCs they are currently exempt from NSW privacy legislation. The PPIPA Act applies to 'public sector agencies' that is, State Government agencies, local councils and universities, bodies providing data services on behalf of these organisations (and any prescribed in regulations) but not SOCs.

...

At present, three of the ten SOCs are prescribed organisations under the Commonwealth regime, that is, Essential Energy, Ausgrid and Endeavour Energy. This means that only those consumers, the customers of these three SOCs, have formal privacy protection and avenues for external redress for any complaints.

The commissioner notes that:

The recognition by SOCs of the importance of privacy and the responsibilities is positive, however, their service users do not have the same level of protection as if there was formal legislative coverage. Voluntary compliance by a SOC with NSW privacy legislation does not provide external review of the complaint handling.

As many SOCs voluntarily comply with the privacy provisions, there should be no problem with formally capturing their responsibilities within legislative parameters, as the bill seeks to do. The Government should close this loophole and implement the recommendation of its key privacy adviser. Why it is not doing so, and has not done so, remains an unanswered question. At the heart of it, one can only think that there is politics at play. Similarly, the NSW Law Reform Commission Report 127, *Protecting Privacy in New South Wales*, published in May 2010, also recommended a change to the law:

... We proposed that all SOCs should be covered by privacy legislation, either by PPIPA or by the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), provided there is no duplication of coverage. This proposal was met with broad support by submissions addressing the issue.

In fact there is now a counterintuitive argument that SOCs may be advantaged in not being formally captured by privacy provisions, while other commercial operations are. We have essentially joined the full circle in this debate because, as I noted earlier, this was the reason that was initially advanced to exempt SOCs from the PPIPA. Much has changed in the nature of deliberations about the importance of individual privacy over the last two decades since New South Wales first introduced the legislation to protect it. A paragraph in the *OECD Digital Economy Papers*, No. 220, published in 2013, summarises the importance of personal data and the need to protect it. It states: The last decade has witnessed extraordinary developments related to data-storage capacities, high-speed networks to move data and a rapid growth of computational power. Significant changes in the volume and uses of personal data have been enabled by improvements in the ability to collect, store, aggregate, link, analyse and transmit personal data. The shift from analogue to digital technology has led to a much greater capacity to store

and share pictures and video. Mobile devices enable the routine collection of geolocation information that locates individuals in time and space. Sensors used in health, environment and energy sectors produce data that can be linkable back to individuals. And much of this data is made available globally, supported by communications networks that permit continuous, multipoint data flows.

Policy makers today are now engaged in processes to review and update privacy laws and frameworks across the OECD.

That is the world we face in this debate. The world has moved on from when there was a question of competitive neutrality to now, when corporations are captured under privacy law, but State-owned corporations are not. Disappointingly, the Government seems intent on resisting this change under the claim that the member for Liverpool and shadow Attorney General did not consult widely enough before introducing the legislation. The Government has issued a discussion paper to do exactly that. I argue that much has been written, much has been contemplated and much has been thought about when it comes to the privacy and protection of personal information. Much still needs to be done, such as incorporating SOC's under the auspices of the Act, so that the data that they hold—repositories of information, for instance customer databases that hold a range of increasing information—is protected.

The Government's lackadaisical approach to data integrity, where it is more intent on using data maliciously than protecting the privacy of data, should be taken into consideration. The My Community Project encourages people to vote for their favourite project in individual electorates. Government members are actively encouraging people to sign up to a Service NSW account; actively encouraging people to give their data to the Government in order to participate in this democratic process of giving out funding. By the same token, we now have a government that is collecting data on the one hand, but is fiercely resisting the opportunity to clean up an anomaly in the law and cover State-owned corporations by data protection and privacy provisions on the other. I encourage the Government to reconsider its position and to support the bill. I expect that we will be back here in a couple of months debating the exact same bill, with the exact same provisions; it will just have a different name.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (11:42): I contribute to the second reading debate on the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (Notification of Serious Violations of Privacy by Public Sector Agencies) Bill 2019. The bill is about trust; it is about transparency—two things that the Government has breached. Public trust, when it comes to the data held by both State and Federal governments and local councils, is vitally important. Time and again, the three levels of government have breached public trust through a lack of transparency, and breaches of data and personal information. Most recently we have seen it with Revenue NSW and the Office of the Minister for Customer Service, which is an ongoing matter, now possibly before the Independent Commission Against Corruption. The NSW Police Force did not have the power to fully investigate that breach.

The objectives of the bill are extremely important. They require a public sector agency that causes a serious violation of the privacy of an individual by contravening an information protection principle, or a privacy code of practice, or by disclosing personal information held in a public register to notify the individual concerned and the Privacy Commissioner of that contravention or that disclosure. This is extremely important. We need this law in New South Wales. The public demands this law. This should have been introduced a number of years ago. It is a blight on the Government that New South Wales privacy laws are so outdated that they have not kept up with modern technology.

The principal Act that covers this area, the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, was adopted in 1998 and since then very few amendments and updates have been made. The argument supporting the bill is clear: The community expects the Government to keep up with modern technology and modern privacy laws. If a government agency loses its information the individual should be notified about it immediately. Notification should be mandatory. Only by doing that can we prevent and minimise the difficulties or damage that may otherwise flow from such a breach, not only to the individual and the community but also to the reputation of any government, no matter what persuasion.

The agency that causes the breach and its management that has been lax or incompetent must be held accountable for allowing the breach to occur. The former Privacy Commissioner recommended this change some time ago. This is a sensible and reasonable modernisation of the State's privacy laws. It increases the accountability of those agencies and potentially helps mitigate the damage flowing from such a privacy breach. It was very interesting to hear the comments of the Attorney General, who is usually quite measured in his approach. It concerns me that the Government would not support this legislation when it has started to go through the process, on the recommendation of the former Privacy Commissioner, with the introduction in July 2019 of a discussion paper on mandatory notification of data breaches by New South Wales public sector agencies.

The Government has issued media releases saying that it wishes to consult with the public and get feedback on whether New South Wales public sector agencies should be required to notify the New South Wales Privacy Commissioner and affected individuals if a breach of privacy occurs and how the key elements of the mandatory notification scheme can operate if implemented in New South Wales. This has been an ongoing discussion for a number of years. I find it mind blowing to have such a media release issued in August this year. This matter has been discussed in this Chamber a number of times since 2016 when the shadow Attorney General raised it. Finally the monolith of this Government, slowly creeping ahead, has done something and said it will consult. Consultation has been ongoing for a number of years: What people are saying and the what the community expects is quite clear.

Debate interrupted.

Motions

NSW POLICE FORCE AND FIRE AND RESCUE NSW

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (11:47): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes community safety will always be a top priority for the Government.
- (2) Notes on 2 July 2019 the Premier and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services announced 450 new police officers.
- (3) Notes on 19 July 2019, 16 new firefighters graduated and will now serve across New South Wales.
- (4) Applauds the NSW Police Force and Fire and Rescue NSW for their enduring service. I am proud to support our emergency service workers who, day in and day out, protect our communities.

The Coalition Government has always made community safety a priority. As a government, keeping the communities that you represent safe is the most basic requirement. That is why I am pleased to serve as the Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Services in a Government that has again delivered record funding to our emergency service organisations. During the election campaign we announced that the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government would provide an additional 1,500 police over the next four years. I am proud to say that we are delivering on this promise, with 450 additional police to be assigned to local stations and specialist areas over the next 12 months to protect communities and to fight crime. I know that this announcement will be welcomed by the hardworking and dedicated police officers, particularly in my local police area commands of Sutherland Shire and Liverpool City. All these officers, led by Superintendents Jason Box and Adam Whyte, do an amazing job in ensuring that our community is safe and secure. I thank them for their service.

The Government is investing a whopping \$1.7 billion in emergency services, excluding the NSW Police Force, to ensure that New South Wales is well prepared for the times when our emergency service agencies are put to the test. This funding will also ensure we foster a community that is resilient to disasters and emergencies. This investment represents an increase of about 6.6 per cent on the 2018-19 budget, or about \$105 million. To put this Government's investment in our emergency services in perspective, 10 years ago in the 2009-10 budget Labor wrote, "The combined expenses of the State Emergency Services, New South Wales Fire Brigades and the Department of Rural Fire Service are expected to be \$847.3 million." This Government is investing \$826 million in Fire and Rescue NSW alone, while also delivering record investments in our volunteer frontline services. The NSW State Emergency Service [SES] will receive \$141 million in 2018-19, an increase of 3.9 per cent from 2017-18.

The NSW SES Operational Fleet Replacement Program has been allocated \$16.3 million. This funding will allow NSW SES to procure new vehicles, marine vessels and trailers. Over the next four years we have committed an unprecedented \$73 million in extra funding to our non-government volunteer rescue organisations to enhance rescue capabilities across the State. This includes funding of \$16 million to Surf Life Saving NSW and \$1 million to Surfing NSW. The Surf Life Saving NSW funding boost comes on top of the existing \$1.7 million per annum provided under a longstanding cooperative agreement. The new funding will provide new community engagement officers in East Ballina, Warriewood, Nowra, Tathra and Tighes Hill. These staff will work in the community and run programs to help educate people about beach safety.

There will be 10 new emergency response beacons at coastal blackspots. There will also be a beach wi-fi trial to better communicate with and educate swimmers, particularly international visitors. This will involve real-time safety alerts, translated into seven different languages. There will be major operational support for Surf Life Saving NSW's 129 clubs, including jetskis, vehicles, wetsuits, lifejackets, helmets for jetski operators and increased training. This funding also includes an additional \$18.8 million over the next four years for the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association and an additional \$37.6 million for Marine Rescue NSW. With this record boost to their funding, both the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association and Marine Rescue NSW will be able to

modernise and enhance their vehicle and vessel fleets. It is because of the Coalition Government's strong economic record that we are able to ensure our emergency services continue to provide the exemplary services they are known for.

I recently had the distinct pleasure of representing the Government at the graduation of 16 new firefighters from the State's new training facility at Orchard Hills. These new firefighters will be deployed to stations all across our metropolitan areas such as at Seven Hills, Marrickville, Cranebrook, Arncliffe, Gladesville and Rydalmere. On the day it was interesting to hear the backstories of these new firefighters. They have come from various fields such as being teachers, crane operators, police officers, commercial divers, physiotherapists, plumbers, paramedics, baristas and lifeguards and there was even a cheerleader. They are united by the same motivation: to serve the people of our State. I thoroughly enjoyed congratulating these firefighters on their graduation and I know everyone here would agree with me in wishing them the very best as they embark on a challenging but worthwhile career. This was not the only Fire and Rescue NSW graduation that has occurred in the past month. On 5 July Minister Lee, who is in the Chamber, attended the Indigenous Fire and Rescue Employment Strategy, or IFARES, program graduation—

Dr Geoff Lee: Fantastic program.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS: —yes, a fantastic program—where 18 Indigenous people graduated. This program is a joint initiative of TAFE NSW and Fire and Rescue NSW and it provides students with the information and skills they need to proceed to the main Fire and Rescue NSW training program. The program saw participants of a range of ages attain a TAFE NSW certificate IV in fitness and complete an intensive week of training at the Fire and Rescue NSW Training Academy. Students received an introduction to firefighting equipment, breathing apparatus and HAZMAT gear, urban search and rescue, bush fire fighting, fire investigation and building fire safety. They also gained job application skills and received mentoring from Indigenous Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters.

I am proud to say that since its introduction in 2014, 51 of the Indigenous Fire and Rescue NSW graduates have gone on to become firefighters. I saw one of them achieve just that the other day. As reported in Dubbo's Daily Liberal, Minister Elliott travelled to Barwon and Dubbo on 24 and 25 July to make several official openings. The Minister announced the handover of four new Rural Fire Service trucks in Barwon, including new category one fire tankers, costing \$320,000, for the Curban Rural Fire Brigade. The Minister also officially opened the first stage of the Rural Fire Service's new \$23.8 million training facility in Dubbo and one of the State's first State Emergency Service and Volunteer Rescue Association's joint operational facilities. I again thank each and every member of our emergency services who keep our State safe.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (11:55): Every day officers of the NSW Police Force are out there working to keep New South Wales a safe place for everyone. On a daily basis the police are putting their lives on the line, dealing with violence, tragedy and the growing risks of terrorism. Unfortunately this work often comes at a great cost to the police officers themselves. It is right that we applaud the service of the officers of the NSW Police Force and Fire and Rescue NSW for their service.

Community safety should always be at the top of the list of priorities of any government. It fundamentally underpins our ideal of democratic government, where the State retains the monopoly on the use of force to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all our citizens in New South Wales and beyond. We rely on the experience and expertise of our police and emergency services to maintain human rights so that everyone in our society has the right to live without fear or the threat of violence. New South Wales police officers undertake the most difficult tasks and usually are the first on the scene of what are often horrific violent crimes, abuses of children, sexual assaults and fatalities. In lending us their experience and expertise in these circumstances they often pay an extraordinarily high emotional price that stays with them for the rest of their lives.

Every day our police officers are making difficult choices when they are dealing with members of society with some of the most complex social problems. Often they are not only required to be experts in their field but also are our frontline response to deal with mental health, drug addiction and social inequality such as homelessness and grinding poverty. The additional numbers of police officers make that work a little easier. But additional police should be underpinned by a well-equipped administrative team and other government services that police rely on. Police are making complex decisions every day that often impact the lives of those they deal with.

I have had conversations with police officers who speak of their frustration at repeatedly dealing with people with obvious mental health and/or drug addiction problems whose primary contact is with the NSW Police Force. Government must do better in providing more drug rehabilitation and mental health crisis support to relieve pressure on the police. The police must have the tools they need to ensure safety and security on the streets and sometimes that means people are best placed in a drug rehabilitation facility so that our police officers are not the

frontline of mental health response. Government must do better at putting processes in place to ensure that it is not just left to the police to deal with those who need assistance in the public domain.

We live in a changing world and the risks that sworn and unsworn police officers face every day are more complex and challenging than at any time in the past. At this time, with the threat of terrorism and the potential for random attacks, our police undertake an extraordinary task, particularly through the expert use of intelligence, to reduce the risks. But the risks still exist. Any member who has been here for some time as I have will have seen Parliament House transition from an open building with special constables prohibited from carrying weapons to a building with numerous restrictive security measures and a well-armed security force. The attack on the police headquarters in Parramatta—a direct attack on our police—is indicative of the intent of those who would do us harm. Those who defend us, both sworn and unsworn police officers, deserve the support of Government both when undertaking their jobs and afterwards.

I ask the Government to note the following case. On 2 October 2015 three special constables responded to an incident in front of the police headquarters at Parramatta. Risking their lives to respond whilst being fired on, they were successfully able to neutralise the perpetrator and minimise harm to bystanders. The primary responder returned to work and has been receiving payments for ongoing counselling and medication from EML in accordance with worker's compensation entitlements. However, as the responder had returned to work full time, those payments were scheduled to cease in June 2019 pursuant to section 59A of the Workers Compensation Act 1987. Only by taking additional time off, which greatly added to the responder's financial and emotional stress and anxiety, were payments renewed for a further two years. Despite the cut-off, this responder is reminded of the incident every time there is a news story on terrorism. As members of Parliament, we can do better for those who protect us.

In rural areas our police force is covering large distances, often in a single patrol. Over the next decade the Government has predicated an additional one million residents in western Sydney alone and this increasing population and associated problems that come with it will put pressure on New South Wales. This State requires a well-equipped and trained workforce and I am sure the commissioner will welcome an additional 450 police officers. I wish all our newly graduated police officers and firefighters the best and assure them that they have the support of all members of the New South Wales Parliament.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (12:00): It is an honour and privilege to support the motion moved by the member for Holsworthy concerning members of the NSW Police Force and Fire and Rescue NSW. Very soon the member for Holsworthy and I will act as a firefighter for a day, which we might make a non-media event. Community safety is the number one priority of any government. A fundamental duty of a good government is to ensure that its citizens are protected from harm. It is critical to equip our frontline police with the necessary resources and technology and to have an appropriate number of police officers across this great State.

Recently I was pleased to hear the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, in company with the Premier, announce that 450 new police officers will hit the beat this financial year as part of the Government's historic commitment to increase the NSW Police Force by 1,500 new officers over four years. This is the largest increase in police numbers across this State in over 30 years, and represents a total investment of \$583 million. It is pleasing to know that those officers will be going far and wide across the State. As the Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Justice, I am pleased to know that many of them will be posted in areas around the Seven Hills electorate, in western Sydney and also in regional areas where they are needed.

I commend the Minister for his recent announcements in regional areas, particularly in Walgett, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo and Goulburn. He announced improvements to many police stations throughout the State and in the metropolitan area, including the new Bay and Basin Police Station at Sanctuary Point and a new station at Mount Druitt in western Sydney, which is closer to my electorate of Seven Hills. Not only will police numbers increase, but also resources and equipment will be provided to frontline police who are doing a difficult job to better protect the people of New South Wales. The Government will deliver \$19.6 million for almost 11,000 new light armour vests for police across New South Wales. Those vests provide the best possible ballistic and stab protection without impacting the officers comfort and ability to carry other equipment as they go about their mobile duties on a day-to-day basis.

I have mentioned the new police stations down south and also in the metropolitan area. New police stations will also be provided at Bega, Goulburn and Monaro. Other equipment will be added to our frontline police across New South Wales including 4,850 body-worn video cameras to assist frontline officers in taking very important evidence at crime scenes. There will also be mobile technology to allow officers to instantly access the police system whilst on the beat and a total of 1,000 fingerprint scanners will be rolled out through 2019 to allow police to take fingerprints and identify offenders. It is an absolute pleasure to support this motion, not only to recognise the good work being done by our police right across this State but also knowing that the Government is supporting them with further increases in police numbers, greater resources and better police stations.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (12:04): This motion yet again reveals the cynical self-interest that drives this Government. The member for Holsworthy routinely comes to Parliament with inane motions that do little to contribute to public debate. On 8 May she moved a motion to congratulate the Government on its election result two months earlier. Today we are forced to listen to the crow and spin about the Government's mismanagement of the emergency services sector. The member for Holsworthy tells us that the Government is a friend of emergency services but Labor—and, more importantly, emergency services workers and volunteers—know this is a lie.

In the recent budget the Liberal-Nationals Government cut \$12.9 million from recurring funding to Fire and Rescue NSW. There is no way that Fire and Rescue NSW can cut \$12.9 million from its budget without cutting back on shifts, crewing and overtime for frontline staff—our fireys! This comes on top of a \$26 million cut in this year's budget to Fire and Rescue NSW's capital expenditure budget. This is a huge hit to its capacity to renew and upgrade its equipment, firefighting appliances and premises. This is the truth of the Government's so-called commitment to the emergency services and it repeats itself throughout the sector. The Government has cut \$4.8 million from recurring funding to the Rural Fire Service and a staggering \$75.2 million from its capital expenditure budget. How is that for a thank you to the volunteers? The State Emergency Service is forced to spend valuable volunteer time and public money patching up and repairing tired, clapped-out vehicles that the Government refuses to replace—that is the reality of the fleet replacement program.

The volunteers who sustain those organisations know the truth. They are not watching Parliament today listening to the craven nonsense of the member for Holsworthy; they have better things to do. However, they know that the Government is made up of a bunch of bankers who come in here and bank on about what a good job they are doing while making cuts to essential services that the community relies upon. It is disgusting. At the last election Labor promised to fund 200 new firefighters. We made that promise because we know that Fire and Rescue NSW anticipate attending 13,000 more fires this year than last. The member for Holsworthy boasts about attending the graduation of 16 new firefighters; however, this number does not come close to addressing the attrition rate of retirements in the organisation. The overall number of firefighters is not growing but is declining in the long term. The workload for our firefighters grows each year but their funding and their workforce is cut with each successive Liberal budget.

There is dishonesty in this motion. It really is a self-congratulatory motion. The member for Holsworthy could instead do some good with her time in this House and lobby the emergency services Minister to properly fund the sector. The member should implore Minister Elliott to do his job in Cabinet instead of rolling over each week for the Treasurer to rub his belly. As the new shadow emergency services Minister I extend my gratitude to our emergency service workers across the State. I will fight in this place for them and the resources they need to provide community safety.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:08): We have heard a complete work of fiction from the new shadow Minister. I was never a banker, and I know the member for Holsworthy was not a banker. The shadow Minister is off to an anything-but-stellar start. I thank the member for Holsworthy for bringing this motion before the House as it recognises that community safety should always be a priority for governments. Our emergency services personnel protect us from harm, rescue us from danger and assist us in all types of circumstances. They are extremely deserving of our gratitude. That is what this very good motion is for. It acknowledges all the hard work that our police, Fire and Rescue personnel and fantastic volunteers at the Rural Fire Service do for our community.

On 16 July I was delighted to host my friend and colleague the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, David Elliott, at Wamberal Rural Fire Brigade on the Central Coast where he and I presented the brigade a \$1,672 discretionary grant for an honour board to recognise the service of its former captains, deputy captains and life members. The Wamberal Rural Fire Brigade facility has had extensive modernisation. I look forward to going to the opening of its soon-to-be-refurbished fire station, which did not get one dollar from members opposite when they were in government. Over the past four years we have been funding several upgrades so that brigades can improve their service to their communities.

The Wamberal station, which got not one dollar from members opposite, was one of the first that I had the privilege of visiting after being elected in 2015. Minister Elliott was also the Minister for Emergency Services at that time. It was great to have him back so he could see the development and progress at that station, which Captain Angela Burford and her team outlined. Those people do an amazing job and an enormous public service by putting their lives on the line to protect people and property. Since 2015 Wamberal Rural Fire Brigade has progressed in leaps and bounds. I was proud to assist the brigade in securing much-needed funding from this Government. After many years of hard work, a brand new building that fits two fantastic, clean and shiny fire trucks has been completed. I look forward to returning in the next few weeks when the facility is officially opened.

To the south of my electorate is the Empire Bay Rural Fire Brigade, to which the Minister recently presented an \$8,000 grant for a thermal imaging camera. Members opposite did not allocate one dollar to that fire brigade either. The camera uses state-of-the-art technology to assist firefighters to identify hotspots after a blaze has been extinguished. It can also be used before firefighters approach a blaze, which helps them to better know what they are walking into and how to stay safe. Empire Bay is one of the original rural fire brigades on the Central Coast. It has an incredible history of which its volunteers are incredibly proud and which has cemented its place in our local community. Across the region we are lucky to have dozens of rural fire brigades staffed by hundreds of men and women volunteers.

Indeed, the Central Coast is the volunteering capital of Australia: Our region has a higher proportion of volunteers than anywhere else in the nation. Volunteers are vital to the fabric of our communities. The Empire Bay Rural Fire Brigade also plays an active role in local events. A simple example is the fire trucks that are used during Anzac Day ceremonies to ensure the safety of participants. Whether it be more resources and equipment for fireys or more police on the ground—a record number of police are working across the State, including on the Central Coast—the Government is delivering for the emergency services. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (12:12): I support the work of our police and Fire and Rescue NSW staff across the electorate of Wyong and the State. We have police stations under the Tuggerah Lakes Police District at Wyong, Toukley and in the neighbouring area of The Entrance, which covers some of my electorate too. I think highly of Superintendent John Gralton and the job he does. I meet with him regularly to discuss various issues in the electorate. All members attend special awards days for our police. At the last one I attended, Constable Rachel Johanson and Senior Constable Kerrie Wells deservedly received National Police Service Medals for 15 years of service. Our police force at Tuggerah Lakes has a good record of clean-up rates for murders and for tracking down missing people. They do a fantastic job.

We have Fire and Rescue stations at Berkeley Vale, Hamlyn Terrace, Wyong, Toukley and nearby at Budgewoi and Doyalson, with a mixture of professional firefighters and retained firefighters. I note that the Toukley retained fire brigade is advertising locally for more members. I have supported their recruitment drive on Facebook and encourage people to get in contact with them if they are interested in joining. I saw the work they do up close; I got to be a firefighter for a day at Wyong. I participated in that program and then went to the firefighter championships at Norah Head to watch brigades from across northern New South Wales compete against each other. I have the highest regard for them.

An important part missing from this motion is how we support our frontline service people not just with equipment but also in terms of the job that they do. We know that shiftwork and erratic hours present an increased risk. A study carried out last year found that emergency workers are paying a higher psychological and physical price for being the first on the scenes of deaths, traumas, violence, chaos, disease and extreme temperatures. We know that first responders are more likely to have injuries. The study found that firefighters and emergency workers had more injuries to their lower bodies, legs and feet, while police officers had a 13 times greater risk of mental health conditions than people in other similar professions. We also know that within any 12-month period many of our frontline police and fire officers are off work on workers compensation and stress leave.

As well as putting resources into material items, which is very important, we call on the Government to do more to support the mental health and physical wellbeing of our staff. It is no good putting extra police out there if injuries continue at the current rate. We are great at recycling people through the system, but if we support them better while they are in the system then they will not have to be replaced as quickly. I pass on my great thanks to all first responders, emergency services personnel and their families for the job they do for our community. We cannot live without them and they deserve our utmost respect and support.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (12:17): By leave: As the member for Dubbo, which is a city that is growing in stature as a hub of emergency services training in this State, I thank the member for Holsworthy for moving this motion. More and more government and private sector agencies are choosing regional centres like Dubbo to construct major pieces of infrastructure, and with good reason. Through the wonders of modern technology, the divide between city and country has narrowed. There is not much that can be done in Sydney that cannot be done in places like Dubbo, including emergency services training. There also is not much that can be built in Sydney that cannot be built regionally—although I am not sure we necessarily want to see the CBDs of regional cities completely mirror the concrete jungle of Sydney's high-rises.

There is little doubt that since the Liberal-Nationals came to government in 2011 regional New South Wales has experienced a massive boost in the development of infrastructure. While I am only fairly new to this place, I know we have been receiving the input and support of the emergency services themselves, including the Rural Fire Service, the State Emergency Service [SES] and the Volunteer Rescue Association [VRA], and I am keen to see that continue. When the Coalition Government was returned in March of this year the Premier and Deputy Premier each vowed to listen to the needs of people in the bush. That promise relates to not only getting

our farmers and graziers through the drought but also ensuring that our regional communities are set up with the infrastructure to ensure that we can continue to develop at the rate we deserve.

In Dubbo we are embarking on a building spree that is unprecedented. But bricks and mortar are not enough; planning needs to be utilised to make sure that we reach our full potential. Last Thursday 25 July was a great example of what can be done. I was joined by my good friend and colleague the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to open the new Rural Fire Service training facility at Dubbo Regional Airport. This State-of-the-art compound is worth more than \$23 million and provides Dubbo and the rest of regional New South Wales with a training and fire monitoring facility that is the equivalent of its Sydney counterpart. It has video-link capabilities, a fully functional state-of-the-art commercial kitchen and canteen area, on-site accommodation and many other features that had the Minister in awe.

For the first time we also have a Rural Fire Service with a state-of-the-art facility located in a regional area. A few hours later we went a couple of hundred metres down the road to open the new State Emergency Service and Volunteer Rescue Association complex, which allows for the safe storage of rescue equipment. The two organisations have different but equally vital charters. The SES rightly states that the worst in nature brings out the best in its members, while VRA officers have the unenviable task of attending serious incidents such as fatal accidents or drownings. By sharing the new facility, the two organisations will have the capability to train together, share knowledge and bounce ideas off each other. Rounding out the new precinct is the new police training facility, which has been announced for the airport but with construction yet to start.

Minister Elliot was briefed by Assistant Commissioner Geoff McKechnie, Commander of the Western Region for the NSW Police Force, on what that facility will contain. The facility will complement the police academy at Goulburn and will be used for annual training and updated programs for officers. It will ensure that our thin blue line is at the cutting edge in modern training techniques. In isolation each facility would be fantastic but, through collaboration with the agencies, the New South Wales Government and the Dubbo Regional Council have been able to turn Dubbo into the heartbeat of emergency services in this State. It is fantastic. Last weekend the city's growing reputation brought 21 teams, including three from overseas, to town for the Australasian Road Rescue Championships, which were coordinated by the Australasian Road Rescue Organisation. Unfortunately we cannot do everything—we cannot make it rain to end people's suffering—but building infrastructure like this for our emergency services is vital. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (12:21): By leave: I thank the member for Holsworthy for moving this motion and all members who have contributed to this debate. I acknowledge the wonderful work of first responders not only in my local community but right across the State and country. The New South Wales Government is committed to supporting our emergency service workers and volunteers, and the families who support them. They all do such wonderful work; it is a great cause. Over the years I have visited my local State Emergency Service units in Hurstville and Kogarah, and recently I visited the Marrickville unit on behalf of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. I also acknowledge the wonderful work they do at that unit. Since coming into government we have done what we could to increase the emergency services budget to help the NSW State Emergency Service, Fire and Rescue NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Service. It is a myth that we have decided to cut services over the years. The former shadow Minister's accusations are wrong.

I thank all emergency service workers, particularly those in my electorate. As the member for Dubbo said, they are the first responders. They are there in the floods, storms and fires. Over the years we have experienced many such occurrences across Sydney and I have witnessed them working to restore power and ensure our communities are safe. I acknowledge all of those workers and volunteers, particularly those from the Hurstville SES unit with whom I have worked to ensure their building is upgraded and that they get the best equipment. I acknowledge also the work of former Minister for Emergency Services and former Minister for Police, the Hon. Troy Grant. He did an outstanding job in this space. Again, I thank the member for Holsworthy and all those who work in emergency services across this State.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:24): In reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Auburn, Seven Hills, Blue Mountains, Terrigal, Wyong, Dubbo and Oatley for their contributions to this debate. I will start with the member for Blue Mountains; I am sure she is expecting it. I never thought it would be considered inane to acknowledge the first elected female Premier of this State—particularly by someone whom I know has always talked about smashing glass ceilings and supporting women. She has talked about it, but apparently when it comes to acknowledging it in the historic record in this House it is inane and does not matter. On that, the member for Blue Mountains is all talk. Yesterday, when I sought precedence for this motion today, I was surprised that the member for Blue Mountains voted against it. She says she supports emergency services and women, but when it comes to debating that in this Chamber and recording it in Hansard she is all talk. I do not get where she is coming from.

Let us focus on the positives. This Government has delivered historic funding for an historic number of new services and facilities for police and emergency services. As the member for Seven Hills said, Bay and Basin Police Station was opened on Monday. I know how excited the member for South Coast was about that opening. I saw her on the weekend and she was incredibly excited about the difference that will make to her community. The electorates of Bega, Mount Druitt and Goulburn are all getting new stations. I am thrilled with the new police station at Liverpool, the new bushfire station at Menai and the Rural Fire Service station at Sandy Point. They are all making a huge difference. Perhaps that is how the member for Blue Mountains could get things to happen—with a bit of honey, rather than whatever came out.

We have more stations, more police and more resources. We are making a difference in communities not just in Sydney but all across the State. The member for Dubbo talked about his massive day of meeting people and ribbon cuttings with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services; really getting to know the needs of those communities and addressing them. That is incredibly important. Just over a year ago the Holsworthy electorate was engulfed in flames—from almost the western corner at Casula across to the east at Barden Ridge. The bushfires came very close to many homes. In fact, back fences were burnt. We have so many firefighters from so many electorates to thank—the Terrigal electorate also sent members down there to look after my community. Five hundred firefighters came down and over 100 appliances were deployed. The dedication of those fire services resulted in no major loss of property or life. We believe that 888 homes were directly saved. Communities were protected because of the people that came down and the resources they had to protect our community.

I thank my local emergency services personnel who came to the community's aid when it was under threat: Menai Bushfire Brigade, Sandy Point Rural Fire Brigade, Casula Rural Fire Brigade, Liverpool State Emergency Service, Sutherland State Emergency Service, Fire and Rescue Liverpool, Fire and Rescue Menai, Sutherland Shire Police Area Command and Liverpool City Police Area Command. They made a huge difference. Without that strong and effective emergency services sector, the result could have been much worse. I am thrilled that our Government is investing \$1.7 billion into our emergency services. I know it will make a huge difference.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit:

- (1) The resumption of the adjourned second reading debate on the Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill 2019 on Tuesday 6 August 2019.
- (2) Consideration of the Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill 2019 during Government Business.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

MOORE PARK

Debate resumed from 6 June 2019.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (12:29): I address the motion moved by the member for Sydney for obvious reasons. The State Government originally proposed a 55,000-seat stadium on the Moore Park parklands. The parklands are important; the original Anzac soldiers camped on them. That is why they are parklands and so historically significant. Before the war Kippax Lake was used as a mortar range by the soldiers who then marched down Anzac Parade to the ships that took them off to Gallipoli. Anzac Parade is named for our soldiers lost in that terrible conflict and is the country's first memorial to them. In 1916 people placed flowers on the road in the soldiers' memory.

Unfortunately, this Government views open space as something to be built upon and it has already encroached on Moore Park—the light rail has taken away parts of it. I understand that the Government supports the motion; I can only assume it has not seen the stadium design that places concrete pathways across the parklands. I wonder whether it understands that the road in front of the stadium is also part of the Moore Park parklands under the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust. It seems to have escaped the attention of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, who, as Minister for Counter Terrorism, along with the then Minister for Sport, Stuart Ayres, wrote to Gabrielle Upton, then Minister for the Environment, asking her to consider a report

about closing the road. Given the land fell within her then portfolio, I am surprised to hear that she was unaware the report had been written and wondered why they were writing to her.

The motion is a good one; we should protect as much open space as we can. We have seen this Government decide to take away part of a soccer field at Robin Thomas Reserve and rip up the only Moreton Bay fig trees in Parramatta to make way for the light rail. Members will recall the problem Cricket NSW had with the Government over the Sydney Football Stadium. Six months after the Government told Cricket NSW that it would not pull down the facility, it said, "By the way, we are pulling your facilities down." It is good that Cricket NSW has been given new facilities because cricket is a sport we all love dearly; however, it has simply been plonked on the community fields at Sydney Olympic Park.

That was the home ground of the Newington Gunners Soccer Club, which now has no field. That is the history of this Government: Open space is simply somewhere to build on, and the cost of any perceived problem can be borne by the community. Given the growth in Sydney, especially the additional one million people who will go into western Sydney over the next decade, every bit of open space—every blade of grass—must be protected, particularly in the congested inner-city area. Some people say the space in question has nothing on it, but that is the point; it is very important to the inner-city community.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (12:33): My voice is playing up: I have been resting it for the past half hour to see whether it will hold up because I am determined to speak on this motion. Please bear with me and do not underestimate my passion for supporting this motion brought by the member for Sydney. I am in favour of the motion and I am gratified that the member has brought it to this Chamber for debate. The Moore Park parklands are very close to my heart. I spent much of my childhood growing up in North Randwick and have spent many a time, both good and bad, in those parklands at Moore Park. I am jealous of quality green space, and I am gratified that this Government also has a very strong commitment to green and open space. The Minister for the new portfolio of Planning and Public Spaces is beside me in the Chamber. He has a jealous eye to preserving green recreational space; space that promotes social cohesion and good mental wellbeing across New South Wales. I could recite the Premier's commitments, but one that I am really excited about is the commitment to increase the green canopy across New South Wales by one million trees by 2020.

Ms Kate Washington: Before the land clearing increases by 300 per cent?

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: What are you commenting on? Just give me a break. This is a really important motion, and I am supporting the Independent member because I too am passionate about retaining green and open space in the Eastern Suburbs—a very densely populated part of Sydney. The member for Sydney and I have the smallest electorates in New South Wales. We understand the pressures on green and open spaces across the State probably as well as any other member, but we look at the issue from a particular perspective. I welcome this motion. I was especially gratified that about nine months ago Strickland House, which is close to my home, became part of the national parks estate.

I fight very hard in my local community to keep green spaces in the right hands, so I was very concerned to ensure that when the development to the Sydney Football Stadium [SFS] was agreed to—as it should have been—by the Government the Government would be able to build social infrastructure as well as hard infrastructure, such as for hospitals, schools and rail transport. The stadium is the home of my beloved Roosters. I have sat in the chook pen on many a Sunday, so I know that we were not well served by the infrastructure that was there. The new stadium must be better, and it will be better. Hard infrastructure offers social services to our community and I was absolutely passionate that the redevelopment would take account of the concerns of attendees and that we have a great sports stadium that can hold international events.

I argued very strongly that any development of the SFS must only be on Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust land. Indeed, that was a very important decision by Cabinet. There was a demarcation; social infrastructure inside the bounds of that property are important but it should not, and will not, encroach on other open and green space. Like the member for Sydney, I am absolutely passionate about this motion. I strongly support it. I ask the member for Sydney to believe me when I say that I will be keeping a close eye on this to ensure that the Cabinet decision is abided by for the benefit of his local constituents and my local constituents.

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (12:37): I support the motion of the member for Sydney about Moore Park development. I am pleased to note that there is no suggestion of encroachment on Moore Park as a result of the stage one and stage two developments of the stadium. In fact, the conditions of consent by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment in its concept approval will ensure that the development benefits Moore Park. The concept proposal includes a public plaza between Moore Park East and the stadium site at its interface with Driver Avenue. The previous stadium was blocked from the Kippax Lake parkland by temporary bus lanes, a venue services building and cricket nets. We acknowledge that the resulting pedestrian and

visual flow between the site and the parkland should result in far more enticing opportunities for people using the stadium and parkland.

Everyone will feel a sense of occasion and theatre as they alight from the light rail and walk through Moore Park to a grand, welcoming plaza. To ensure the plaza and stadium entrance align with the Moore Park Master Plan 2040, a departmental condition of consent requires the applicant to provide a comprehensive landscape strategy identifying the connection between the site and Moore Park, and to comply with the objectives of the master plan to enhance the use of the parkland as a recreational facility. Importantly, it was determined that the stadium will not overshadow the public spaces in Moore Park or Kippax Lake. Additional assessment of the visual impact will soon be undertaken in stage two, in conjunction with the detailed design of the proposed stadium. I am also pleased to note the assessment has confirmed that there will be no significant direct or indirect impacts on the biodiversity within Moore Park.

The redevelopment of the Sydney Football Stadium has been and will remain a transparent process assessed independently at every step by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. I note a judicial appeal was lodged in the Land and Environment Court to challenge the decision to grant development consent for the concept proposal and stage one early works but on 6 March 2019 Justice Pain dismissed the appeal on all grounds and a subsequent appeal was dismissed by the Court of Appeal immediately after the hearing finished.

Both judgements clearly endorsed that the department's comprehensive and community-focused assessment of the new stadium proposal complied with all statutory requirements and, in particular, was done with an extensive consideration of design excellence and design issues. That is crucial to ensure the redevelopment improves Moore Park and earns the faith of the New South Wales public. In closing, the New South Wales Government and I are in agreement with the motion of the member for Sydney and the wishes of the wider community that Moore Park's open space should be protected and enhanced. We appreciate Moore Park is a place to be open and enjoyed forever.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (12:40): In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Manly, Heffron, Auburn and Camden. I also thank my neighbouring member, the member for Vacluse, who this morning had no voice—I know she was able to find her voice and her passion for Moore Park and this motion, which I greatly appreciate. This motion is especially important at this time as concerns around the stadium knockdown and rebuild continue to grow. The Government promised the community that it will expand and strengthen protections of green open space and recreation spaces in urban environments, with the Premier arguing that "access to green open space is crucial for communities to thrive". A dedicated Minister has been appointed and \$150 million has been allocated to expand and improve the public parklands estate. I acknowledge the Minister's presence in the Chamber. Last week I enjoyed planting trees with him and class 4H at Bourke Street Primary School.

In a letter dated 12 March 2019 the former Minister for Sport, Stuart Ayres, told the Saving Moore Park group that the Sydney Football Stadium redevelopment will not impact on open space within Moore Park. He also said that investment in Moore Park will be considered as part of the \$150 million green open space funding. These commitments must be honoured and they are reinforced by the passage of this motion. While widespread community concern and anger over the stadium redevelopment focused on how money could have been better spent, the surrounding communities have always been worried over serious risks of encroachment of and negative impacts to Moore Park. This follows successive government decisions that have resulted in the alienation and permanent loss of massive amounts of parkland.

The new stadium will be bigger, more imposing, closer to Moore Park and set to host more events. This creates major risks to the parklands that must be addressed. Protecting Moore Park from the new stadium will require redesign to make it less imposing and ensure no encroachment on grasslands or disruption to the park's tranquillity. It will mean the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust [SCG Trust] does not move facilities and functions into the Entertainment Quarter. The stadium redevelopment should be seen as an opportunity to fulfil commitments to expand and improve urban green open recreation space. Event parking is one of the biggest causes of alienation of Moore Park from public use. When the new stadium opens, the light rail service will be operating and there will be an unprecedented opportunity to change the way patrons travel to and from matches. Integrated ticketing and removal of car parking would encourage people to move from driving to catching public transport and should be mandatory for all events. That is why the Moore Park Master Plan 2040 aims to achieve this.

The Parliament's support for this motion comes at an important time as it is clear that the SCG Trust is continuing to push for ongoing parking on the grasslands, which encroaches on Moore Park and is contrary to the master plan. Let us hope the strong community opposition to this and the passage of today's resolution of the Parliament sends the SCG Trust a strong message. Moore Park is publicly owned, provides large areas of grassland and habitat for native fauna and includes the beautiful Kippax Lake. It is located in an area of rapid population growth where demand for open space is soaring. It is prime land to invest in for recreation and open space needs.

Supporting this motion is a way for the Government to show that it is listening to the community and keeping its commitments to protect Moore Park from the stadium and to expand green public places in Sydney. I commend the motion.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (12:44): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes the special report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that to avoid a 1.5 Celsius rise in global warming, global emissions would need to fall by 45 per cent from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero by around 2050.
- (2) Acknowledges that climate change has already substantially affected New South Wales with the rise of extreme weather events including bushfires and droughts.
- (3) Declares a state of climate emergency and calls on the Government to prepare a comprehensive plan of action to urgently transition New South Wales to achieve net zero emissions by 2040 including through decarbonising the economy, phasing out coal and gas and switching to 100 per cent renewable energy.

It is still winter but this morning on the radio it was reported that the NSW Rural Fire Service has declared 1 August as the start of the bushfire danger period in 12 local government areas in New South Wales. This usually starts in October. More than 98 per cent of this State is drought affected. Recently, 500 scientists from over 50 countries published the most comprehensive report to date on the state of nature and biodiversity. We are facing an extinction crisis. There is mass extinction underway and not only are we the cause, but our own existence as a species is also under threat.

We are on track to wipe out about a million plant and animal species—that is one-eighth of all life on earth. We have lost 60 per cent of all vertebrates since 1970. Even more worrying is the catastrophic decline in insect numbers, which affects 80 per cent of our crop species relying on insect pollination. It is not an exaggeration to say that if we lose our pollinating insects we will not be able to feed ourselves. The chair of the group that put together the report said, "We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide." The report tells us that the only way we can turn this around is to entirely reform the world's legal, institutional and economic systems.

Just in case the threat of imminent extinction was not enough for people to be convinced of the need to act then we need look no further than the rising sea levels. The sea level rise is coming and it is not a gradual process. In reality rising air and ocean temperatures will see large swathes of ice from the arctic and Antarctic shear off and melt, putting billions of tonnes of water into the sea in a short time. Cracks in the Antarctic ice sheet increased in size again earlier this year and scientists are expecting a chunk of ice the size of Manhattan to fall off at any time. This is a scale big enough to rewrite the map of Antarctica.

Most of Australia's population, communities in our regions and populations around the world live in coastal low-level areas. The impact will be devastating. The commitments made by countries as part of the Paris Agreement will not keep us within the ambition of 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming—they will not even keep us within 2 degrees of warming. Not only are current plans not enough, we are failing to take any meaningful action on the plans to meet them. It is beyond belief that in this crisis we continue to approve coalmines in New South Wales and continue to export coal. In New South Wales only 12.6 per cent of our electricity comes from renewable sources—way behind Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania.

We must stop living in a state of denial. We need a renewable energy revolution. We need to face this reality. The challenge may seem insurmountable, but as Nelson Mandela said, "It always seems impossible until it is done." The best way we have to contain global warming within the range that can sustain human life is to treat this like the extinction crisis and emergency that it is. We need to act now: this year; this month; today. We need to immediately prepare so that our electricity grid has the storage capacity to smooth out the peaks and troughs of renewables and decentralised energy production. We cannot burn any more coal. We need to transition to 100 per cent renewables. We need to stop land clearing and start reforesting vast areas of this continent to draw down the carbon already in the atmosphere and to slow the extinction crisis.

It is too late to debate aspirational goals and platitudes. We need a comprehensive plan of action that sets out radical reform starting now. The people refuse to do what the climate-denying dinosaurs in power are doing. We will not put our heads in the sand. People are joining, acting, changing and standing on the street. They are joining the student strikers and the Extinction Rebellion. They are taking to the streets to take action to protect our communities, to stand up for our environment and to stand up for our planet. The Greens stand with them in

those struggles and those actions. But we need to face the reality of this crisis. We need to recognise that offering inspiration and hope is not enough. As Greta Thunberg makes clear, "It's not enough to just offer hope in a state of such an emergency and crisis. We need action." As she says:

But I don't want your hope, I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic, I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And then I want you to act, I want you to act as if you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if the house was on fire, because it is.

I urge all members in this place to do what we have not done in New South Wales when it comes to climate action. I urge all members to consider supporting this motion. I urge all members to act. We can lead the way when it comes to addressing this climate crisis—this extinction crisis—that we are facing, or we can continue to put our heads in the sand and continue to live in denial about the fact that 98 per cent of our State is in drought. We can continue to live in denial that in winter the Rural Fire Service is making announcements like it did this morning to say that we have now entered the bushfire danger period in 12 local government areas. This is a crisis. We can continue to deny it, but it will not go away. We must face the reality, and this Parliament should pass a motion declaring a state of climate emergency.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (12:51): This motion is a Greens special—alarm, alarm, alarm. It is time for some reason. I will run through a few facts shortly. The motion notes one thing and then calls on the Government to do another. It is right there. The motion calls on the House to note that the special report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that emissions would need to reach zero by around 2050. But the motion calls on the Government "to achieve net zero emissions by 2040. That is interesting. The Greens call for the Government to listen to the science, and then fails to listen to the science. I know that climate change, energy and the environment are close to the hearts and minds of many people right across this State, including me.

The Government recognises that climate change will affect both our natural environment, and the social and economic welfare of New South Wales. It is serious about tackling the challenge of climate change, but wants to do so without placing an undue burden on jobs and living costs. The Government has a clear plan: manage and mitigate the effects of climate change. It is transitioning towards a modern energy future that is sustainable, diverse and, importantly, affordable for everyone. In doing so, the Government acknowledges that people across the State have some expectations in terms of energy.

When people switch on their lights at night, they rightfully expect that the lights will actually come on. When people turn on their heater in the cold of winter, or their air conditioners in the heat of summer, they rightfully expect the cost to be reasonable. People can rightfully expect that the decisions that governments make are respectful of future generations. These expectations underpin three key factors in Government decision-making: ensuring energy is reliable, ensuring energy is affordable and protecting the planet for future generations. It is fair to say that all members of this House are, or should be, concerned about the impact of a changing climate on our communities—whether that is people living and working on the coast or farmers affected by drought in my part of the State and further west.

But The Greens' hypocrisy does not stop at its 2040 targets. It also calls for the end of gas and coal generation in New South Wales. Let us be very clear: While the grid is transitioning, technologies like gas will be needed to firm up the generation coming from renewables. It is that simple. That should be good news for every member in this House who wants to make sure that all citizens have access to reliable electricity when they need it and who also want to see lower emissions. The Greens have alarmist motions; the Government has sensible policies. New South Wales is the only State with a dedicated Climate Change Fund. The purpose of the fund is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the impacts of climate change. Through that, we are investing \$1.4 billion over the five years to 2022 to realise energy savings and cut power bills, support clean energy and help our communities to be more resilient to climate change.

The Empowering Homes program will kickstart up to \$3.2 billion of investment into renewables, and give families the opportunity to install solar energy and battery storage systems. Not only will this program kickstart investment, but hundreds of thousands of households will also see reductions in their energy bills. The NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy connects New South Wales to cheap sources of energy in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia, which will put downward pressure on bills. Electricity prices are biting particularly hard for those less well-off and on fixed incomes. I am proud to say that last year the Government saved 900,000 New South Wales households around \$300 million through energy rebates, which saved each household about \$330 a year on their energy bills.

A couple I met recently in Dubbo saved over \$2,000 after an appointment with one of the amazing Service NSW specialist staff members to go through their bills to find savings. Our data shows that more than 300,000 families could be eligible for rebates, but have not taken them up yet. People can find out if they are eligible for an energy rebate on the Service NSW website. The Government is also looking out for those who need

immediate assistance to pay an energy bill. They can do that by accessing the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance scheme. This winter the Government will continue to help those families most in need to pay their energy bills. The best way to find out if you are eligible for energy rebates or other energy-saving initiatives is to check Service NSW's Cost of Living website, or make an appointment to speak to a specialist advisor at a Service NSW centre.

The specialist advisor could point you towards the Energy Switch program, which the Government has just extended to include both electricity and gas. Since that free service launched last year, around 7,000 households have switched electricity providers, bringing in close to \$3 million in annual savings. That equates to an average saving per household of around \$400 a year. This side of the House is prosecuting a sensible agenda—looking out for those who need it most and putting downward pressure on bills. The Government does not support the motion of the member for Newtown. We will listen to the science, we will take a technology neutral approach and we will maintain continuity of Government policy to provide certainty to the market.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (12:57): As the shadow environment Minister and the representative in this House for the shadow Minister for Climate Change and Energy, the Hon. Adam Searle in the other place, I contribute to this motion. First I seek to amend the motion. I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out all words after "zero omissions by" in paragraph (3) with a view to inserting instead:

"2050, including a transition to as close to 100 per cent renewable energy as possible".

I, and every one of my Labor colleagues, understand that climate change is a significant issue. We understand that the policy vacuum on energy and climate change by the Liberal-Nationals Coalition at a State and Federal level is making the situation worse. The impact only increases with every day of policy paralysis and denial. I note that today the member for Dubbo said that Government policies create reliable energy, or that the goals are for energy to be reliable, affordable and to protect the environment. The Government is failing on every single count. The effects of climate change are all too real. If serious action is not taken urgently, our communities will be devastated—economically, socially and ecologically. Ongoing inaction will mean that my kids' generation and their children will be devastated by the avoidable effects of prolonged drought, rising sea levels, the destruction of arable land, increasing food insecurity and the extinction of native species.

These are not absurd predictions. They are reasonable and considered opinions of expert scientists from Australia and around the world who know what they are talking about. For a long time now these experts have been sounding alarms. It is our job to listen to the experts and to put in place the laws and programs that are necessary to tackle the issue. That is exactly what Labor has done. We have spoken to the experts; we have shaped our policy and we took it to the last election. It was not only informed by the best science but it was also entirely achievable. The amendment that I have moved to this motion not only reflects our policy, but also reflects the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] recommendation of net zero emissions by 2050. This recommendation is referenced in the first paragraph of today's motion, as was pointed out by the member for Dubbo. In contrast to the IPCC recommendation of net zero emissions by 2050, today's motion is calling for net zero emissions by 2040. I will leave it to the member for Newtown to explain that discrepancy.

The Greens motion also calls for 100 per cent renewable energy and a phasing out of coal and gas-fired generation. The fact is that based on the current technology the path to renewable energy will rely on gas peaking plants. Without them we would be at risk of serious supply failures in acute periods and we would be at risk of destroying entire industries. As the member for Port Stephens I know this firsthand. Intensive manufacturing in my electorate relies on a secure energy supply to survive. These are the manufacturers that are making the components for wind turbines. They are the ones that are building the steel pins and forging the steel that create and help build and secure the wind turbines. We need a secure energy supply to be able to build the renewable energy of our future.

We need an honest discussion around these issues. The motion as amended reflects Labor's honest and realistic approach. We are not putting our heads in the sand, like those opposite. I urge members to support the amended motion; the original motion does not do justice to the reality of what we are facing. We are facing a climate change potential of devastation to our communities and we must act now. The Government continues to ignore any serious attempt—even an attempt—to address what is happening in our communities across this State.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (13:01): No ignoring here: We too recognise the importance of a sustainable environment and managing the transition to renewable energy. However, the motion in large part is a re-litigation of the agenda that The Greens took to the recent New South Wales election. This agenda saw The Greens suffer a swing against them on first preferences in both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. The electorate spoke and repudiated The Greens agenda at the election, and rightly so. By contrast, the Government has a sensible agenda of action to help Australia meet its international obligations, to ensure reliability of supply, to put downward pressure on prices and to reduce carbon emissions.

We set the ambition to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. To help achieve that ambition we are investing in a range of programs. I single out the Empowering Homes Program. In the lead-up to the 2019 New South Wales election the Government committed to the new Empowering Homes Program to support the rollout of up to 300,000 battery and solar battery systems across the State over the next 10 years through the provision of interest-free loans. I draw attention to the fact that this solar is backed by batteries, which ensures that we meet supply with demand and allows for power to be used when the sun is not shining. This ability to firm up the energy supply is one of the key challenges that we face with the transition to renewables.

The program aims to unlock up to \$3.2 billion in clean energy investment, adding up to 3,000 megawatt hours of storage into the New South Wales energy system when complete. As a result the program will help create jobs, reduce emissions, increase system security and reliability and place downward pressure on energy costs for all users. While this program incentivises solar, the Government knows this problem will not be solved by solar alone. We need to support a mixture of technologies that will help us diversify the energy mix and drive more competition in the market, ultimately lowering prices for consumers. I point to Snowy 2.0 and hydropower contributing to our storage capacity.

We will take a technology-neutral approach to this issue and not rule one form of generation in or out. We are not in the business of picking winners or arbitrarily closing down industries without a plan for jobs and economic opportunities for affected workers. Our strong economic management is also creating an environment in which businesses, such as clean energy businesses, can invest with confidence. We do need responsible action on climate change and that is what this Government will continue to deliver.

Debate adjourned.

VOLUNTEER ORGANISATIONS

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (13:05): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises the outstanding work volunteers do in communities.
- (2) Recognises organisations such as Surf Life Saving, the State Emergency Service and the Rural Fire Service.
- (3) Notes the Government's ongoing support for these organisations.

The New South Wales Government understands the vital work carried out by the by the NSW Rural Fire Service [RFS], NSW State Emergency Service [SES] and Surf Life Saving NSW volunteers. We are committed to supporting the invaluable work they do and ensuring that they are well equipped through a variety measures. In January this year the Government provided \$723,000 in joint Federal funding to support 13 projects as part of the Emergency Volunteer Support Scheme [EVSS] to help recruit local volunteers, upskill volunteers and assist retention. The New South Wales Government continues to support NSW RFS volunteers and last year invested \$9.5 million in the efficient large air tanker and very large air tanker aerial water bombers.

There are 13 rural fire brigades in the Sutherland Shire district, all with numerous volunteers, including 51 volunteers at Waterfall, 61 volunteers at Sandy Point, 56 volunteers at Menai, 69 volunteers at Heathcote headquarters, 78 volunteers at Illawong, 43 volunteers at Maianbar, 71 volunteers at Engadine, 104 volunteers at Grays Point, 110 volunteers at Woronora, 13 volunteers at Sutherland Fire Control Centre, 80 volunteers at Kurnell, 82 volunteers at Loftus, 55 volunteers at Bundeena and 28 volunteers at Sutherland Communications Brigade. I make special mention of Naomi McCabe at Sutherland Communications Brigade.

In 2011 the Woronora RFS opened its new \$1.7 million station, replacing the old station which was built in the 1970s. The purpose-built station is believed to be the first floating bushfire station in Australia, with its three firefighting boats stored on pontoons inside a boatshed on the water to allow quick access during emergencies. Sutherland Shire Council has recently ticked off on getting that section of the river dredged, which is very good news. In 2014 Bundeena RFS opened its new \$1.38 million station, with Sutherland Shire Council contributing \$280,000. It contains truck and vehicle bays, a workshop, a storeroom, an operational and administrative area and a training room. In 2015 Menai RFS opened its new \$1.49 million station, with Sutherland Shire Council contributing \$552,000. The station includes vehicle bays, an operations and administrative office, storage areas, kitchen amenities and a training room.

In 2018 the Sandy Point RFS opened its new \$1.55 million station, with Sutherland Shire Council contributing \$650,000. The opening was attended by the member for Holsworthy. The station includes vehicle bays, an operations and administration office, storage areas, a kitchen and amenities room, a training room and an outdoor terrace. New trucks have been delivered, replacing the fleet in a timely manner. I acknowledge volunteer Deb Sharp of Engadine RFS who received the Distinguished Volunteer Award in 2018. Superintendent Andrew Pinfold has received the New South Wales Government Community Service Award in 2015 for his contribution

to our community, particularly for his vital role in managing the large-scale bushfires that occurred in the Sutherland shire in 1997, 2001 and 2002.

I commend the Rural Fire Service Sutherland District Manager Andrew Pinfold and Inspector Scott Deller on their outstanding service in protecting our community. It is a pleasure to assist them whenever I can. Between 2012 and 2017 the SES received \$46 million for procurement, maintenance and control of its 635-strong SES operational vehicle fleet. In the 2018-19 budget, the SES received a record funding boost of \$56.4 million to deliver state-of-the-art rescue vehicles, boats, trailers and upgrades to communication networks to better equip volunteers in their emergency work. I acknowledge paramedic John "Gonzo" Gonzalez, who is the local controller of the New South Wales SES shire unit, in leading and supporting our local SES volunteers in tackling all emergencies. John is also a paramedic, which is fantastic.

Last year the New South Wales Government passed the Emergency Services Legislation Amendment Bill, which recognises Surf Life Saving NSW as an emergency services organisation. In January this year, the Government announced \$16 million over four years for Surf Life Saving NSW to fund the purchase of new jetskis, vehicles, additional emergency response beacons, community engagement officers and an innovative new beach wi-fi project to educate tourists. In April this year the Government boosted critical communications for emergency services in the Royal National Park with the instalment of a new government radio network site at Waterfall.

The new site at the Garrawarra Centre is critical because it fills in black spots in the Royal National Park. The new site at Garrawarra is part of the NSW Telco Authority's Critical Communications Enhancement Program [CCEP], which is increasing the Government's radio network from 190 sites to approximately 700, with coverage expanding from 30 per cent to 80 per cent of the State. The new site not only extends the network coverage from paved roads within the Royal National Park but also provides infill coverage in the deep valleys between Waterfall and Stanwell Park. Over the next four years \$320 million will be invested to expand the network across the State. The CCEP represents the biggest investment in critical communications infrastructure in New South Wales in two decades.

I could go on and on—and I will! The Government also has delivered six new surf life saving clubs in my electorate at Garie, Burning Palms, Era, Helensburgh, Stanwell Park, Coalcliff and Scarborough. The funding has delivered a variety of improvements to the clubs that include enhancing first-aid rooms, replacing weather-damaged windows and doors and so on. The Burning Palms Surf Life Saving Club in the Royal National Park alone received \$301,000.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (13:12): I commend the member for Heathcote for moving the motion, which all members of Parliament endorse. Unlike the member for Heathcote, I will not name every organisation because I did not plan to speak, but I was so inspired by his contribution that I had no option but to rise to my feet. He did not know he was so inspirational. I recognise the outstanding work of volunteers in communities across New South Wales, particularly in my electorate of Lismore. In particular I recognise organisations such as Surf Life Saving NSW, our State Emergency Service [SES] and the Rural Fire Service, which do commendable work in keeping our communities safe. The work they do is both challenging and dangerous.

Earlier this year terrible bushfires went through Tabulam, Jennings and Wallangarra and staff from the Rural Fire Service, as well as volunteers from around the State, came to fight and extinguish the fires to keep our community safe right across that northern district. The State Emergency Service and many other services came to the fore at the time. In fact, as a result of the fires some of the work they do is ongoing because it takes a long time after such devastating fires to put us back to where we were.

The impacts of the 2017 floods in Lismore are still being felt by the local area, particularly in the central business districts of Lismore and Murwillumbah. The State Emergency Service again came to the fore at the time. After the floods there were a lot of discussions about operational changes that should be made to the SES. I have discussed this with the Minister to make sure that we do everything we can, although we know that the SES operates in accordance with its instructions and guidelines. It is up to us, its representatives through the Ministers, to make sure that those guidelines and its standard operating procedures are up to date, in place and work for the community.

I live in Lismore where there is no surf but we have the Lismore-Ballina Surf Life Saving Club, which does wonderful work. When I was the Federal member for Paige, Ballina was in my electorate and I did a lot of work with the club and secured some money to build a grand surf life saving club that sits right on Ballina beach, which has great views and a great restaurant. Many volunteer organisations cover a range of services right across the electorate. Many people, particularly women, are in those organisations. Recently I have attended many Lions Club, Rotary and other organisations' annual general meetings and changeover dinners. I am sure many members

have attended. At those events I have heard about the wonderful quiet work they do that makes a difference to the lives of people in our community.

The third paragraph of the honourable member's motion notes the Government's ongoing support for those organisations, which I also note. I point out that those organisations have bipartisan support. Earlier this year Commissioner Fitzsimmons from the Rural Fire Service spoke at an event and said that in the past 20 years the service has had bipartisan support and that should continue to prevail, regardless of which party is in government. My conversations with the Minister about those issues also take place within that framework. I support this motion and commend the honourable member for bringing it before the House.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (13:19): Volunteers make an extraordinary contribution to Australian society. They are the lifeblood of our community and come from every town and all walks of life. They are working people, students and professionals, young people and retirees. Six million Australians volunteer for different organisations. In my electorate the Rural Fire Service [RFS] and the State Emergency Service [SES] play a significant role. I will be a strong voice in this House for those organisations and will continue to fight for more funding. In my electorate in the Wollondilly shire we have RFS brigades at Appin, Bargo, Buxton, Cawdor, Douglas Park, Lakesland, Menangle, Mount Hunter, Oakdale, Orangeville-Werombi, Pheasants Nest, Picton, Silverdale, Tahmoor, The Oaks and Theresa Park—just to name a few. In the Wingecarribee shire we have brigades at Alpine, Balmoral, Colo Vale, Hill Top, Mittagong, Yerrinbool and Woodlands.

Recently I had the honour of attending the 2019 Young People in Emergency Services Awards ceremony, at which local school student Olivia Cole from Bowral High School was the winner of the 2018 New South Wales Secondary Schools Cadet Program's Cadet of the Year. I was impressed to see the RFS and SES commissioners and our very good Minister David Elliott presenting awards to those great young volunteers, who are important role models in their communities. We are fortunate to have two major SES units in my electorate, being the Wollondilly unit located at Picton and the Wingecarribee unit located at Mittagong. The Wingecarribee unit covers over 2,500 square kilometres and is one of the busiest in the State. This year it has attended a number of call-outs. There have been 62 rescue incidents including road crashes, general land rescues, community-first responses and vertical rescues. A further 295 call-outs involved storms and flooding. There have also been 18 occasions when the SES has been asked to assist with various searches. That makes a total of 375 occasions on which the SES has been called upon to respond.

One recent Saturday there were 10 rescues required. Some volunteers were in action from 4.00 a.m. until 11.30 p.m. That was a huge commitment by them and we need to recognise how much time volunteers give up with family and friends. They also put in countless hours of training so that they can respond effectively and with great skill. I acknowledge the outstanding leadership of the local area commander of the highlands cluster, Warren Turner, and the unit commander of the Wingecarribee SES, Heather Rowe. Those outstanding people and the unit volunteers who support them are a credit to their communities. I pay special thanks to them.

Recently the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and I had the pleasure of handing over the keys to a new state-of-the-art rescue vehicle. The vehicle is equipped with the most up-to-date technology, and I even had a go at using the jaws of life. The Government can only fund these wonderful organisations by making the hard and tough decisions it has made over the past eight years. Due to the wonderful financial leadership of Premier Gladys Berejiklian and Treasurer Dominic Perrottet the Liberal-Nationals Coalition has funded the biggest infrastructure commitment in the history of the nation.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (13:23): I support the motion moved by the member for Heathcote. When I spend time in my electorate I often wonder how on earth we would do anything or how my community would be as beautiful as it is without the hard work, effort and courage of so many volunteers. The motion mentions the State Emergency Service, the Rural Fire Service [RFS] and surf life saving clubs—all of which deserve recognition. I would add to that list the Marine Rescue volunteers who go into the face of danger and save lives when many of us would turn the other way. I recognise their significant contribution to my community and communities across New South Wales.

This year's fire season has been declared much earlier than usual and I can understand why. Last year in Port Stephens we experienced bushfires in winter and we are preparing for that again this year. Those fires did not stop and we have had more than our fair share. As a result, the RFS volunteers are heroes in my community. The amount of time they spent saving houses and lives last year, away from their families, loved ones and workplaces—and often not getting an income in the process—amazes me. Whilst recognising the volunteers who give so much, particularly those who save people's lives and risk their own in the process, I also thank their partners for allowing their loved ones to spend time in those organisations and get the training that they need to do their jobs safely. Whilst their loved ones are in extreme circumstances during emergencies, the partners support the home, often experiencing enormous stress themselves.

I thank all volunteers in the organisations mentioned in the motion and their families who support them. I also thank the enormous number of other volunteers who support the community and make it special. They include volunteers in P&Cs, progress associations, Landcare, animal welfare groups and service clubs. At every function or festival I see the Lions Club doing its thing or the Rotary Club running yet another barbecue. The funds they raise go back into our communities and we all benefit from them. I am blessed to represent a community with a large ageing population. The people who come to my community to retire and enjoy their lives bring an enormous amount of experience, skills, capacity and expertise. They show real care for where they live. According to the census, the community of Tea Gardens has the oldest population in Australia, but it thrives because of the number of community groups and volunteers who support every aspect of life anyone would want to participate in. From working out family genetic lines to the artistic and cultural endeavours of residents, everything is supported in the community. That happens only because of the hard work and dedication of so many volunteers.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (13:27): I am delighted to support the motion of my very good friend the hardworking and dedicated member for Heathcote. As the Minister responsible for volunteering, I am pleased to contribute to this debate. Our tireless volunteers play a critical role in our society and should be commended for their fantastic hard work. All members of the House have reflected on their involvement in volunteer organisations and their support for them. Across New South Wales more than 2.1 million volunteers contribute a combined 240 million hours of their time each year. That contribution must be recognised and supported in the best way possible.

This morning I was pleased to announce the opening of the consultation period for the development of the third NSW Volunteering Strategy. We want to hear the frank and fearless feedback of volunteers and their organisations about how the Government can engage more volunteers to do more good things across the State. The consultation will be used to shape the future of volunteering in our State and ensure that we maintain a vibrant and positive volunteering sector. Volunteers are the essence of our communities and we want to give them every encouragement and support. The new strategy will provide the blueprint for the work in the sector over the next decade. Responses to the consultation surveys will inform how we invest and support volunteers and how we reduce barriers to volunteering and improve recognition programs.

On the point of recognition programs, I acknowledge the work of the Centre for Volunteering, its Chair Valerie Hoogstad and its CEO Gemma Rygate. Many people have been acknowledged as part of the volunteer awards, not the least of whom is 2011 New South Wales Young Volunteer of the Year Loki Ball, who is now my chief of staff. I encourage everyone to visit the NSW Volunteering website and complete the online survey before it closes at 5.00 p.m. on Friday 6 September. I am sure all of us have had interesting interactions with volunteers but I have one that is innately personal. As members well know, and I have spoken about it before, I have a visual impairment that has led to legal blindness. When I was growing up I needed a piece of equipment—an electronic magnifier that used closed-circuit television equipment, a camera and a screen to enlarge text—to undertake school and music activities. In the 1980s my parents simply could not afford it.

At the time that piece of equipment was worth around \$5,000. My mum approached Bruce Murphy of the Bomaderry Lions Club—which was actively involved in Save Sight programs—and they came to my aid. I was provided with a \$5,000 piece of equipment that my parents could simply not afford. If it were not for that generous gift, I have no doubt that I would not have gone on to do the things that I have done in my life—finishing my schooling, graduating from university, becoming a member of Parliament and then being the first disabilities Minister to have a disability. So if members are looking for someone to blame, it is the fault of the Bomaderry Lions Club!

I sincerely thank every charitable organisation that makes a contribution. I am but one example of a life that they have changed for the better. I can personally attest to their work, as well as all of the organisations that have been mentioned—from P&Cs to sporting clubs, from Rotary clubs to Lions clubs, and from the Red Cross to so many other charitable organisations. We are lucky to live in a State where no matter what side of politics we come from or our views in life, every single one of us will get behind the selfless work of volunteers. Volunteers put service above self and they believe in community. Every single hour they spend volunteering makes our community a much better place to be.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (13:31): I speak to the member for Heathcote's motion in support of volunteers. This is a good motion. It acknowledges the fundamental and important work that volunteers and volunteer organisations do in our communities across New South Wales. Volunteers are a critical part of the fabric that holds us together. They are so important to our community. I acknowledge, along with the member for Heathcote, the important work in particular of Surf Life Saving Australia, the State Emergency Service and the Rural Fire Service. Statistics show that across New South Wales 2.1 million people volunteer their time. In fact, they contribute 240 million hours to our local communities and are the single biggest workforce in this State. The inner west, my part of New South Wales, is home to a multitude of community organisations and volunteers.

Business interrupted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to Marion and Gavin Platt-Hepworth, guests of the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, and member for Tamworth. I welcome Jill Hall, former member for Swansea and former Federal member for Shortland; and the Eastlakes U3A group, guests of the member for Charlestown. I welcome residents from the Lake Macquarie electorate, guests of the member for Lake Macquarie. I welcome Professor Armoogum Parsuramen, GOSK, who is a member of the Executive Council and Council of Religions of the Republic of Mauritius, a former member of Parliament and Minister for education, art, culture and science. I welcome also Dr Chandrika Subramaniyan, a solicitor and Cumberland Citizen of the Year. They are both guests of the member for Prospect.

*Members***MINISTER FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS**

The SPEAKER: With his consent, I acknowledge that tomorrow is the birthday of the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. I guarantee that if the Minister asks for an extension of time today, he will get it.

*Committees***STANDING ORDERS AND PROCEDURE COMMITTEE****Reports**

The SPEAKER: I table the interim report of the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee entitled *Modernisation and reform of practices and procedures*, Report 1/57, dated August 2019. I order that the report be printed.

*Question Time***HEALTH WORKER SAFETY**

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:22): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that additional security was provided to health bureaucrats today, why will the Premier not beef up security to protect frontline health workers, dozens of whom are being assaulted each month in New South Wales hospitals?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:22): I acknowledge the question from the Leader of the Opposition and say that of course the New South Wales Government takes very seriously the health and wellbeing of all our frontline workers, especially those in the health sector. In fact, the health Minister commissioned well-regarded former Labor Minister Peter Anderson to conduct an inquiry into hospital security involving frontline staff. Mr Anderson gave his interim report in February and, from memory, he made about 48 recommendations in the report outlining what the Government should do. He also highlighted that he needed more time to have a comprehensive look at the issue, especially in relation to frontline health workers in rural and regional New South Wales. The Government has taken on board his requests and we anticipate he will give us his findings by the end of the year.

As members will know, the Government also has a comprehensive commission of inquiry into ice and related drugs. There is no doubt there could be overlap between the two reports, and the Government will consider those together comprehensively. I assure the community, perhaps to the detriment of the leader of the Health Services Union and the health Minister, that they have a very strong working relationship. We will continue to ensure that if there is anything more we need to do in the interim, we will do it. But our Government prides itself on relying on expert advice, having a comprehensive response and ensuring that we deal with the issues properly, and that is what we will continue to do.

It also gives me a wonderful opportunity to stress that this Government will provide an additional 4,600 frontline health workers over the next four years. Their health and safety is our priority, as is the health and safety of all patients under their care. I assure the people of New South Wales, including members of the Health Services Union and those opposite, that not only have we been proactive in this matter but also we are looking at it comprehensively. I look forward to implementing any further recommendations Mr Anderson provides to the Government and, in particular, to acknowledging his request for further information regarding issues in rural and remote New South Wales that differ from those in our major urban centres.

PREMIER'S PRIORITIES

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:25): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on measures announced since the budget that will improve the lives of people in New South Wales, and are there any alternatives?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:25): I thank the member for Holsworthy for her question. We have a strong budget position, a strong economy and an infrastructure pipeline that is pretty much world leading in scale and magnitude; however, it is also important for us to deal with issues that fall between the cracks and that, for decades, all governments of all persuasions have found difficult to deal with. That is why I was pleased recently to announce a set of Premier's Priorities to look at some social areas that require the Government's attention.

Again, I stress that our core business is always about delivering a strong budget and economy so that we can afford the infrastructure pipeline and services. But we also have an obligation to support the most vulnerable and shift the trend in key areas of government that have been in the too-hard basket for too long. I take this opportunity to update the House on the Premier's Priorities and identify some of the issues we are tackling. I commend my predecessor, Mike Baird, who introduced the notion of Premier's Priorities. Every Premier's priority we have identified has trended positively—bar one, which we are addressing; I will come to that. The biggest challenge for us is identifying what is left off the list because every priority we put on the list gets the attention it deserves. We are looking forward to dealing with those issues.

The first Premier's priority is bumping up education results for children. Quality standards in our schools are absolutely essential. We do not want any child in New South Wales, whether they attend a school in the city or the bush, to be disadvantaged because of what happens inside the classroom. Our Bump it Up program was a pilot that identified schools where individual literacy and numeracy results could be improved. We found overwhelmingly that the schools we identified had a huge success rate in lifting standards. Now we want to make this program business as usual by applying it to every single public school across the State.

The next priority is increasing the number of Aboriginal students who actually finish year 12. I was very concerned to learn that only 30 per cent of students with Aboriginal heritage complete year 12. We want to increase that number because we know that students who go on to complete high school have a greater opportunity not only to seek employment but also to have a better quality of life. That priority is very important to the New South Wales Government. Of course, protecting our most vulnerable children remains a priority. I must acknowledge the work of former Minister Goward and the work of Minister Ward because we have seen a change in trend in the number of children re-reported as being in out-of-home care.

It is important for us not only to reduce the rate of re-reporting, but also to provide permanency for children in out-of-home care. We want to see children who are in out-of-home care provided with permanency and not be moved from home to home. They should be given the security that every child deserves to have a good start in life. The Government's priorities also include reducing domestic violence reoffending. This is one Premier's priority that we would like to see improve. It was a priority for the Government last year, in the last term.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I have only got up to the sixth of the 14 Premier's Priorities, but I would like the opportunity to keep informing the House of these important initiatives. The next priority that the Government is addressing is to reduce recidivism in the prison population. The rate of recidivism in New South Wales is, frankly, too high. I acknowledge that. We have made some good progress in this area but we need to make sure the transition—*[Extension of time]*

There have been some great initiatives, and I acknowledge the former Minister and the current Minister, who have done some great work in relation to what is happening inside prisons. We have to make sure that the transition to life in the community is equally supported. I am also pleased to announce that it is a Government priority to reduce homelessness and it has set a specific target. New South Wales—not just the city of Sydney but the whole State—was the first jurisdiction to sign up to a global target to reduce street homelessness by 50 per cent by 2025. This is an ambitious target but it is one that the Government is pleased to set.

Ms Jodi McKay: What about the rest of the homeless?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Those on the opposite side of the Chamber do not like it when we talk about social issues.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Opposition members have claimed that the Government is not putting any money towards homelessness. How about \$1 billion over four years? Those opposite could not provide \$1 billion over their whole budget, let alone put it into homelessness.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Opposition members are touchy today. There is room to improve further in key areas in our health system. The Government is pleased to announce some Premier's Priorities in relation to service levels in our hospitals to make sure that people receive immediate and urgent care when they need it. In relation to improving outpatient and community care, the Government wants to make sure that people spend as few days in hospital as they need, but have support in the community, in their homes. The feedback that we have received from people who are receiving that expert community support from the health system has been outstanding. I was blown away when I heard from patients who told me of their personal experiences of people coming to their homes to deliver daily care, as opposed to having to spend time in hospital. [*Time expired.*]

HEALTH WORKER SAFETY

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:32): My question is directed to the Minister for Health and Medical Research. Given that health workers have been pushed to the brink today to take industrial action, will the Minister now support calls to give security guards at hospitals additional powers to detain, as well as increased training? Will there be extra guards across New South Wales?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health and Medical Research) (14:33): I thank the member for Keira for his question. I am delighted to see that there are three Labor shadow Ministers focused on health on this very expanded Labor front bench. I am grateful for that because there was not much focus on health under the former Labor Government, and none at all from New South Wales Labor in the last few years.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Brad, don't be like that.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am looking forward to a question from the member for Maitland, too. I am being nice and I agree that she has been supportive of Maitland Hospital. The member for Keira needs to tread carefully here; he needs to talk to frontline staff rather than just jumping on the bandwagon.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: We have.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: No, I promise you. The depth of that question was abysmally lacking. I refer to the security of staff. First, the Government has committed more staff to the hospitals—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Yesterday one of my constituents called me. They are ringing me and they are distressed because they are getting bashed up.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Sophie, shoosh.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Canterbury will restrain herself from interjecting.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The Government has committed more frontline staff to the New South Wales health system than ever before in the State's history. As the Premier indicated, thousands more nurses and midwives and, of course, around 1,360 new support staff will be coming into the hospitals in the next four years. The Government is aware that there are major issues in regard to the incredibly good work that our staff do, but the very poor circumstances they sometimes find themselves in. I have had numerous meetings with the Health Services Union [HSU] and indeed with frontline staff. The security issue is a lot more complex. I am going to be kind about it. If it was as easy as was represented by that first question from the member for Keira then of course it would have been addressed.

The problem the hospitals have is that the sorts of things that are happening in the community—particularly off the back, as the Premier said earlier, of the use of ice and other drugs—are resulting in an increase in violence in our hospitals. Some security staff would say that we should have uniforms—that is, constables—in the hospitals. Other staff, also security, say that they do not want that. Up until a few years ago some hospitals had people in uniforms that looked almost police-like, and yet the local health districts have said no to that in concert with discussions between their own security staff and the nurses and doctors. The nurses and doctors invariably say that they want security staff who are effectively part of the health team or the health framework, not dressed as police.

The issue is pretty simple. When people are coming in who have mental health issues and/or drug and alcohol issues sometimes a police-type uniform is not appropriate. That is what the nurses and doctors and other security staff say. In addition, some security staff have said that they would like batons or mace, but again some security staff say that they do not want that because there have been circumstances in which even a police officer

has come into an emergency department and been forced into a situation in which he has used mace and then found that all the medical staff have been maced as well.

It is not that easy. I say to the member for Keira that we are happy to brief him. He has not been in to talk to me or to the Ministry of Health about the security issues. I am happy to talk to him, but I would ask him to at least try to get some depth to the questions if we are going to be here for the next 3½ years. That was not a very deep question. That was just, "Oh, you've had a strike today." I also indicate that I met with the senior staff in HSU on Monday and we talked about a compromise, which was to trial in two—

Mr Ryan Park: That obviously went well. They're on strike today.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: If you are interested, just listen—otherwise do not bother asking me questions. In Wyong and Gosford we have offered a trial of some additional security staff, which they accepted. That was agreed at the Industrial Relations Commission yesterday, then something went wrong between 12 o'clock and 4 o'clock. There was talk of a four-hour strike. Today it turned out that instead of 22,000 people, only a few hundred people walked out. They walked out for about half an hour to an hour.

Today I have been asked whether we will deduct their salaries. I have indicated in good faith that if they were out for only half an hour to an hour to have those discussions about what is going on with the Peter Anderson review, which the Premier referred to earlier, and what else we are doing there will be no salary reductions. If they had a fair dinkum strike and went out for three or four hours, they will get deducted. We are also going to deliver on the promise that was made irrespective of the stupidity of this action in the past 24 hours by the union but not by the staff. As I said, the staff were well considered. We will still deliver on our promise on Gosford and Wyong hospitals to increase the security. Next time the member should ask me something after he has worked it through properly with all the staff.

BUS SERVICES

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (14:38): Mr Speaker, I appreciate your support—

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown was on his feet a couple of seconds before the next member. I will make up the numbers, but members need to be alert in seeking the call.

Mr GREG WARREN: I appreciate your support. I have always been good like that, Mr Speaker—get on the front foot and in first. My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Roads—my old mate. The Minister told the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 4 March that direct Hills bus services from the north-west to the city would not be cut as a result of the metro. Will the Minister say "sorry" to residents from Riverstone and surrounding suburbs—and the nearly 10,000 people who have signed petitions—for this week cutting the 621, 642, 620X, 620N, 650, 650X, 607X, 610 and the 617X buses?

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Hornsby to order for the first time. I call the member for Kiama to order for the second time.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (14:40): I am a bit confused. Aren't you a member from south-west Sydney? That is right, Labor has no north-west Sydney electorates. There is a reason for that: We have phenomenal, great members in north-west Sydney who delivered a brand spanking new metro.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I apologise. We have great members in north-west Sydney who delivered a brand new metro.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I am confused as to why the member for Campbelltown has not asked about south-west Sydney transport and instead has asked about north-west Sydney transport. Obviously there is a bit of confusion. I will let the good people of Campbelltown know that their local member is more interested in how well the north-west metro is going, and let me tell you it is pretty fantastic. On that score, why would you build a brand-new fully automated \$7.3 billion train and keep buses running on empty around it? You are completely and utterly crazy. What I would also say is that I made clear that we would always observe what happened to bus patronage in and around the metro. But you weren't at those press conferences where I said that, and that is the key point. You would always adjust the bus network around the north-west metro, given that that is what—

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister is right about one thing: He is confused. Will you say sorry for cutting the bus services in the north-west?

The SPEAKER: The Minister has the call.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I will not apologise for building a \$20 billion metro train for communities and turning this State around, old mate. You are the type of bloke who goes there and sits there and complains about air conditioning on trains for about—

Ms Jodie Harrison: Point of order: I ask that the Minister address his comments through the Chair.

The SPEAKER: I have asked the Minister to do that. I remind the Minister to direct his comments through the Chair. I understand the member's point of order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The point I would make is that the member for Campbelltown spends more time whingeing about air conditioning on trains, which this Government has at 100 per cent. We inherited a legacy where 76 per cent of trains had air conditioning, not 100 per cent. We had to buy a few trains and then we had to bolster the train services to western Sydney because of the growth. We always said very clearly that we would monitor the buses, and we will continue to monitor the buses in north-west Sydney. I recognise Ray Williams for his positive attitude.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

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

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. He cannot monitor the buses because he cancelled them; he shut them down. We want to know when they are coming back and will he say sorry?

The SPEAKER: The Minister has indicated that he has completed his answer.

REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (14:44): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Will he update the House on how the Government is improving journeys and connectivity in regional New South Wales?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (14:44): Thank you, Mr Speaker—

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I thank the member for Dubbo for his question. He sees the investment that we are making into towns like his, which reflects what we see in communities across New South Wales. There is no doubt—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time. I call the member for Keira to order for the first time.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: There is no doubt that members on this side of the House have a big vision to ensure there is a regional transport and roads network in New South Wales that provides connectivity. The member for Dubbo knows that our Building a Better Dubbo project will make roads safer and will ease congestion in his community. Dubbo will become the home of the rail maintenance facility, it will see the new regional rail fleet rolled out, and it will also benefit from additional bus services to support the city's growth and connect isolated communities to their nearest towns.

It is an exciting time to be in charge of the portfolio of Regional Transport and Roads. It is a portfolio that in the next 12 months will see an investment of over \$6 billion into the regions. That is unprecedented investment in roads and public transport services in our communities. Have a look at that figure—it is an incredible figure. It is half a billion dollars a month, or more than \$100 million a week. It is game-changing investment for our regions. While I hear complaints from members on the other side of the House, it is making a difference to the lives of people who are impacted and who see the investment made by members on this side of the House. The investment will unlock opportunity and create jobs. It will support our local economies, especially at times when communities are suffering from drought. It is investment that will improve journeys and improve the customer experience.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: There are big distances to travel in the bush, and there are long journeys for our members.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: We are ensuring that we provide this investment to the bush. Those opposite have had a very long journey over the past 14 weeks. They have been more concerned about selecting their leader.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I will tell members this: If you look at the buster that occurred with the sports Minister, he can show you that if you take your eyes off the ball you can end up with a mouthful of turf.

The SPEAKER: The member for Londonderry will be called to order if she continues to interject.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister has strayed from the question. No-one knows more than a regional—

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Swansea. I have heard enough. The Minister has been sufficiently relevant and may continue.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I am pleased to report that members on this side of the House are on track to deliver the commitments that will make a difference in our regions. We are seeing a commitment to seal the State's two most remote highways, and they are well ahead of schedule. We have prioritised the projects on the Silver City Highway and the Cobb Highway. This is an investment of \$145 million from this side of the House. Both of these highways will be finished by 2022 if weather permits. While Labor took its time to decide on a leader, we have continued to deliver for our communities. We have seen 5.4 kilometres of the newly sealed Cobb Highway. We have also seen 23.9 kilometres of new work on the Silver City Highway between Broken Hill and Tibooburra.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: We also finished the new bridge at Packsaddle. For those communities in the Far West the sealing of the Cobb and Silver City highways is critical infrastructure. It means a better transport route for local produce and products. It also means a smoother, more reliable and safer journey with much better visibility. It is delivering benefits for more than just road users. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: One more comment from the member for Kogarah and the member will be placed on a call to order.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Members may joke about this but it is important. In the Far West the nearest hospital could be over 200 kilometres away.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: When an emergency occurs, every minute matters. The upgrading of the Silver City Highway at Shannons Creek is now able to be closed off at short notice.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: The highway can also be used as an airstrip for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. In April of this year the Royal Flying Doctor Service did just that when it transported an 11-year-old boy, Max, who had fallen off his motorcycle, to the Royal Adelaide Hospital. The Government is creating jobs. Those road projects in the Far West have created jobs for 150 road workers, trainees and apprentices. Those people are working on legacy projects. Many more roadworks are happening across the State.

On the Newell Highway, which is the freight backbone of New South Wales, the Government is now constructing the third of 30 overtaking lanes with the first of the overtaking lanes at Dustys Creek near Gilgandra close to completion. All 30 are expected to be finished within the next four years. These overtaking lanes will take about 25 minutes off the travel time for those travelling border to border. I have driven on the Newell Highway and spoken to a number of the roadwork teams. They are proud of their work and are pleased that they are making a difference to those smaller towns, villages and communities. While those opposite want to talk a big game, it is this side of the House that is delivering for the people of regional New South Wales.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (14:52): My question is addressed to the Minister for Local Government. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is working closely with local government to deliver for communities across New South Wales, and are there any alternatives?

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (14:52): I thank the member for Albury for his question and his interest in local government. The Opposition is clearly uninterested in local government. I am very disappointed in the member for Campbelltown, who has not asked me a question on local government—yet. He has put out a couple of press releases and said that local government is under—

Mr Greg Warren: Do you want me to explain it to you?

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: Excuse me.

[Opposition members interjected.]

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: Can you just shut up?

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Members will remain silent. The Clerk will stop the clock. I will hear the point of order from the member for Auburn. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the second time.

Ms Lynda Voltz: I have three points of order. The first one is that the member should be directing her—

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Baulkham Hills to order for the first time. I have asked members to remain silent. I want to hear from the member for Auburn in silence.

Ms Lynda Voltz: First, the member should be directing her comments through the Chair. The second point of order is under Standing Order 59, which states that the Speaker can direct a member not to be irrelevant in their speech and the third point of order—

The SPEAKER: Members will remain quiet.

Ms Lynda Voltz: The third point of order is that the Minister should withdraw her comments under Standing Order 74. If members opposite were listening to what the Minister was saying they would not be arguing.

The SPEAKER: In relation to the first two points of order there is no point of order. In relation to the third point of order I do not understand what comment is being asked to be withdrawn that might have been disorderly or quarrelsome. I could not hear the contribution.

Ms Kate Washington: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: If there is a particular comment, I am happy to hear the member for Port Stephens speak to the point of order. I note that the Minister had barely commenced her response. I could not hear.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: She said, "Shut up".

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

Ms Kate Washington: To the point of order: The Minister said across the table to members on this side to "shut up".

The SPEAKER: Is that what you are seeking to have withdrawn?

Ms Kate Washington: Under Standing Order 74 we ask that the Minister withdraw the comment.

The SPEAKER: The clock has been reset. The Minister has been asked to withdraw that statement.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I withdraw it. I admit to being rude.

The SPEAKER: I will ask the Minister to commence her answer, having withdrawn the previous statement. I want total silence as she commences her answer.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I was making reference to the member for Campbelltown and I pay tribute to him. I understand that he is doing a lot of research, he is ringing mayors and courting joint organisation [JO] members in his office on his Peak velvet furniture and he is doing very well. Well done to him. In particular I thank the member for Albury for his interest in local government. I thank also the many members on this side of the House—and I will not exclude the member for Blacktown—who are bringing their mayors, local government councillors and general managers to me to sing the praises of their local government areas.

This week is Local Government Week and I thank all members who have spoken about local government in a positive way. Of course local government has its challenges but there are so many opportunities and achievements in local government. Since we were elected to government in 2011 we have invested \$9 billion into local government. Those on the other side are not interested in local government.

Ms Prue Car: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Before I hear the point of order from the member for Londonderry I ask for silence. The member for Londonderry is showing how it should be done properly rather than by making interjections.

Ms Prue Car: Point of order: The Chamber should be able to hear what the Minister is saying. She is speaking to the Government benches.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: We certainly can hear you most of the time.

Ms Prue Car: We want to hear you, Minister Hancock.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: We don't want to hear you, though.

The SPEAKER: It would be useful for the Minister to speak into the microphone so that members can hear her.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Back to her charming self.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: See how much we have to put up with you? How about you be quiet. There are 128 councils in this State. Many members take an interest in local government, others not so much. Since 2011 the Government has invested, through the Office of Local Government, \$1.4 billion of that \$9 billion into local government through the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme, the innovation fund and pensioner rebates. I hope the member for Campbelltown will discuss issues with me in a bipartisan way, as the previous shadow Minister did. I think our councillors expect that of us and I would expect that of the member for Campbelltown as well.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: The member for Albury being a veterinarian will understand that 80 per cent of the NSW Pet Registry funding goes back to local councils for management of their animal programs, for off-leash areas and pest infestations. I have heard that there is a rat infestation on level 10. Have you heard anything about that, Mr Speaker?

The SPEAKER: I have not heard anything.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: We inherited an enormous infrastructure backlog across this State and we have reduced that backlog from \$7 billion to \$3 billion over eight years. It took us eight years, but it was a huge backlog. We have been working hard to continue to reduce the backlog. In Local Government Week we celebrate the achievements of local government. We on this side of the House celebrate the commitment of this Government to local government as evidenced by increasing funding. Today the JO will join us in this place. Tonight is Local Government Week Awards Evening—I think the member for Kiama and a number of other members will be going. It is great that the member for Campbelltown is also going. Together we will be celebrating the achievements of local government.

I hope all members in this place will congratulate the winners in their area, because they deserve to be congratulated. I say to all members in this House that some of them do not necessarily prioritise working with their local councils, but so many do. It is essential, if funding is attracted to their local areas, that they have a strong relationship with their councils' general managers and that they understand their councils' issues. If members find this to be a problem, an issue or a challenge, I ask them to bring those concerns to me because my door is always open. I am always willing to listen to local governments, because the sector is important. [*Extension of time*]

Under round two of the Innovation Fund we have seen some fantastic funding go to brilliant projects throughout this State such as funding for drone technology to carry out weed inspections, new technology to allow customers to lodge documents online and funding for implementing cloud-based financial management systems and the like. Councils can access these kinds of funding opportunities. Funding opportunities also exist under the new JO program, which was initiated by the Deputy Premier. I thank the Deputy Premier for his advocacy on the JO model. It is working extremely well and this morning I welcomed JO representatives. There are more programs that councils should be aware of and all members should avail themselves of. I invite members to work with me so that we can maximise opportunities for funding. The press release from the member for Campbelltown said councils are underappreciated but I say to the member that they are not underappreciated by me.

PASSFIELD PARK SCHOOL

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (15:02): My question is directed to the Premier. In eight years this Government has ignored basic health and safety issues at Passfield Park special needs school, including severe mould, ramps that are too steep and doors that are too narrow for wheelchairs. Why has the Government failed to allocate a single cent in this year's budget to a desperately needed upgrade?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:03): I welcome the question from the normally quiet member for Macquarie Fields, because it is an important question. I appreciate the question and I am incredibly proud of the amount of money we have allocated to supporting children with a disability and school infrastructure programs. As many in the State would recall, it was our Government that took the important step to support needs-based funding for students and for schools; the Labor Party opposed this step. What this

means is that the dollars and the support for infrastructure follow students in need, which is exactly as it should be. I am incredibly proud that we have set aside record amounts in our school infrastructure program. All members of Parliament should know that if they believe specific schools require additional attention, the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning is always open to hearing about those specific issues.

The SPEAKER: The member for Londonderry will cease interjecting. Members will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am pleased to say that it always gives me an enormous sense of satisfaction to visit schools that have received upgrades to support children with disability.

Ms Prue Car: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Obviously the Premier is trying to avoid answering the question.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being relevant. I call the member for Londonderry to order for the second time. If she continues to interject, she will be called to order for a third time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Government has an open-door policy when it comes to addressing issues concerning children with disabilities. I am not sure what the member for Londonderry meant by her point of order. However, before I was interrupted I was saying that in recent times I was very pleased to accompany the member for Mulgoa to visit a special needs school in her community that has been upgraded. We saw the delight of the students—of course they are delighted—but more so the delight of the parents who know their stress is alleviated because their schools have been provided with additional support for students with a disability. Similarly in the Camden electorate I know of upgrades of major schools that are special schools for children with disabilities.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: The question referred to one particular school, the Passfield Park School. What I am asking the Premier is this: If money has gone to special needs schools in Liberal electorates, could she support the Passfield Park School?

The SPEAKER: The question was specific and the Premier is being relevant to the question by referring to disability funding for schools.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say to any member of this place—whether it is the member for Macquarie Fields or otherwise—to please bring your specific concerns to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members should listen to the Premier's response.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I reiterate this important point: Our Government had the guts to support needs-based funding for students and infrastructure whereas the Labor Opposition opposed it.

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129 because the question was very specific.

The SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: I also note the comments made by the Premier that representations should be made to the Minister, which I did as the local member.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. I acknowledge that the question related to a particular school, but as I have said on previous occasions the standing orders relate to general relevance. The Premier has been generally relevant to the question. Therefore, there is no point of order. The Premier has the call.

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: May I seek leave to table the correspondence?

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough.

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: I am seeking leave to table the correspondence in which representations were made last year about the Passfield Park School.

The SPEAKER: It is not in order to do so during question time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As I said, the Government's agenda for upgrading infrastructure to provide support—especially for students with disabilities—is completely in line with the Government's philosophy that every child, irrespective of their circumstances, deserves to have the best opportunity to obtain quality education.

BUILDING COMMISSIONER

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (15:08): Mr Speaker—

[An Opposition member interjected.]

The SPEAKER: Who said that? Was that the member for The Entrance? I call the member for The Entrance to order for the first time.

Mr David Mehan: Point of order: It was not me.

The SPEAKER: I am sorry, I thought it was you. Who said that? Whoever said it does not have the guts to stand up; that person is a low-life. On previous occasions I have made it clear that members will refrain from making comments about another member's stature. Members will remain silent. I am very serious. I will not put up with those types of comments. I have made it very clear that they are inappropriate. I do not want to hear them again. Earlier I placed the member for Drummoyne on a call to order for making a similar comment. I have placed other members on calls to order for the same reason. Before I hear from the member for Keira, I make it very clear to the House that I will no longer put up with those comments.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: Once or twice—maybe three or four times—my stature has been referred to by one or two Government members in this place but it has not got the same reaction either from you or from the former Speaker.

The SPEAKER: I cannot recall hearing those comments, but I give you the commitment that if I hear them in future they will get the same response that you are now getting. I make it very clear to members that I am setting that standard.

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order: The term "low-life" does not befit your standing in the Parliament thus far as Speaker. It may be worth reflecting on that.

The SPEAKER: I agree that it is not a term I would normally use, and it is not one that I use lightly. I am happy to withdraw it in that context. I made that strength of comment not only because the interjection was inappropriate, but also because when somebody is asked to identify themselves and they do not have the guts to do so it is not impressive. Let us leave it there. I make it very clear that I do not want to hear those sorts of comments again.

Mr MARK COURE: Where was I? My question is addressed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is restoring confidence in the building industry, and are there any alternatives?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (15:12): I thank the upstanding member for Oatley for his keen interest in the Government's reform of the construction industry. Yesterday I informed the House that the appointment of a building commissioner was imminent.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The next member I hear interject will be called to order.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I am happy to advise the House that late yesterday afternoon the Government was able to confirm terms for the appointment of Mr David Chandler, OAM, as the NSW Building Commissioner. Today the Premier and I were joined by Mr Chandler to publicly announce his appointment. As Building Commissioner, David Chandler, OAM, will provide strategic oversight of the building regulation industry and drive the New South Wales Government's reform of the building and construction sector. I informed the House that the Government would cast a wide net to look for the State's first ever Building Commissioner and it did just that. Through a combination of in-house executive search and external advertising we drew from a list of 22 very strong, qualified and highly credible candidates.

David has extensive experience in construction across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. He was the construction director for Australia's New Parliament House. Until recently he was an adjunct professor in Construction Management at Western Sydney University. He was the founding industry engagement lead for the successful Centre for Smart Modern Construction. Mr Chandler has more than 40 years of industry experience and will be invaluable as we move to restore confidence in the building and construction industry.

We know that there are national challenges affecting the industry. However, the commissioner will play a key role in protecting New South Wales home owners and driving critical reforms. David will lead the implementation of our reforms to the building and construction industry, which will be tabled later this year. The legislation will deliver the bulk of the Government's commitment to respond to and implement the recommendations of the Shergold Weir Report that was commissioned by State and Territory building Ministers. Mr Chandler will also advise the Government on any additional reforms that may be needed to ensure better protections for home owners and purchasers and to lift building standards across New South Wales.

The Building Commissioner will oversee new laws that will require buildings to be designed and constructed to plans that fully comply with the Building Code of Australia. The laws will require that all building practitioners—including building designers, architects and engineers—be registered to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and insurance and can be held accountable for their actions. The laws will provide a new duty of care to make it easier for home owners to seek compensation for negligent buildings.

Consultation on the new laws closed on 24 July; the Government will introduce legislation to support the reforms in this session of Parliament. The Government has received over 120 submissions on the reforms. The submissions span all parts of the industry—from construction companies and industry associations to corporations and building professionals. I note that there was nothing from members on the other side of the Chamber. I have done a lot of research in this area and have been trying to find out whether members opposite support the implementation of the recommendations of Shergold and Weir; it appears not. However, they seem to be interested in the views of Michael Lambert, author of the Lambert report. I can advise the House that in recent days Mr Lambert made a submission to the just-closed consultation on our reforms. In it he states:

I note that of the 24 recommendations in the Shergold Weir report, which takes a national perspective, all but one are also addressed in my report which demonstrates a consistency of views between the two reports.

[Extension of time]

Mr Lambert goes on to say that he fully agrees with and supports the findings and recommendations of the Shergold Weir report. In its submission Local Government NSW [LGNSW] states:

A key plank of the NSW Government's reform announcements was the appointment of a building commissioner. This is welcomed by LGNSW...

The Property Council of Australia stated in its submission that the appointment:

...is a positive step to enforce and maintain best practice regulation and oversight of the building industry.

The Owners Corporation Network described the proposed establishment of a Building Commissioner as an appropriate first step. Meanwhile, the Master Plumbers Association of NSW perhaps best summed up what the appointment of a Building Commissioner will mean when it stated:

...he/she should also be seen to act as the promoter of professionalism and high standards within the industry.

On the back of the announcement we have also received positive feedback from Engineers Australia, which has welcomed the appointment of David Chandler. I am pleased to confirm that the Building Commissioner will be responsible for investigation and disciplinary action related to misconduct in the building industry. We welcome Mr Chandler to the role. I look forward to introducing legislation later this year with the Opposition's support. We have the best interests of New South Wales at heart. Mr Chandler is the right man for the right job. He is highly qualified, well credentialed and well connected. I congratulate him and thank him for taking up the role of the NSW Building Commissioner.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (15:19): My question is directed to the Premier. The drought is unprecedented, as is the crippling financial hardship on many small businesses in regional New South Wales. The current government focus of loans for future resilience measures does not address the cash drought for small business and agriculture. Across my electorate I hear desperate stories of business owners, see the empty shop fronts and witness the decline in livability that results from it. Once a small business closes there is a real fear it will never reopen. What is the Government doing to support small businesses in regional New South Wales as part of the drought response?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:20): I thank the member for Barwon for his question and I support his comments about the severity of the drought across western New South Wales, the Hunter and other parts of the State. I also acknowledge and appreciate the member's focus on businesses beyond the farm gate because we know that the depth and severity of the drought is making a huge impact on communities way beyond the farm gate. That is why I am pleased that our Government is part of the \$1.8 billion package for drought support in a myriad of ways such as feed, subsidies, grants and infrastructure upgrades. Recently the Government also announced \$170 million for a special purpose Drought Infrastructure Package, which supports infrastructure projects in specific communities to ensure economic stimulus to keep businesses going in the town and to provide incentives to businesses to move to those towns and generate employment.

I acknowledge that recently the Deputy Premier visited Barwon and invited the member for Barwon to make some announcements about the \$170 million fund. I will go through the ones specific to that community but I stress that what we announced in Barwon, we have replicated in many electorates across the State. Hand on heart, it does not matter to us who represents the electorate; we deliver the help where it is needed. Recently the

Deputy Premier, along with the member for Barwon, announced \$2.4 million for the Broken Hill airport to improve safety and bring the airport up to speed with current technology. Obviously, in this environment you want to make sure that freight, logistics and other industries are ongoing.

The Government has allocated \$4.4 million for the Cobar Industrial Subdivision Project. That is critical because we know that business parks or intermodals in regional communities make a huge difference. Supporting a community such as Cobar by identifying a centralised industrial area ensures that businesses get every opportunity to either relocate or start up there. Additionally, in the Barwon electorate alone, the Government has allocated \$3.9 million for another important project—the inland rail industrial precinct in Gilgandra. There is a theme: The freight and logistics industry has to be stimulated during the drought more than ever. It is not only a stimulus for job creation but it also incentivises companies to set up or increase their footprint in those regional communities.

The Government has also allocated \$2.2 million to improve bore water supply in Coonabarabran. As members would know, the former Minister for Regional Water and I visited Coonabarabran—the Deputy Premier and I visited other communities—and witnessed the 11 or 12 bores. I learnt more about bores and pump stations than I have in my life but the observations were insightful. In addition, the Government has announced \$439,000 for the redevelopment of the Coonamble Riverside Caravan Park. It excites and interests me to entice people to visit our regional communities rather than have a holiday interstate or overseas; I know this is the focus for the Deputy Premier and the relevant Ministers, too.

The opportunities to enjoy the beauty of our regions are huge. Improved caravan facilities attract grey nomads and other tourists to those communities to enjoy the unique natural environment of western New South Wales. We have also allocated \$1 million to transform the Girilambone railway station into a railway heritage museum to support the Indigenous art gallery there and our tourism industry. As part of our \$1.8 billion package we have specific dollars allocated to stimulating jobs, stimulating economic activity and supporting business. There are two additional things I will note. First, that we are supporting payroll tax relief to small business—something those opposite opposed. We opposed their tax on farm vehicles because that would have had an increased impact on the drought. I commend the member for Barwon not only for raising this issue in this place but also for acknowledging that the drought is something beyond the control of anybody. I thought the Leader of the Opposition had made a mistake when she blamed The Nationals for the drought but she has actually repeated those comments a couple of times this week. At first blush—

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: The Natural Resources Commission has said that this Government brought the drought on three years early—

The SPEAKER: What is the member's point of order? The Premier will continue.

Ms Kate Washington: The Premier should be apologising to the member for Barwon and his constituents.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the second time. The Premier has a few seconds to conclude her answer.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I thank the member for Barwon for allowing me to speak on these matters; the drought and drought support should be beyond politics.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (15:26): I address my question to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Government is delivering jobs and infrastructure for the State, and are there any alternatives?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (15:26): It has been a big week for the new Leader of the Opposition. I am a casual observer of how new leaders go. I remember when the member for Maroubra first started he was a bit nervous in his first week, but solid. The member for Strathfield though has been a bit shaky, if not jumpy—"Jumpy Jodi". Leadership is all about teamwork. The problem for the Leader of the Opposition is that whilst there is no "I" in "team" there is a big "I" in "Jodi".

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 73. If the Treasurer wants to make—

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. The Clerk will stop the clock. I make two points. The comments I have made over the past few days in relation to Standing Order 73 will be followed up by a formal ruling next week clarifying Standing Order 73 and its interpretation. On this occasion there was no point of order under

Standing Order 73. It being the last question today I will show some latitude, but that will not extend to allowing breaches of Standing Order 73.

Ms Kate Washington: That was a clear personal reflection on the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: Please do not argue with me. I am happy to clarify my interpretation of Standing Order 73 next week. That was not a breach of Standing Order 73. I am sure the Treasurer will be mindful of that.

Ms Yasmin Catley: To the point of order: When the Speaker said a few weeks ago about members having a bit more flexibility in the last question—

The SPEAKER: That flexibility does not extend to Standing Order 73.

Ms Yasmin Catley: —we only agreed if it was Robbo because he is the only person on that side with a good sense of humour. Our position on this stands.

The SPEAKER: I clarify that the latitude that is shown does not extend to a breach of Standing Order 73, and it will not.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 75. The Treasurer clearly did not call the member by the correct title.

The SPEAKER: I remind the Treasurer of Standing Order 75 before he resumes his answer. I ask all members to let the Treasurer continue. He is not even one minute into his response.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I really look forward to that ruling next week. We need some clarification, and I am sure it will make a lot of sense. There is no doubt that the New South Wales Government is transforming every single corner of the State. Our building pipeline is the envy of the nation, with \$93 billion committed over the next four years. According to the NSW Treasury—the best Treasury in not only the country but also the world—New South Wales has the largest infrastructure program in Australia. It is larger than the programs of Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory combined. We are better than everyone. I am going to talk about education today because we are not just building new schools; we are investing significantly in existing schools. As the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces—and the former Minister for Education—knows well, during the election we announced the maintenance backlog to zero.

To get an understanding of the magnitude of that investment I spoke to the Department of Education, which is my favourite department after Treasury—it was planning; it is now education. The department told me that this year the Government will use 275,000 litres of paint to give our schools a fresh coat. That is enough paint to cover nine Sydney Harbour Bridges. On top of that, more than one million square metres of roofing will be replaced, which is enough to cover 186 Bunnings Warehouses. There is a paving boom. If all the pavers were laid next to each other, one by one, they would go from Macquarie Street past Epping past Castle Hill past Hawkesbury past Bathurst and all the way to Orange.

How good is education under the Coalition? These projects are not only producing great end outcomes, but also driving business. More people are being employed right across the State. Another organisation doing a great job is the Independent Commission Against Corruption. Yesterday the ICAC launched a public hearing—another investigation—into the New South Wales Labor Party. It ends up being an annual event. I was reading *The Sydney Morning Herald*—

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Treasurer is not being remotely relevant to the question he was asked.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will continue his answer.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The ICAC is clearly doing a great job. It might need further funding if this goes on for a while. It is investigating former Labor secretary Jamie Clements and former MLC Ernest Wong.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr Ryan Park: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Mr Speaker, I would like you to make a ruling next week on your interpretation of "related matters". The Minister's answer has absolutely nothing to do with the question asked. If "related matters" includes anything, then the standards that you are endeavouring to uphold in this place—and which the Premier promised would be delivered—mean nothing.

The SPEAKER: I note that the member for Wollondilly is seeking an extension of time. I will take the point about "and related matters" on notice and provide the House with some guidance within a reasonable time

frame. Acceptance of "and related matters" has been a habit of the House for some years. In relation to the question of the Minister's relevance, I have made it clear that the standing orders require only general relevance. The Treasurer has been generally relevant. I have also indicated that, in terms of relevance, I am happy to show greater latitude for the last question on a Thursday. I have made clear that that latitude does not extend to breaching Standing Order 73—which is important—but Standing Order 73 has not been breached. The extension of time is granted. The Minister will continue his answer.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Last year *The Daily Telegraph* wrote about this press conference that was held downstairs. There we have Ernest Wong—

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: It is a legitimate point of order in relation to the use of a prop, which is disorderly. There are a number of precedents to that effect.

The SPEAKER: If the prop is put away now, it is not disorderly. If it continues to be used, then it is disorderly.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We saw who was there. There was the member for Maroubra—
[A Government member interjected.]

I will table it.

Ms Jodie Harrison: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Ms Jodie Harrison: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129—relevance. The question was "How is the Government delivering infrastructure and jobs in this State, and are there any other alternatives?"—which means other alternatives to providing infrastructure and jobs in this State. There were no "related matters" in the question; it was about alternatives to infrastructure and jobs. Furthermore, remember Spicer?

The SPEAKER: The gratuitous addition to the point of order did not help the member's cause. On the matter of relevance, the member for Keira raised related matters. In the same vein, the addition "and are there any alternatives?" is a similar point that I will also cover in my ruling. Even with the latitude extended to the Treasurer, I ask him to make his answer more relevant to the question.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am trying, but those opposite are the alternative—and not a very good one. What does it say at the top there? It is the Parliamentary Friends of the ICAC. That was the launch.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: The Treasurer is flouting your ruling regarding the use of props.

The SPEAKER: I have directed the Treasurer to not use the prop further.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: A picture tells a thousand words. The member for Maroubra has been a bit chirpy this week. What did he say at the time? He said, "Ernest Wong is an outstanding member. We need to work together to make sure he has a prominent role in public life." Clearly, that is exactly what he has delivered—from Opposition—because we will see his public life for the rest of the year. I thank the member for Maroubra for his service; we appreciate it. So we have the former member. We have the member for Kogarah, with his connections to Jamie Clements. We have the member for Strathfield, with her connections to Kaila Murnain. It is Team ICAC: the past leader, the present leader and the future leader all tied up.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: It relates to Standing Order 73. If the Treasurer is going to attack people, he must do so by way of substantive motion so that we can have a proper debate.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer's time has expired. He has completed his answer.

Committees

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (PAC)

Reports

Mr GREG PIPER: As Chair: I table the report of the Public Accounts Committee entitled *History of the Public Accounts Committee: 1902 - 2018*, Report 1/57, dated August 2019. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

*Sessional Orders***SESSIONAL ORDERS**

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (15:39): By leave:
I move:

That this House:

- (1) Agrees to the proposed amendments to the sessional orders as follows –

BELLS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 35 shall read as follows:

- 35.** The timing for bells is as follows:

Tuesdays

Bells are rung at 11.45 a.m. for 20 seconds and at 11.58 a.m. for 60 seconds.

Wednesdays

Bells are rung at 9.15 a.m. for 20 seconds and at 9.28 a.m. for 60 seconds.

Thursdays

Bells are rung at 9.15 a.m. for 20 seconds and at 9.28 a.m. for 60 seconds.

After lunch

Bells are rung at 2.00 p.m. for 20 seconds and at 2.13 p.m. for 60 seconds.

Division

One continuous bell for four minutes, after which the doors are locked.

Quorum

One long continuous bell (for up to four minutes until a quorum is present in the Chamber).

House adjournment

Two short bells.

One long bell

A continuous bell rung at the discretion of the Chair.

RESTRICTION ON QUORUM CALLS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 45 shall read as follows:

- 45.** Members shall not be permitted to call attention to the want of a quorum:
- (1) During Private Members' Statements or Community Recognition Statements;
 - (2) During the Debate on a Petition signed by 10,000 or more persons;
 - (3) During the take note debate on reports from committees; or
 - (4) Before 10.00 a.m. on any sitting day.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 46 shall read as follows:

- 46.** Unless otherwise ordered, the House shall be adjourned without motion moved at the conclusion of Community Recognition Statements.

SPEAKER HAS DISCRETION TO PAUSE THE TIMING CLOCK

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, the following Sessional Order be adopted:

- 49A.** The Speaker has discretion at any time to pause the timing clock to maintain order in the House.

MAXIMUM TIME LIMITS FOR DEBATES AND SPEECHES

- 85.** That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, the following maximum time limits shall apply for debates and speeches:

Address in Reply (SO 5)

Premier	-unspecified
Leader of the Opposition	-unspecified
Mover	-15 minutes†
Any other Member	-15 minutes†
Reply	-15 minutes†

Bills (SO 188-239)Second Reading:

- (i) **Introduced by a Minister**

	Mover	-unspecified
	Leader of the Opposition or one Member deputed, next speaking	-unspecified
	Any other Member	-10 minutes†
	Reply	-unspecified
(ii)	Appropriation Bill	
	Mover	-unspecified
	Party Leaders	-unspecified
	Any other Member	-15 minutes†
	Reply	-unspecified
(iii)	Introduced by a Private Member	
	Mover	-unspecified
	Premier or one Minister deputed	-unspecified
	Leader of the Opposition or one Member deputed	-unspecified
	Any other Member	-10 minutes†
	Reply	-unspecified
Consideration in detail of bill or other matter (SO 240-242)		
	Minister	-unspecified number of periods limited to 15 minutes each
	Leader of the Opposition or one Member deputed	-unspecified number of periods limited to 15 minutes each
	Any other Member	-three periods each on any one question not exceeding 5 minutes each.

Bill be now read a third time after consideration in detail (SO 217)

All Members	-10 minutes†
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Committees, reports from – take note debate (SO 306)

Chair or Member tabling the Report	-6 minutes
Any other Member	-4 minutes

(Question being put after 22 minutes)

Community Recognition Statements (SO 108A)

Member making statement	-1 minute each.
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Days and times of meeting (SO 34)

Mover	-5 minutes
Three other Members	-5 minutes
Reply	-5 minutes

Public Interest Debate (SO 109)

Mover	-7 minutes
Six other Members	-5 minutes
Reply	-3 minutes

Debates not otherwise provided for

All Members	-20 minutes*
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Expulsion of a Member (SO 254)

Mover	-30 minutes*
Member next speaking	-30 minutes*
Any other Member	-20 minutes*
Member in response	-20 minutes*
Reply	-20 minutes*

General Business notices of motions or orders of the day (not for bills) (SO 107)

In each debate:

Mover	- 7 minutes
Member next speaking	- 7 minutes
Four Members	- 4 minutes each
Reply	- 4 minutes

Inaugural Speech or Valedictory Speech (SO 63)

Member making inaugural speech or valedictory speech	-20 minutes
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No confidence in the Government (SO 111)

Mover	-unspecified
Party Leader	-unspecified
Any other Member	-30 minutes
Premier in response	-45 minutes
Reply	-45 minutes

No confidence in a Minister (SO 112)

Mover	-unspecified
Minister named	-unspecified
Any other Member	-20 minutes
Response by Minister	-30 Minutes
Reply	-30 minutes

No confidence in Speaker (SO 113)

Mover	-unspecified
Member leading debate in opposition to the motion	-unspecified
Any other Member	-20 minutes
Response by Member leading debate in opposition to the motion	-30 minutes
Mover in reply	-30 minutes

Censure of Member (SO 114)

Mover	-15 minutes
Member named	-15 minutes
Four other Members	-5 minutes
Response by Member	-10 minutes
Mover in reply	-10 minutes

Censure of Speaker (SO 115)

Mover	-15 minutes
Member leading debate in opposition to the motion	-15 minutes
Four other Members	-10 minutes
Response by Member leading debate in opposition to the motion	-10 minutes
Mover in reply	-10 minutes

Papers, printing of (SO 266)

All Members, including reply	-3 minutes
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(The Speaker may call the Minister in reply if debate exceeds 30 minutes)

Petitions signed by 10,000 or more persons (SO 125A)

First Speaker	-5 minutes
Four other Members	-5 minutes each
Minister in reply	-3 minutes
First speaker in reply	-2 minutes
Total	-30 minutes

Press, accommodation (SO 263)

All Members	-10 minutes
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(The Speaker shall be entitled to put the question after 30 minutes of debate)

Private Members' Statements (SO 108)

Member making statement	-5 minutes
Replies by Ministers	-1 minute

Privilege/Contempt (suddenly arising in House) (SO 91)

The Member may speak for 10 minutes to establish a prima facie case

Proceedings after consideration in detail

All Members	-20 minutes*
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Re-ordering General Business (SO 106)

Member in charge of the bill	-3 minutes
One other Member	-3 minutes

Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Assistant Speaker, election of (SO 10, 13, 14)

All Members	-10 minutes
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Speaker's ruling, dissent (SO 95)

All Members, including reply -10 minutes

(The Speaker may call on Member to reply if debate exceeds 30 minutes)

Statutory Rules, disallowance (SO 116)

All Members, including reply -10 minutes

(The Speaker may call on Member to reply if debate exceeds 30 minutes)

Suspension of Standing Orders (SO 365)

Mover -5 minutes

One other Member -5 minutes

Reply -5 minutes

* A Member may request and the Speaker shall put, without debate or amendment, a question that the Member be allowed to continue that speech for a further period of up to 10 minutes.

† A Member may request and the Speaker shall put, without debate or amendment, a question that the Member be allowed to continue that speech for a further period of up to 5 minutes.

CLOSURE

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 86 shall read as follows:

86. A motion may be made by any Member, "That the question be now put". Such motion:

- (1) May be moved whilst another Member is addressing the House;
- (2) Shall be put forthwith and decided without amendment or debate;
- (3) Must be carried by at least 30 Members in the affirmative; and
- (4) May not be moved before 10.00 a.m. on any day when the House meets at an earlier time.

ROUTINE OF BUSINESS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 97 shall read as follows:

97. The House shall conduct its business in the following routine:

Tuesdays

1. At 12.00 noon the Speaker takes the Chair
2. Giving of General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices), up to 15 minutes
3. Government Business up to 1.15 p.m., then the Speaker leaves the Chair
4. At 2.15 p.m. the Speaker resumes the Chair
5. Ministerial Statements
6. Giving of Notices of Motions (Government Business, Bills, Business with Precedence under Standing Order 118)
7. Question Time
8. Ministerial Statements
9. Papers
10. Committees – Tabling of reports and announcements
11. Petitions
12. Placing or Disposal of Business
13. Business with Precedence under Standing Order 118, if any
14. Government Business (if completed, proceed to Private Members' Statements)
15. At 5.00 p.m., Public Interest Debate
16. Government Business (if required)
17. Private Members' Statements
18. Community Recognition Statements for up to 30 minutes after which the House shall adjourn without motion until the next sitting day.

Wednesdays

1. At 9.30 a.m. the Speaker takes the Chair
2. Giving of General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) up to 15 minutes
3. Government Business
4. At 12.45 p.m., Committee Reports – Take note debates, for up to 30 minutes, then the Speaker leaves the Chair

5. At 2.15 p.m. the Speaker resumes the Chair
6. Ministerial Statements
7. Giving of Notices of Motions (Government Business, Bills, Business with Precedence under Standing Order 118)
8. Question Time
9. Ministerial Statements
10. Papers
11. Committees – Tabling of reports and announcements
12. Petitions
13. Placing or Disposal of Business
14. Reordering of General Business Orders of the Day (for bills)
15. Business with Precedence under Standing Order 118, if any
16. Government Business (if completed, proceed to Private Members' Statements)
17. At 5.00 p.m., Public Interest Debate
18. Government Business (if required)
19. Private Members' Statements
20. Community Recognition Statements for up to 30 minutes after which the House shall adjourn without motion until the next sitting day.

Thursdays

1. At 9.30 a.m. the Speaker takes the Chair
2. Giving of General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) for up to 15 minutes
3. Government Business for up to 30 minutes
4. General Business Notices of Motions for Bills for up to 20 minutes
5. General Business Orders of the Day for Bills for up to 90 minutes
6. General Business Notices of Motions or Orders of the Day (not being Bills), up to 1.15 p.m.
7. At 2.15 p.m. the Speaker resumes the Chair
8. Ministerial Statements
9. Giving of Notices of Motions (Government Business, Bills, Business with Precedence under Standing Order 118)
10. Question Time
11. Ministerial Statements
12. Papers
13. Committees – Tabling of reports and announcements
14. Petitions
15. Placing or Disposal of Business
16. Business with Precedence under Standing Order 118, if any
17. Private Members' Statements
18. At 4.00 p.m., Petition Debate
19. Private Members' Statements
20. Community Recognition Statements for up to 30 minutes after which the House shall adjourn without motion until the next sitting day.

FRIDAY SITTINGS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 98 shall be suspended.

ESTABLISHING THE PROGRAM FOR GENERAL BUSINESS DAYS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 101 shall read as follows:

- 101.** The procedure for establishing the program for General Business Days is as follows:
- (1) On Wednesdays, Members shall advise the Clerk in writing by 12.00 noon which General Business Notices of Motions for Bills, Orders of the Day for Bills, or Notices of Motions (not for Bills) standing in their name on the Business Paper are to be postponed. Party Whips may also advise the Clerk in writing of which items of General Business standing in the name of Members of their party are to be postponed.

- (2) The first ten notices on the Business Paper, not advised to be postponed by 12.00 noon on the day preceding a General Business Day, will be deemed to be proceeding. Any General Business Order of the Day for Bills re-ordered by the House to have precedence in accordance with Standing Orders 97 and 106 will retain such precedence.
- (3) On any day when General Business is being considered by the House, a Member may, without debate:
 - (a) withdraw or postpone any notice of motion standing in their name on the Business Paper for that day.
 - (b) postpone, or on motion, discharge an Order of the Day standing in their name on the Business Paper for that day.
 - (c) discharge an Order of the Day for a Bill on motion without debate or amendment, "That the Order of the Day be discharged and the Bill withdrawn".

PRECEDENCE AND LAPSING OF GENERAL BUSINESS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 105 shall read as follows:

105.

- (1) General Business Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day shall retain their relative places on the Business Paper and be considered in the order in which they are given or set down.
- (2) General Business interrupted by the operation of the Routine of Business shall stand adjourned and be set down as an order of the day for tomorrow with precedence of all other notices and orders, except any General Business Order of the Day or Notice of Motion accorded precedence for that day in accordance with Standing Order 106.
- (3) General Business Notices of Motions (for bills) and Orders of the Day (for bills) not commenced or completed 6 months from the date given shall lapse.
- (4) General Business Notices of Motions (not being bills) and Orders of the Day (not being bills) that have not commenced or completed 3 months from the date given shall lapse.

RE-ORDERING GENERAL BUSINESS ORDERS OF THE DAY (FOR BILLS)

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 106 shall read as follows:

106. At the re-ordering of General Business Orders of the Day (for Bills) in the Routine of Business:

- (1) Any two Private Members may move to re-order an order of the day for a bill of which they have carriage, to give precedence to the resumption of the debate over other orders of the day listed for the following sitting day.
- (2) The carrying of one motion in (1) above prevents another Member moving a subsequent motion.
- (3) On a motion for re-ordering, the Member in charge of the bill shall be permitted to make a statement of up to 3 minutes and one other Member may reply for up to 3 minutes.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION STATEMENTS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, the following Sessional Order be adopted:

108A. The procedure for Community Recognition Statements is as follows:

- (1) Community Recognition Statements must not contain:
 - (a) Matters of policy;
 - (b) Requests for the Government or the House, or another body to take some form of action or not; or
 - (c) Criticisms or negative reflections on any person, including Members, Office Holders, the Government, the Opposition or a third party.

Written Statements

- (2) Each member can make one written Community Recognition Statement each sitting day.
- (3) Statements must be lodged electronically with the Table Office by 12.00 noon on a sitting day for publication in Hansard that day.
- (4) Written statements must not exceed 200 words.
- (5) A statement not conforming with the rules or with the practice of the House can:
 - (a) Under the authority of the Speaker, be amended by the Clerk.
 - (b) Be ordered by the Speaker not to be included in Hansard.

Statements given in the House

- (6) In accordance with the Routine of Business, the Speaker will ask if there are any Community Recognition Statements.

- (7) Members may make Community Recognition Statements for up to 1 minute each, for a total of 30 minutes.
- (8) Members may not give consecutive Community Recognition Statements.
- (9) Community Recognition Statements may be taken between items of business with the leave of the House for a specified period or a specified number of Members or until certain business is to be conducted as notified by the Minister in charge of the House at that time.

PUBLIC INTEREST DEBATES

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 109 shall read as follows:

109. The procedure for the consideration of Public Interest Debates shall be as follows:

- (1) The notice of motion for debate must be submitted to the Speaker by 12.00 noon on the day of the debate.
- (2) The motion will be submitted by:
 - (a) Government – sitting day Tuesdays
 - (b) Opposition – first and second sitting day Wednesdays
 - (c) Cross bench – third sitting day Wednesdays
- (3) The Speaker will determine whether the notice is in order.
- (4) By 1.45 p.m., the Speaker will publish the notice of motion.
- (5) The Speaker will announce the subject matter of the notice of motion in the House prior to Question Time.
- (6) The following time limits shall apply to the debate:

Mover	–7 minutes
6 other members	–5 minutes
Reply	–3 minutes
Total	–40 minutes
- (7) At least one member speaking in the debate must be from the cross bench.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 110 shall be suspended.

DEBATE ON PETITIONS SIGNED BY 10,000 OR MORE PERSONS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, the following Sessional Order be adopted:

125A.

- (1) The subject of every petition received by the House and certified by a Member and announced by the Speaker as having been signed by 10,000 or more persons, shall be automatically set down as an Order of the Day "That the House take note of the petition".
- (2) The Order of the Day shall take place at 4.00 p.m. on the Thursday of the next sitting week.
- (3) Any further petitions received before the first Order of the Day is disposed of shall be set down on succeeding Thursdays in the order in which they are presented.
- (4) The following time limits shall apply:

First speaker	–5 minutes
Four other Members	–5 minutes
Response by Minister	–3 minutes
First speaker in reply	–2 minutes
Total	–30 minutes
- (5) If a Member does not seek the call when the Order of the Day is called on, the Order of the Day will lapse.

QUESTION TIME

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 131 shall read as follows:

131. The procedure for Question Time is as follows:

- (1) Questions are asked orally and may be read and are subject to the same rules as written questions but shall not be recorded in the Questions and Answers Paper.
- (2) An answer to a question must not exceed five minutes.
- (3) At the conclusion of the Minister's answer to a question, the member who asked the question may, at the discretion of the Speaker, seek additional information from the Minister. The Minister's response on the additional information must not exceed two minutes.
- (4) No question shall be asked after 45 minutes from the Speaker calling on questions or the answering of 10 questions whichever is the longer.
- (5) One supplementary question per Question Time may be asked immediately by the Member asking the original question. The answer shall count as one of the 10 answers.

- (6) The Leader of the Opposition is entitled to be called first by the Speaker at the commencement of Question Time.
- (7) Ministers seeking to provide additional information to questions already answered at the current or a previous sitting shall do so at the conclusion of Question Time.

NOTICES OF MOTION

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 133 shall read as follows:

133.

- (1) A notice of motion for:
 - (a) A bill;
 - (b) Government Business;
 - (c) No confidence in the Government, Minister or Speaker, or censure of Member or Speaker;
 - (d) Business with precedence (SO 118) with the exception of motions of condolence and the printing of papers; and must be given verbally at the time prescribed in the Routine of Business.
- (2) General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices):
 - (a) May only be given when called for at the time prescribed in the Routine of Business each day;
 - (b) The period for giving General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) is limited to a maximum of 15 minutes. The Speaker has discretion to allow the giving of notices to exceed this 15 minutes period.

RESTRICTIONS ON DIVISIONS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 187 shall read as follows:

- 187. The House shall not conduct a division on any question before 10.00 a.m. on days when the House meets at an earlier time, during Private Members' Statements, Community Recognition Statements, or the debate on a petition signed by 10,000 or more persons. If a division is called prior to 10.00 a.m. on such days, the division shall be deferred and conducted at 10.00 a.m. and any business then before the House shall be interrupted and recommenced after the division(s).

COMMITTEE REPORTS, TABLING IN THE HOUSE AND DEBATE

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 306 shall read as follows:

306.

- (1) The report and associated documents of any committee (not being a legislation committee or the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee) shall be presented at the time provided in the Routine of Business, or at any other time with the leave of the House.
- (2) The Member presenting the report may move **"That the document be printed"**. This question shall be decided without debate or amendment.
- (3) Reports from committees (not being reports of the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee) shall stand in the order in which they are presented (or reported by the Clerk when received during an adjournment) as Orders of the Day **"That the House take note of the Report"**.
- (4) Such Orders of the Day may be considered at the time allocated in the Routine of Business on Wednesday for a period of up to 30 minutes. Any interrupted item of business shall stand as an Order of the Day for tomorrow.
- (5) Debate on an Order of the Day may be adjourned and the resumption of the debate set down as an Order of the Day for tomorrow.
- (6) When the Order of the Day is called on and not proceeded with, consideration of the report shall be postponed until the next Wednesday sitting when reports are considered. If the Order of the Day is called on at that subsequent sitting and is not proceeded with, the question shall be put.
- (7) If a committee has more than one report on the Business Paper, the Chair or Member who tabled the report may move a motion without notice, amendment or debate to facilitate the consideration of two or more of the committee's reports together.
- (8) The Member tabling the report may speak for up to 6 minutes and any other Member may speak for up to 4 minutes to the question **"That the House take note of the Report"** with the question being put after 22 minutes. No reply is permitted.
- (2) Agrees to the proposed changes to the sessional orders coming into force on and from 6 August 2019.

Members know that over recent months the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee has met. The committee has been working incredibly well in a bipartisan way. The member for Lake Macquarie represented the crossbench. Members opposite were adequately represented by the member for Liverpool and the member for Maroubra—who has had a busy day today. Of course, Government representatives were also on it, including the member for Oatley.

The committee worked to a couple of principles. First, the committee wanted to start a staged process to modernise parliamentary procedure; and, secondly, make some stage one changes, which I have moved in the House this afternoon. The changes should go through. The extracts of the minutes of the committee meetings, which can be found behind the report, reflect a reasonably harmonious, bipartisan approach to all the changes. In fact, the committee reached consensus on a raft of issues, in particular on bringing together matters accorded priority, matters of public importance and the reordering of general business to end up with a public interest debate of the day. All committee members agreed to it; however, there is no minute reflecting that.

A good outcome was achieved for members opposite. I do not like to give things away, but it is important on occasion. The committee decided that the public interest debate would result in two debates every week, one on a Tuesday and the other on a Wednesday. The great thing for members opposite is that Labor will have two weeks and the crossbench will have the third week in public interest debates. Everyone agrees—I can point to the minutes where there was no real objection to this. The Government played fair. The Labor Party had no leader, no shadow leader of the House and no Whip. The committee was established and I did not ram through changes on members opposite when I could have played the game—

Ms Anna Watson: I was there. Where was I? We had a Whip!

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: —when the member opposite did not even have the decency to turn up to the next session of Parliament. I am the Leader of the House and we do the right thing. So what happens? This afternoon the Labor Party has issued a press release about "crushing scrutiny" in the Parliament. It said that the Liberal Party and The Nationals are seeking to abolish three debates that are central to parliamentary accountability in the public interest, including motions accorded priority and matters of public importance.

When the committee met there was no motion moved by members opposite in relation to fighting the public interest debate. The only issue that came up was that members opposite did not like the timing of that at 5.00 p.m.; that is it. That is what I suspect they are about to say here. Do not come into this place, issuing press releases. I know that the member for Maroubra is pulling the strings behind the scenes, telling people what to do and playing the game, but the reality that is the reforms are part of the first stage in modernising the Parliament. I think all members would agree that we want to see more debate in the House. That is what we are doing by sharing the ability for the crossbench, the Opposition and the Government to undertake public interest debates. It makes sense.

The Government has also accommodated even more time for consideration of private members' bills. It is trying to allow more time for debate. Those opposite are being allocated more time on Thursdays for debate on private members' bills. They know that this whole notion that a motion accorded priority is some sort of marquee event of the day is rubbish. I ask Opposition members to be fair dinkum. There has been a good committee process. I urge the Opposition to show restraint in its press releases so that they reflect what has gone on.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (15:44): I start by acknowledging the Speaker's work. Opposition members have noticed a significant change in this place. Those who visit this place and those who observe Parliament would have noticed that difference. I also acknowledge two of my colleagues, the member for Liverpool and the member for Maroubra, who worked in a spirit of cooperation with respect to changes to the sessional and standing orders. But let me be clear: The minutes of those meetings did not reflect that the debates would be at a time when there would be no chance of getting the issues raised by the men and women on this side of the House aired in a public forum.

Those of us who have been around this place long enough know that when a matter is pushed back to half past four or five o'clock, the chance of it being recorded by media outlets and examined by those watching the nightly news is very limited. Some may think that this is some kind of joke, but it is not. We represent electorates and the men and women in our communities have every right to have issues raised, examined and dealt with in this place at an appropriate time and not put off until the end of the day.

I understand that there has been an increase in the amount of time allocated to Government business. I could understand it better if the Government had reforms or other work to do. I am concerned that hours and hours will be spent filibustering—members will be trying to fill in parts of the day—and debates that the Opposition wants to participate in will be pushed back to later in the day. The member for Maroubra, in partnership with the member for Liverpool, has been working with the member for Bega, the Leader of the House. I flag that the member for Maroubra will be moving an amendment.

I make it clear that if these changes are adopted the Opposition will have no choice but to bring forward more censure motions to make sure that the issues that are raised by the men and women of our electorates are heard at an appropriate time and place, and given priority in the oldest Parliament in this country. I do not think that is unreasonable. I acknowledge the Speaker's work. I acknowledge that committee members tried, where

possible, to work together, but this is a significant issue for members of the Opposition. It is an important issue. We ask that the House consider it.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (15:48): I feel compelled to contribute to this debate. Generally, I support the recommendations. I acknowledge everyone who sat around the committee table during a substantial number of meetings. I am not sure how many meetings there were, but many of us made a significant effort to get to those meetings or to participate by phone. It was a fairly courageous attempt to reform the way this Chamber operates and to improve the quality of debate in whatever way we can. There is no doubt that this House will continue to have robust debates. We can build in a whole host of mechanisms to try to soften the robustness of debate and to take out what some might call the nastier vitriol—as mentioned in Standing Order 73—but these are well-intentioned reforms. I acknowledge the Leader of the House. I have had a good working relationship with him throughout this process. I believe that the House will benefit from these reforms.

While I have not had the opportunity to confirm every point with every member of the crossbench, I can assure them that their interests have been well served not just by my participation, but also by the intentions of the Government and the Opposition, who have given proper consideration to them. One issue I take the Government to task on—and I know the Leader of the House understands that I support the Opposition on this one measure although not on everything in the press release of the member for Keira—is the public interest debate. Although it was unspoken, it seemed clear that the public interest debate would replace the matter accorded priority [MAP] and therefore would fit into that spot sequentially—what I think we all would have considered to be the appropriate time. I cannot understand why it is being relegated to the 5.00 p.m. position, but I can understand why the Opposition would have some difficulty with that and feel somewhat betrayed on that point.

I am not quite sure how this will play out, but I would support an amendment that moves the public interest debate back into the sequential order so that it follows on in lieu of the MAP and at a similar time. Overall, however, when that is defeated, let's move on, because this will be very substantial reform for this Parliament. It is not about taking away the robust debate people would expect. It is not about hiding from public scrutiny. I believe it was very well intended. The contributions from the Government, the Opposition and the Independents were given very good consideration overall. This one surprises and disappoints me, and I will support the Opposition in relation to it.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (15:52): I understand it is Thursday afternoon so I will be as brief as I can be. First, though, I thank you, Mr Speaker, for raising the tone of the House and for doing what you said you would do on day one, and that is to see that the business of the House is transacted on a more orderly and civilised basis. You have achieved that. We came together in this committee shortly after the election in May. What members have heard today is correct: It was a multi-partisan committee. Goodwill has proceeded at every turn until late yesterday afternoon.

We came up with a list of possible amendments to the standing and sessional orders of this place to make it run better in a number of respects. We argued them down to a shorter list. The key to the list of amendments before the House today is this: On each and every occasion where someone on the committee, regardless of their political colour or lack of political colour, wanted a change they had to justify it through argument. We went through each of those justifications in goodwill and came to the list that has been put before members today.

I have been fighting a battle since I came into this place—sometimes I feel like I am almost a lone voice—to elevate the conduct of this place to that which appears in other great Chambers around the world. If you watch the House of Commons, one of the hallmarks of the House of Commons is that there is a debate at several times of the day that bounces around the Chamber. Members have no notes; they are not permitted notes. It is a terrific thing to watch. I have been hoping that in my time in this place we would work towards that.

The changes embodied in the reforms before the House today go some way to starting that process. The Leader of the House has acknowledged this is step one of what might go on for the four years of the term, because things change. I have always thought of each of us that we are not merely politicians: When we are in here we are members of Parliament and that means something. In my first speech to the House in 2005 I said that the greatest privilege that a citizen could bestow upon another citizen is to have them speak in this place and make laws on their behalf.

When members of the Executive make changes to our standing orders—that is we, the members, when they make changes to our standing orders—if you do not examine them correctly and with a degree of goodwill and scepticism you find that what is happening today is the same as what has happened in this place for 25 years under successive governments. We have been disrespected and our privileges and rights have been eroded. There is no greater privilege than to stand in this place and talk on behalf of your citizens. I have sat here for a long time under both governments and I have watched speaking times erode and debates disappear. We had hoped,

Mr Speaker, that under your leadership things would change and you have discharged your responsibilities. I thank you for that.

However, what has happened to the public interest debate? As the member for Lake Macquarie said, overwhelmingly we support all of the changes to be made today, but there is a big difference to what we have in this place as Opposition members and what Opposition members have in the Commonwealth Parliament, which is a mechanism available to them once a day that enables them to call a suspension of standing orders to bring on a debate. We do not have that. The debates that we hold in our special status as Opposition members—and it is a special status because we are the alternative government—are very valuable tools to hold the Executive to account as members of the Parliament. We will not let go of them lightly.

There are typically three debates a day: The matter of public importance, the motion accorded priority and the reordering, which I note has snuck into use in the past 12 to 18 months. They are the three opportunities to bring on a substantial debate where the Opposition and the crossbench can examine the Executive. We agreed to fold them into one public interest debate. The Leader of the House scoffs at me when I say it should be the marquee debate of the day, the seminal debate of the day, where the best speakers line up to debate important matters so that you can enjoy watching the skills of members of Parliament. A special proviso is that the debate happen at a relevant time of day. It was supposed to replace the motions that were debated straight after question time when we are all in the Chamber, when there are people in the gallery, when the media cycle has not closed for the night and when people at home might be watching online; that does not happen at five o'clock.

The sole exception to this amendment that stands out in stark contrast to the litany of others discussed in the committee is that the Leader of the House, who has moved this motion at the direction of or with the acquiescence of the Premier, has not been able to justify it. He shrugged his shoulders and said, "You can object, we don't care. Get over it. We put it to a vote in the committee, we did not want to do that, but we had to put it on the record". As we debate this the Leader of the House has provided no justification to any of the members or to the Opposition as to why it should be put back until the end of the day. The Opposition Leader of the House is correct: It will be put back until the end of Government business. Let us call this for what it is, the legislative ambitions of this Government since the March election are in sleepwalking mode.

We will have hours and hours of budget take-note debates. It will be like the return of *The Walking Dead*. The zombies will trundle down to the Chamber to stun us for 20 minutes of budget take-note debates, which we will have to sit here and suffer through until the House is put to sleep or everyone has gone to catch a bus to go home or to pick up children. Then the House will bring on what should be a debate that this Parliament could be proud of—a heartfelt debate on the most important issue of the day. Alas, that will not occur because the Executive has interfered with the rights of members. I ask the Clerk for a copy of the motion.

Mr Alister Henskens: We all remember your effort in the leaders' debate.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: You'll never have to worry about that. I move an amendment to the motion as follows:

That the motion be amended by adding "with the exception of the Public Interest Debate, which should take place immediately before Business with Precedence."

Mr Andrew Constance: Could you put it in writing and hand it up? You have to do that.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Do you want me to speak slowly for you as well?

Mr Andrew Constance: I want you to write it down and then hand it up.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I am sure the Clerks can handle that.

Mr Andrew Constance: Go and write it up, like every other member does.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I will do that.

Mr Andrew Constance: Go and write it up and hand it over.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I would, except this is the first time that I have seen the motion, my friend. You don't have the call so you might want to take a seat.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Perhaps you could have circulated the motion before lunch and stopped ambushing us.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (16:01): In reply: I do not know what the member for Maroubra was doing at lunchtime but there is a big question mark about it. I want

to get regional members onto aircraft so that they can get home tonight but I first want to make this point. The Opposition speaks for three minutes to try to justify the priority of its motion but how often does the Opposition ever achieve a motion accorded priority? Never, ever. That is right, the Opposition has never, ever been able to move a motion accorded priority because the Government has the numbers to ensure that it does not.

Mr Clayton Barr: Let's not have votes anymore. Just ban the votes.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: My point of order is that the Minister is misleading the House—

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The point that I am making—

[Opposition members interjected.]

Members need to keep their inside voices inside their heads. The member for Maroubra creates this sense inside of me and I get excited. The member for Lake Macquarie made a very important point that I will respond to. The Government is replacing the motion accorded priority and the matter of public importance with a public interest debate to set the tone in this place. Every Tuesday the Government will have the motion, the Opposition will have every two out of three Wednesdays and the crossbench will get every third week. That is good because we will not be trying to argue priority about whose motion is more important. Let me call a spade a spade: The Government gets its way in those debates. Members now will be able to have a debate, with the mover speaking for seven minutes, six members will speak for five minutes and there will be a reply of three minutes. The issue is whether or not the Labor Party can grandstand after question time, which I can assure Opposition members no-one really cares about or pays attention to.

My other intention is to create more opportunities for debate on bills. I do not know if members have noticed that with the increased crossbench in the upper House we will see a lot more legislation and amendments come through this place. That is why this House will be starting the day at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays. It will create greater capacity to deal with amendments and to debate legislation, which, as the member for Maroubra said, is one of the great privileges of being a member. The Government is modernising the process. It is dealing with the stupidity that has gone on after question time and having a proper public interest debate. The other point I make is that the reason the public interest debate will be at five o'clock is because the debate will take about 45 minutes and more than likely there will be a division—I suspect not so often when the crossbench raises its public interest debate. Then the House will move on to private members' statements and then community recognition statements.

The great advantage of running the House from 9.30 a.m. to about 5.45 p.m.—in terms of members being required to be in the House for divisions, quorums and the like—is that members can opt to stay in the Parliament and make a private members' statement and community recognition statement, to attend community events or to be with their families. The Government is starting to modernise this place and make the proceedings sensible. That is why I have brought on the public interest debate at five o'clock. Is the Opposition concerned about the three minutes it is allowed to try to establish priority over the Government's motion or is it about members having a shot at other members? That has happened. The Opposition has a shot at a Minister and then guess what happens? Of course, the Opposition having had a shot at a Minister, the Government then has a shot at the Opposition. The Opposition then loses the vote. We are trying to prioritise public interest first and foremost by introducing the public interest debate.

The Standing Orders and Procedure Committee has been a great committee and it will continue. We will look at question time reforms as well. I think this is a much more sensible approach; it modernises the Parliament and gives more opportunities to members. It increases the time for the giving of general business notices of motion from 10 to 15 minutes. Every two weeks the Opposition will be able to bring forward its own standalone debate, if it wants to do so. There will be increased opportunities for crossbench members—who quite often have felt excluded—to participate in those debates. Members will be able to speak to a community recognition statement each day before midday which will form part of *Hansard*. If a member wants to stay and be filmed giving their community recognition statement they can do so and put it up on their Facebook page or send it to their community organisation. There will be 25 private members' statements every day and with the 10,000 signature petition there will be a Government reply.

Those are the changes and I think they are eminently sensible. Having the public interest debate as the last issue of the day when there is likely to be a quorum or division will allow members to participate in a private members' capacity after that time. Other members can choose to go home to do what they wish in their communities or to be with their families. On that basis, the Government will be rejecting the amendment outright. I look forward to seeing it handwritten and presented. I endorse all members to support the reforms.

The SPEAKER: I do not wish to make a speech on this matter, but I will make a couple of observations. Having chaired the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee I thank all those who participated in the process, which was undertaken with a substantial degree of goodwill from all sides. As mentioned by the Minister in his reply, I highlight that there will be further reforms, including to question time, which the committee continues to consider.

The question is that the motion as moved by the Leader of the House be agreed to, upon which the member for Maroubra has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes41
Noes47
Majority.....6

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Barr, Mr C
Catley, Ms Y
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Dib, Mr J
Finn, Ms J
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
Lynch, Mr P
Minns, Mr C
Parker, Mr J
Scully, Mr P
Voltz, Ms L
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Atalla, Mr E
Butler, Mr R
Chanthivong, Mr A
Daley, Mr M
Donato, Mr P
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Lalich, Mr N
McDermott, Dr H
O'Neill, Dr M
Piper, Mr G
Smith, Ms T.F.
Warren, Mr G
Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S
Car, Ms P
Cotsis, Ms S
Dalton, Mrs H
Doyle, Ms T
Harrison, Ms J
Hornery, Ms S
Leong, Ms J
Mehan, Mr D (teller)
Park, Mr R
Saffin, Ms J
Tesch, Ms L
Washington, Ms K

NOES

Anderson, Mr K
Berejiklian, Ms G
Conolly, Mr K
Coure, Mr M
Dominello, Mr V
Gibbons, Ms M
Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A
Lee, Dr G
Pavey, Mrs M
Provest, Mr G
Sidgreaves, Mr P
Smith, Mr N
Taylor, Mr M
Upton, Ms G
Williams, Mrs L

Ayres, Mr S
Bromhead, Mr S
Constance, Mr A
Crouch, Mr A (teller)
Elliott, Mr D
Greenwich, Mr A
Hancock, Mrs S
Johnsen, Mr M
Lindsay, Ms W
Perrottet, Mr D
Roberts, Mr A
Sidoti, Mr J
Speakman, Mr M
Toole, Mr P
Ward, Mr G
Wilson, Ms F

Barilaro, Mr J
Clancy, Mr J
Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Davies, Mrs T
Evans, Mr L.J.
Griffin, Mr J
Hazzard, Mr B
Kean, Mr M
Marshall, Mr A
Preston, Ms R
Saunders, Mr D
Singh, Mr G
Stokes, Mr R
Tuckerman, Mrs W
Williams, Mr R

PAIRS

Mihailuk, Ms T

Petinos, Ms E

Amendment negatived.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the motion of the Leader of the House be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery Kirsty Creek and family members Luke, Jasper, Isla, Mia and Audrey, who are guests of the member for Newtown.

*Petitions***RESPONSES TO PETITIONS**

The CLERK: I announce that the following Ministers have lodged responses to petitions:

The Hon. Paul Toole—Hazelbrook Public School Safety Barriers—lodged 16 June 2019 (Ms Trish Doyle)

The Hon. Matt Kean—Wild Horse Management Plan—lodged 18 June 2019 (Ms Trish Doyle)

*Matter of Public Importance***MINEWORKER SAFETY**

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:18): I bring this matter of public importance before the House as a reminder to all of us that safety at work can never be compromised. It is a reminder of the consequences when workers fear raising safety concerns because they are worried that they will be dismissed and a reminder of the consequences of managers not heeding the warnings they receive. Over the last week residents of two small communities, Appin and Mount Kembla, have paused to reflect on the anniversaries of two terrible events that were defining moments for each of them: the fortieth anniversary of the Appin mine disaster and the 117th anniversary of the Mount Kembla mine disaster, two mine explosions that echo through the ages.

Last Wednesday relatives of the victims; representatives of the Appin mine owner South32; current mineworkers; Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union representatives; members of the Appin community; and students from Appin Public School came together to remember the anniversary of the 1979 Appin mine explosion. I was pleased to be joined at the event by the member for Wollondilly and I thank him for his thoughtful contribution to the ceremony. While it has been 40 years since that fateful night, in hearing from and speaking with the relatives of the miners who lost their lives it is clear that their pain will never dull.

The Appin mine disaster occurred when a rush of methane gas exploded in the mine around 11.00 p.m. in a remote part of it about three kilometres underground. Ten miners who were in the crib room at the time died. A further four died varying distances away. More than 100 volunteers took more than 26 hours to recover all of the bodies. It is important to note they were mining the same seam as was being mined when the Bulli mine exploded in 1887, killing 81 miners. Following a judicial investigation, Australian Iron and Steel, the then owner of the mine, was found guilty of contributing to the explosion. The report of the inquiry by Judge Goran described itself by the words, "This report is an account of how men came to die while at work".

While of small comfort to the families of those killed, the explosion resulted in stricter mine safety requirements in New South Wales. Recommendations included that automatic devices be installed in mines to give continuous gas readings, that a special officer supervise ventilation and that the number of mine inspectors be increased. I acknowledge the efforts of South32 in commissioning a new public artwork to be installed next to the existing memorial to ensure that this mining disaster is never forgotten. I also acknowledge the Appin Historical Society Inc. for collating a display of photographs and Frank Lauterbach and Steve Peck for sharing their reflections and memories with those who gathered to pay tribute and their respects.

Last night, 117 years after the Mount Kembla mine exploded in 1902, people gathered in the Windy Gully cemetery to remember the 96 men and boys killed in that disaster. Despite happening more than a century ago it remains Australia's worst industrial accident. I grew up in Mount Kembla, which is a small village on the fringes of Wollongong. The Mount Kembla mine provides high-quality coking coal that feeds the Port Kembla steelworks. I have attended many memorial services for the 96 miners who were killed, but I could not attend last night due to my commitments in Parliament. Sadly, that was so also for my Federal colleague Sharon Bird, who also unable to attend because the Australian Parliament was sitting. We were represented by playwright Wendy Richardson, whose play *Windy Gully* is instrumental in keeping the memory of the disaster alive—telling a haunting tale of the events of the explosion.

For the information of those who are not familiar with the incident, it was another gas explosion. The royal commission found that a roof fall drove out a mixture of fire, damp and air, which was picked up as coal dust as it travelled through the ventilation shaft before it was stopped and forced back where it met a naked flame on a safety lamp, which ignited the dust and after-damp mix. It was reported that the force of the explosion resulted

in flame coming out of the entrance. The vibrations were felt 11 kilometres away in Wollongong where an arbitration commission hearing was taking place. Earlier that day the hearing had been told that the Mount Kembla mine had no gas. That could not have been more wrong.

Concerns about gas had been reported many times but miners were too afraid of losing their jobs to say anything about it. They were also reluctant to use safety lamps rather than naked flames because the lights on their helmets were so poor. The Mount Kembla mine had been a source of tensions for miners for many years. Miners were paid only for the amount of coal they extracted. Low hewing rates meant that miners wanted the maximum amount of light to work by; hence the naked flame was preferred despite concerns over gas. Again that shows the intersection of industrial relations and mine safety. Growing up in Mount Kembla I used to pass the memorial to those 96 miners killed in that explosion—the youngest of whom was just 14 years old. It was a daily reminder of the need for workplace safety. It was a daily reminder that no worker should ever feel afraid for their job if they raise concerns about workplace safety. It is a daily reminder for me, as the shadow Minister for Natural Resources.

I will never forget this disaster and the impact it had on the people of the village where I grew up. Mine safety will always be a priority for me. Miners share a special camaraderie with one another as they understand the risks they face every day at work, the dependence they have on the miner who works next to them and the impact should something go wrong. It is a camaraderie that means they will rush into a mine to try to rescue their colleagues when something goes wrong. It is a camaraderie that we should respect and support through our efforts to keep mines in New South Wales safe so that the events like Appin and Mount Kembla are not repeated.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (16:23): I thank the member for Wollongong for drawing this matter to the attention of the House. The purpose of this important memorial is to remember those who fell while extracting coal for the people of New South Wales. On behalf of the Government, I express my profound sorrow and deepest sympathies to the families and friends of the deceased workers. The Resources Regulator major investigations unit is now a plank in the platform of the Government's commitment to mine safety. The unit was the first of its kind in Australia and was established by the New South Wales Government to conduct investigations into serious mining accidents. An extract from the *Illawarra Mercury* about the blast reads:

More than 200 people gathered at Appin Memorial Garden on Wednesday morning to mark the 40th anniversary of the Appin Colliery methane gas explosion that killed 14 miners on July 24, 1979.

The blast may have occurred four decades ago but CFMMEU District Secretary Lee Webb said the fact that up to 300 people attended the memorial service in Appin at 7.30am was a reflection of how the event not only shook the small mining community but the entire Illawarra where many families are still dependent on their men going underground day after day.

The blast, in what was then Australian Iron and Steel and later known as BHP Billiton, was ignited by a rush of methane gas around 11pm in K panel, a remote tunnel of the mine about 3km underground.

Ten miners died in the crib room while enjoying tea and sandwiches, and another four were found varying distances away. The recovery involved more than 100 volunteers and took 26 hours to recover all the bodies. Rescuers risked their own lives as they picked through twisted metal and dirt near deadly pockets of carbon monoxide and methane.

At the time of the explosion, 45 men were underground.

That brings home to members in this very comfortable Chamber what it is like for men working underground. Recently I visited a coalmine at Appin. At 700 or 800 metres underground it is stifling hot. You can hardly breathe. There is lots of dust and—funnily enough—there is lots of wind because the mines are vacuumed out. The machinery is extremely loud and it is a very uncomfortable place. You are walking around in three or four inches of mud and it is very humid. Although miners are well remunerated, it is hard to put into words how courageous they are for going into the mines and putting up with those sorts of conditions day after day. Although the industry is heavily mechanised and I understand it will move towards using even more machinery, there is still a requirement for workers to be underground. We must remember those who have lost their lives in that endeavour.

As the member for Wollongong said, there have been several mining accidents in the Illawarra over the years. In fact, Bulli Hospital was established in response to a mining accident because there was no facility close enough to look after wounded miners. As the member for Wollongong also said, it is an absolute tragedy that people have lost their lives. It is with great sorrow that we remember them 40 years later. The Australian mining industry is now statistically one of the safest in the world; however, every year mineworkers still suffer terrible injuries while helping to earn the billions of dollars that the industry contributes to our economy. We must remember that. The people who go into the mines are very courageous. In every sector we expect people to go to work in the morning and return home at night. We need to ensure that it happens for our miners who look for minerals on our behalf.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (16:27): I pay tribute to my colleague the member for Wollongong for bringing forward this matter of public importance for discussion. I thank Government members for the way in which they have conducted themselves. As the member said, he is from one of the proudest coalmining towns in the country. Mount Kembla is a small village that continues to produce high quality coal day in, day out. It does

so by sending working men and women down into the mine each and every day and into a very challenging and difficult environment. Over the past 150 years three of the biggest mining disasters have occurred in electorates represented by me and the member for Wollongong. There was a significant accident at South Bulli—or Old Bulli, as we call it.

The member for Wollongong outlined the significant Mount Kembla and Appin disasters. They are a reminder to us all of the incredibly important but dangerous work that is performed by men and women each day after they clock on and head down to the pit to extract coal that allows us to live the lives that we are so fortunate to enjoy. I thank the member for Wollongong, particularly in his new role as the shadow Minister for Natural Resources, for taking time out to acknowledge these disasters. I thank him for not only never forgetting the important role that coalmining plays in our community but also never forgetting the dangers that working men and women face every day in that industry.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (16:29): By leave: On the evening of 24 July 1979, 14 miners lost their lives in a methane explosion at the Appin coalmine. The impact reverberated through the close-knit community of Appin, especially at a time when there was often a sole male breadwinner. The tragedy remains a solemn chapter in Appin's collective memory. The strength of that memory was on display recently when I attended the fortieth anniversary of the mine disaster. More than 200 residents paid their respects at the event, which was moving and deeply emotional. Also in attendance was the member for Wollongong, Paul Scully, who spoke eloquently and compassionately.

Organised by the Appin community and South32 Illawarra, the commemoration was held at the Appin Mine Memorial Garden. It featured a performance by the Appin Public school choir and a stirring bagpipe interlude. A local band also played a song written about the disaster. Relatives spoke about their loss. One of them, who lost a brother, read a poem written in his sibling's memory. Miners from South32 laid a wreath in remembrance of their colleagues. A number of family members travelled from outside the township to gather and remember the brothers, sons, fathers and husbands who were unexpectedly taken from them. One of those family members was Sharon Hili, who lost her father in the disaster. Sharon's sister flew in from Queensland to attend. Sharon said of the event:

It definitely brings the community together. I hope my children and my children's children will keep coming to the event and keep the memory alive for the community. I think that's important.

Frank Lauterbach lost his brother in the mine disaster and was also in attendance. He said:

I was speaking to a miner non-stop for a long time and it touched a nerve for him when I said something about mateship—about it being all for one when they are in the mines together. He really understood that. It's about always being there for your mates if something goes wrong. That's something that ties us all together.

From talking to some of today's miners who were at the event, when we look at all the changes that have come about in the mines when it comes to safety, it's a way of bringing some sense to it all. It was a terrible thing, but it led the way for changes that have been made for the better.

It was such a big thing at the time and it's important to keep [the commemoration] going.

The most emotional speech of the day ended with a wonderful quote: "The most important thing to come out of a mine is a miner." That is very true.

Business interrupted.

Petitions

KATOOMBA AIRFIELD

Discussion

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:33): I thank the members of the Blue Mountains community who have come to Parliament today to listen to the discussion of this petition. The petition brings to the attention of the House plans to develop a new commercial airfield at Medlow Bath in the Blue Mountains. The history of Katoomba airport is an interesting one. A dirt airstrip within bushland at the northern end of the quiet Medlow Bath township, Katoomba Airfield, has been home to small flying clubs and community organisations. For a number of decades it has served as the staging ground for aerial bushfire fighting and rescue activities. Former leaseholder Rod Hay and his family operated a small, low-impact business at the airfield that provided runway access for low-flying enthusiasts operating light aircraft, as well as access for State Government agencies—such as National Parks and Wildlife—that sometimes required an airstrip for their activities. Furthermore, they provided access to the site for the Royal Australian Air Force, local scouting groups and the amateur astronomy club, among others.

Tragically, Rod Hay died when his aircraft crashed at the end of the Katoomba Airfield runway. Rod's family—particularly his daughter, Amber, and his wife, Chrissie—were keen to take over the lease and continue the low-impact activity at Katoomba Airfield and continue providing access to local community groups and the emergency services. However, through a somewhat opaque process, the New South Wales Government declined to offer them the opportunity to retain their lease at the site. Instead, the Government has allowed an interim licence holder to pursue plans to develop the airstrip and begin commercial activity so as to demonstrate a long-term business plan. To that end, I acknowledge that I have met with the owners of FLYBLUE, Floyd and Derek Larsen, and listened to their proposal for a new business at Katoomba Airfield. I have also attended the community consultation workshops that the department of lands held. Many attendees at the consultation sessions have not felt listened to; they have not felt that their concerns are being taken seriously.

I share the concerns of many in the Blue Mountains that a radically expanded airport at Medlow Bath may induce a level of flight activity that is unacceptable to the amenity of local residents and that is out of step with the peaceful bushland setting of the Katoomba Airfield. Many in my community believe the peace and quiet of our World Heritage area is now under threat. Contrary to arguments proffered, the community is concerned that our tourism industry, which is vital to our local economy, may not benefit from the fly-in-fly-out tourism that a freshly redeveloped Katoomba airport would offer, just as many hospitality and accommodation operators have told me that they get little economic benefit from the large buses and coaches from Sydney that come and go from one village within a matter of hours.

Our tourism industry needs to be supported by government measures that promote overnight stays by visitors so that our hotels, short-term lets, cafes, pubs and restaurants receive year-round patronage. The worried community feels strongly that it will not be achieved by small aircraft or helicopters running relentless flights. Having said that, I do not shy away from the need for something to change at the Medlow Bath site. It has fallen into disrepair and in 2017 it was closed to fixed-wing aircraft landings. When my office was assisting the Hay family in the aftermath of Rod's death, I formed the view that we should support a small operation at the airstrip that would sustain the airfield, ensure that it remained available to our emergency services and that it could continue to serve as an emergency landing location for passing aircraft. Many in the community have that view, which is supported by the Blue Mountains City Council, local representatives from the RFS, the NSW Police Force, the State Emergency Service and, I understand, National Parks staff.

I thank the signatories of the petition, as well as the Blue Mountains Conservation Society, the Colong Foundation, the Environmental Defenders Office and other concerned members of the community who took the time to make submissions to the lands department's public consultation process. At the very least, our community deserves an open, transparent and fair process as the Government moves towards signing a long-term lease. So far, that has not been forthcoming. The lesson for the Government through the petition is that there is a broadly held concern amongst the Blue Mountains community about what a new, redeveloped airport at Medlow Bath will mean for residents, bushwalkers and the environment. The petition asks that the community's objections to any commercial lease for the public land be taken seriously, that the land be put into the national park and that the airfield be kept for emergency use only.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (16:38): The New South Wales Government thanks the Blue Mountains residents and other concerned citizens who have signed the petition and showed their views. We will consider their feedback carefully. We have not made any decision on whether to grant a lease over the Katoomba Airfield. The tenant of the airfield wants to convert its interim licence into a lease to gain greater security of tenure so that it can invest in the infrastructure. There are many different views in the Blue Mountains community and we take them all seriously. The Government seeks all views as we work in partnership with communities to determine the best use of Crown land.

We have gone to the Blue Mountains community to listen to their views and are well into the community consultation on the proposed lease. In fact, the community consultation is open until midnight on Sunday 4 August and we are seeking the views of everyone who is interested in this proposal. Community consultation will have a direct effect on how we consider the lease application. Each issue raised through community consultation will be considered. Community engagement is a key commitment within the Crown Land Management Act, which we passed in 2016. It would be inappropriate to circumvent this process by making a decision now about the future of this very important site. When we have consent, we will publish all the submissions we receive so that all the community has input and it is plain for all to see. Community consultation sessions were held on 19 June and 25 June this year at the Hotel Blue & Conference Centre in Katoomba.

Information about the proposed lease is available on the department's website and includes a fact sheet and frequently asked questions. Key stakeholders engaged include the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council, the Blue Mountains City Council and the native title service provider NTSCORP Limited. Even if the lease does not proceed, helicopters and aircraft will still be able to fly over the Blue Mountains from other airports

and heliports. All new leases for Crown land in New South Wales now include obligations to show appropriate management of the environment. We will consider carefully all aspects of the application, including the environmental management plan and possible community benefits and impacts. It is important that the Government completes the process of community consultation before making a considered decision about the airfield.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:41): I welcome and congratulate visitors in the gallery from the Blue Mountains. Getting over 12,000 signatures on a petition is no mean feat. I know that as the member for Port Stephens because we have these battles all the time. I have had similar debates on behalf of my community in an attempt to protect the environment that they love so dearly and to maintain its serenity, peace and beauty. I also recognise and thank the terrific member for Blue Mountains. When you have a woman like Trish Doyle in your corner, you are in a very good place. Trish will always listen to concerns; she understands that there are differences of opinion. But she has a good heart and lands in the right place every time.

I thank everyone who signed the petition and the contributors who have made submissions on the proposal that is currently with the department. I also thank everyone who helped to gather signatures for the petition, such as Katoomba Airfield Community Group, Blue Mountains Conservation Society, Blue Mountains Peacekeepers, Medlow Bath residents and the Colong Foundation. I am sure that there are many others because, like in my community, many people care deeply about the environment in which they live.

I hear the frustrations of the Blue Mountains community. I am concerned that the member for Hawkesbury responded to the discussion instead of the relevant Ministers. There is no sign of Minister Kean, who is the environment Minister, and no sign of Minister Ayres, who has responsibility for tourism. The Government has simply given the member for Hawkesbury a script telling local residents how much they have been consulted. I understand that an interim lease was put in place on Crown land—public land that the community ought to have a say about—without any consultation whatsoever. Now we have a proposal for a 50-year commercial lease on land that local residents care about deeply. I have no doubt—because I have seen it happen so many times in my community—that the consultation process has been entirely inadequate.

The Government said today that residents' concerns have been, and will be, listened to. I am guessing that that is very far from the case. I hope that the submissions on this development application are read, understood and taken into account when this process comes to completion. The idea that Katoomba is a suitable location for a helicopter business flies in the face of common sense. Local residents live with the majesty and beauty of the Blue Mountains. I urge the Government to support the residents for once and retain the peace of the Blue Mountains.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:44): It is interesting that the member for Port Stephens had a go at the member for member for Hawkesbury, whose electorate is probably just as close to the Katoomba Airfield as her own. I travel through the area regularly on my way back to Dubbo. I assure the House that the Government is listening to community concerns about the application for the lease of Katoomba Airfield. Community engagement is a very important part of the management of Crown land. There is a framework for community engagement for certain activities and dealings in the Crown Land Management Act. That is why the Government is actively seeking the community's input on the proposal.

As the member for Hawkesbury mentioned, community consultation is open until midnight on Sunday. When we have consent the Government will publish all submissions so that all community input is plain to see. The Government will carefully consider the application and all the relevant issues raised through community consultation. I reiterate that no decision has been made at this time. The site has operated continuously as an airfield since it opened in 1969. For the past three years it has been temporarily closed to fixed-wing operations but there is no legal restriction on the use of the airfield by fixed-wing aircrafts or any other aircrafts. Helicopter operations, including emergency services, have continued. It is important to address community concerns that the applicant plans to develop a commercial airport on the site. There will be no commuter airport on the site. There are no plans to build terminals.

The Government is assessing an application for a lease over an existing airstrip and the surrounding curtilage. The applicant proposes to reduce the extent of the current runway through tree planting. The airfield remains open to emergency services, the Defence Force, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the NSW Rural Fire Service. The Government will consider appropriate restrictions on 15-minute joy flights in or out of the airfield and circuit training, which involves flying around the perimeter of the airfield, should the lease be granted. I reiterate that no decision has been made and that community consultation remains open until midnight on Sunday.

*Matter of Public Importance***MINEWORKER SAFETY****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (16:47): By leave: I thank the Assistant Speaker for his contribution at question time today. It came at a tense moment when we all needed to take a break. I acknowledge the matter of public importance brought to the attention of the House by the member for Wollongong, which recognises the coalmining disasters at Mount Kembla. I am fortunate to represent the community of Cessnock, which was built on the coalfields of the Hunter Valley. Coal was first kicked on the surface in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie. Miners followed that coal seam and ended up right in the middle of the Hunter Valley in areas such as Maitland, Kurri Kurri and Cessnock. At that point they were going underground and digging quite deep for coal. Working underground is entirely abnormal. Anybody who has been underground will appreciate that it is not a normal human endeavour or a typical workplace. It is incredibly dangerous. There are large pieces of machinery, gases and the potential for a rockfall or a wall collapse at any time.

Every year on the second Sunday in September I attend a memorial service in Cessnock at the federation that represents the northern coalfields mineworkers. On the wall of the memorial are the names of 1,800 coalminers who have died in the pursuit of coal, for the purposes of the economy and, for them individually, so that they can earn a wage and support their families. It is an incredibly moving ceremony and one that I can only compare to Anzac Day.

I invite any and every member of Parliament who might have an interest in the price that has been paid for coal on the northern coalfields over the past 200 years to attend this incredible ceremony and service and to see the names of people as young as 13 or 14 and as old as 66 or 67. When things go wrong in a coalmine, there is no age discrimination; the disaster takes the nearest life. Around the Cessnock area we have had our own disasters as well that are similar to that mentioned in the motion, although with nowhere near those numbers. Coalmining is a dangerous pursuit. The economy has done well as a result of coal and we need to remember those people who have paid the ultimate price.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:50): I thank the members representing the electorates of Heathcote, Keira, Wollondilly and Cessnock for their contributions to the discussion today. Among all of them the common theme is their admiration for the men and now increasingly women who work in our mining industry, and particularly for those who have paid with their lives in the pursuit of coal or other resources that we mine around the State and around the country. Another common theme was that mining is a dangerous and difficult job that does not come naturally to people. Having socialised with many mineworkers and their families, I know that some people go in for a shift or two and then work out that mining is not a pastime that they want to be involved in any further.

I look forward to joining the member for Cessnock for that memorial service in September. To the 1,800 people whose names are on the memorial at Cessnock and the 1,800 families that go along with those names, the 96 men and boys killed at Mount Kembla, the 81 men killed at Bulli, the 14 men killed at Appin and all the other hundreds who have been killed in our mines, I extend my most sincere condolences. At Mount Kembla, those 96 men and boys left 33 widows and 120 fatherless children at a time when welfare payments did not exist. Miners leased a house from the mining company—they still do today in the village of Kembla Heights. Once families did not have a miner employed at that mine, they did not have a house at all. They were out. Some widows and their families were kicked out within weeks of the 1902 disaster.

A number of years ago in Wollongong I attended an unveiling of a memorial to coalmining. It was unveiled by then Lord Mayor David Campbell, who went on to have a great career in this place; the Premier of New South Wales at the time, Bob Carr; mine worker Fred Kirkwood, who was a young child when the Mount Kembla explosion happened; Julie Hodgson from the Mining Women's Auxiliary; and Peter May, a mine worker. The plaque reads:

This memorial pays tribute to the courage, struggle, sacrifice and camaraderie that are the hallmarks of Wollongong's mine community. It recognises and honours the debt of gratitude owed by the City to the men and women who have worked in the mining industry since its inception in 1849.

I echo those sentiments in what has become the last matter of public importance discussion that this House will see.

*Community Recognition Statements***COFFS HARBOUR CUP**

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:54): Parliament House is not the only place where people are having fun today. You can bet your bottom dollar that plenty of fun is being had trackside in Coffs Harbour today. Our community is letting down its hair at one of the year's social extravaganzas: the Coffs Harbour Gold Cup at the Coffs Harbour Racing Club and function centre—where the turf meets the surf. The Gold Cup is the highlight of our festival of racing, which also incorporates the Sawtell Cup on 21 July 2019, the Bonville Cup on 3 August 2019 and other events.

Our carnival continues to grow in prestige; Racing NSW announced a near doubling of the prize money to \$150,000 for the Coffs Harbour Cup. The Daniel Baker Sprint, the Ken Howard Cup and the Country Magic are also now worth more. Racing club CEO Tim Saladine, licensee and events manager Cam Nealer and all their hardworking staff make our cup the king. So, too, does a visionary racing club board: Chairman Alan Johnson, Vice-Chairman Shane Burns, Treasurer Mark Palmer, Merv Mercer, Scott Nolan, Kevin Riddell and Samantha Wardman.

FESTIVAL OF CHARIOTS

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:55): I recognise the Rath Yatra or Festival of Chariots celebrated in Liverpool on Saturday 6 July 2019, commencing in Bigge Park. I attended the first festival 13 years ago and have been to most, if not all, of the subsequent annual festivals in Liverpool. The traditional Hindu festival is part of Indian Hindu cultural heritage, emphasising the promotion of peace and harmony among diverse communities, and its history extends back thousands of years.

I acknowledge the presence at this year's event of Consul General of India Manish Gupta and Indian Consul S. K. Verma. I also acknowledge the contribution to the event of its main promoter Govardhan Das, of Vedic Festivals Inc. The festival coordinator was Arvind Baldeo. A significant contribution was made by ISKON, whose temple at North Sydney is known as the Hare Krishna Temple of Sydney. A large number of people were involved in pulling the chariot through the streets of Liverpool's CBD, which was preceded by a ceremony involving various dignitaries hurling coconuts to the ground to break them. None of us wore our best suits.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FIELD REGIONAL CHALLENGE COIN AWARD

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:56): I formally congratulate two of Dubbo's finest police officers: Detective Sergeant Mark Meredith and Detective Sergeant Richard Morley, both of whom were recently presented with a very special award—the Deputy Commissioner Field Regional Challenge Coin. The awards were presented by Deputy Commissioner Gary Worboys at a special ceremony that coincided with a visit to the Dubbo police station by my colleague David Elliott, the member for Baulkham Hills and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

Detective Sergeant Meredith is the Investigations Manager with Orana Mid-Western Police District and has served in his local command since joining the force in 1988. Detective Sergeant Morley is the head of the district's Target Action Group and has also spent his entire career in the region, having started with the NSW Police Force in 1991. Both men are heavily involved in their local communities and are a credit to themselves, the NSW Police Force and their families. I congratulate them.

DEBRA MURRAY

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (16:57): Heroes do not need to be known as heroes; they do what heroes do because it is right and it must be done. Such a hero exists in my electorate. Today I spotlight the incredible bravery of Mrs Debra Murray. On 4 July 2019 Mrs Murray, a Barrack Heights resident, was finishing her shift at Warilla High School canteen when she and her son noticed smoke billowing from a nearby Barrack Heights home. Without a second thought, Mrs Murray rushed into the burning building, saving a 92-year-old man's life. At great risk to herself, she led the man to safety through the smoke. Both of them were treated at the scene by our great emergency services. I am happy to share that they are alive and well. I commend and thank Mrs Murray for her bravery, courage and heroism.

CHRISTINE RAYNER

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (16:58): I pay tribute to Christine Rayner, who recently retired after 40 years working at Hawkesbury District Health Service's Hawkesbury Hospital. As a midwife, Christine Rayner delivered countless Hawkesbury babies and is very well respected and admired within the Hawkesbury community. When she walks down Hawkesbury streets she brings smiles to people's faces and lights up their eyes. After such dedication to serving Hawkesbury's families, Christine has decided to move

to Victoria to be with her family. On behalf of all Hawkesbury residents, I thank Christine for her contribution to our community and wish her all the very best in the next chapter of her life.

INVASION OF CYPRUS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (16:58): I honour and remember people who were killed and people who are still missing on the forty-fifth anniversary of the invasion of Cyprus. I had the privilege of attending the wreath-laying ceremony hosted by the Cypriot and Hellenic communities of New South Wales at the cenotaph in Martin Place. I had the pleasure of meeting His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in Australia, who made one of many heartfelt speeches. I thank President of the Cypriot community of New South Wales Sotiris Tsouris, OAM, and President of the Justice for Cyprus Co-ordinating Committee of New South Wales Jack Passaris, OAM, for allowing me the honour of attending such a dignified event as a representative of New South Wales Labor.

BOOKHAM BERREMANGRA RED CROSS AND BOOKHAM HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (16:59): On 19 July I was lucky enough to spend a cold winter's afternoon in front of a warm open fire at the Bookham Memorial Hall listening to the achievements of the local branches of the Red Cross and hospital auxiliary during their successive annual general meetings. The Bookham auxiliary primarily fundraises through its catering efforts, and any money raised goes straight back into the community. The amounts raised by both committees within such a small community is quite unbelievable. This is a great example of how small communities can make a huge difference to the lives of many. I was delighted to assist in the installation of the newly elected committees, both ably led by Mrs Noelene Hazel for over a decade. It was wonderful to catch up again with State President of the United Hospital Auxiliaries of NSW Linda Swales. I congratulate all the committee members.

REFUGEE WEEK

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:00): On behalf of the Fairfield electorate I pass on heartfelt congratulations to the Iraqi Australian University Graduates Forum and CORE Community Services in Fairfield for celebrating Refugee Week on Sunday 30 June 2019 at Monamar Reception, Fairfield. The Sharing Food Sharing Story event was filled with several success stories, short films, folkloric music and dancing from newly settled refugees in Fairfield. A major highlight of the evening was the traditional folkloric fashion parade, and the exhibition of arts and crafts. These colourful works of art were created locally by artists showcasing their unique heritage. Congratulations to the organising committee and the contributors for promoting culture, and all other attendees involved for making the night a success. It was a pleasure to listen to so many truly moving and inspirational stories. The Fairfield community has so much to be proud of.

CHARLIE MAHER

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:01): I acknowledge our local Clontarf Foundation Director Charlie Maher and his induction today into the Hastings Secondary College NAIDOC Hall of Fame, recognising his leadership in youth educational initiatives and job seeker support options for young Aboriginal men in Port Macquarie. Described as a powerful role model and life coach to young Biripi men in our community, Charlie's tireless work in teaching the core principles of resilience, persistence and discipline are fundamental to his success in securing employment post school for Aboriginal youth. He is credited for establishing the Bush to Beach program, an initiative that shares cultural experiences, mentoring and leadership development amongst the Port Macquarie and Ntaria communities. The objective of the highly commended program is to ensure history and culture are intertwined to create a sense of belonging, facilitating positive change in the lives of participants.

Charlie is no stranger to competition, being the first Indigenous Australian to finish the New York City Marathon, and competing in the 2018 Chicago Marathon. Locally he was also instrumental in establishing the Port Macquarie IMF Running and Walking group, and preparing young Aboriginal men and women for the City2Surf running event. In his spare time Charlie also involves himself in White Ribbon Day, NAIDOC Week and Anzac Day. I recognise Charlie as an inspirational leader of our Indigenous community and an outstanding role model for local Aboriginal youth. Congratulations, Charlie, on your Hall of Fame induction.

ASHLEY PERNECKER

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (17:02): Ashley Pernecker is a 15-year-old sporting superstar from my electorate. Her achievements so far include coming first in the British Columbian State Championship 800 metres and third in the 300 metres State championship. Ashley received five gold, one silver, two bronze and four personal bests in Canada. Currently ranked third in Australia in the heptathlon for juniors, she is ranked sixth in Australia for the 800 metres and has been selected for the Athletics New South Wales Target Talent Program. She is also one of four chosen to represent New South Wales in the 2019 Australian Little Athletics Championships.

I recently had the honour of presenting this great young athlete with awards and cannot wait to see her many sporting achievements in the future. While studying in the United States, Ashley wants to become a paediatrician and support young people in their health.

SERVICE NSW

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:03): Members in the House are hearing it first—tomorrow I will officially open the brand-new Service NSW centre at Woy Woy! This is a promise the Government made during the election campaign, and it has already been delivered by this Coalition Government. Service NSW has transformed the customer experience. It gives people access to hundreds of government services, as well as over 70 cost-of-living savings—all under the one roof. Gone are the bad old days of waiting in queues at the Roads and Traffic Authority. That was Labor's model of service delivery; this Government's model of service delivery is Service NSW. The Woy Woy centre will save time and money for residents in Woy Woy and surrounding suburbs such as Empire Bay and places in my electorate. This is a Government that delivers on its promises.

WORLD JUNIOR SCRABBLE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (17:04): Today I acknowledge local Cabramatta Scrabble masters Patrick Huynh, Alex Lam and Jason Tang. These three young gentlemen recently qualified to represent Australia at the World Junior Scrabble Championships that will be held in Kuala Lumpur this year. All three gentlemen have been playing Scrabble for a number of years and have now reached a significant milestone. I am pleased to say that Cabramatta has contributed to junior Scrabble competitions in New South Wales for the past few years and has had resounding success in producing some of the finest Scrabblers in Australia. On behalf of all members on both sides of this House, I wish these gentlemen the best of luck in the world championships. We are all rooting for you. You are all doing yourselves and Australia proud.

GIDGET FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:05): Earlier this year I attended the Gidget Foundation Australia Ladies' Lunch. This year's theme was "On Safari". This event supports an amazing organisation based in North Sydney that raises important awareness of perinatal depression and anxiety in expecting and new parents. With over 1,500 supporters on the day, the event raised in excess of \$370,000, which is a new record amount for the event. The Gidget Foundation provides programs to support the emotional wellbeing of new and expecting parents and raises vital funds to continue to support those who need help the most. Their work also helps to end the silence and stigma around mental health and, in particular, perinatal depression and anxiety. The event was attended by an array of supporters including the former Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop; Deputy Premier John Barilaro; and the Minister for Mental Health and Women, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor. I thank the board of the Gidget Foundation, including Dr Kathryn Austin, Professor Bryanne Barnett, Jarrod Bowditch, Jessica Davis, Patrick Delany, Kara Nicholls, Simone Short, Allan Sparkes and the CEO, Arabella Gibson.

TROUBADOUR CENTRAL COAST

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:06): I congratulate all the wonderful folk involved in the Troubadour folk community at Woy Woy. Their show last Saturday night was absolutely wonderful. I am sure I am not out of line in saying that it was thoroughly enjoyed by all of us in the audience. We loved the combination of visiting acts and local stars, carefully crafted together by the talented sound technician, Ken Grose. It was an incredible privilege to present Ken with a NSW Seniors Local Achievement Award for his contribution to our community. Ken has been with the Troubadour since the outset 30 years ago. For every performance he sets up the necessary sound equipment and delivers the best possible quality sound to fans, carefully guided by the expertise of performers. Ken also identifies gaps in the equipment needs and makes sure they are filled. He is a very deserving recipient with 30 years of commitment to the sound production of the Troubadour under his belt. I express special thanks to Father Michael Davies and the parish of St Luke's for allowing the Troubadour and our community to use the church hall.

VALLEY TRACK

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (17:07): I advise the House of a wonderful program being undertaken in the Clarence Valley called Valley Track. This program is the brainchild of David and Christie Bennett, who have been involved in dog trialling for more than 20 years. They assist disadvantaged youth to train and build relationships with the dogs, which is a vital part of the program. They are, after all, man's best friend. Valley Track runs weekly programs for youth, which show them how to handle the dogs and to be in control of them through a dog trial course. Mr Bennett was encouraged to start Valley Track after seeing the success a program called BackTrack had on kids in the Armidale area. This is a fabulous initiative. I wish David and Christie every success with it.

SCIENCE SPACE

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (17:08): I congratulate Science Space Wollongong on its thirtieth birthday. Recently, along with my Federal colleagues Sharon Bird and Fiona Phillips, and the Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Gordon Bradbery, I joined many others in marking this anniversary. Science Space has been visited by more than 1.3 million people over its 30-year history. It has helped provide an insight into science, technology, engineering and maths to all its visitors and has helped students from the University of Wollongong improve their science communications skills as they volunteered as demonstrators. Science Space has been well supported by many local organisations, but would not have been possible without a few key people. In particular I acknowledge the decades of effort by Glen and Elizabeth Moore in keeping their dream going for so many years. I also acknowledge the work of Stuart Creal, the current director, who is setting a fantastic foundation for the next 30 years, with some exciting plans ahead. I also thank particularly every one of the students who have volunteered their time to help bring science to life.

BEROWRA MOUNTAIN BIKERS

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (17:09): I congratulate Berowra locals Paul Maher, Paul Hughes, Jim Beaumont, Clive Carre, Stuart Montgomery and Andrew Adam, who are this month competing in the second stage of the Bicentennial National Trail [BNT] mountain bike competition. The competition is a 10-year process which involves mountain biking a total of 5,300 kilometres from Cooktown in Queensland to Healesville in Victoria. The boys are expected to finish section 2 of the challenge by 22 June, which involves 655 kilometres and a total of 14 days of riding. While taking on the physical challenge of endurance, they are raising money and awareness for the Sporting Chance Cancer Foundation. This organisation has no paid employees and puts every dollar towards making highly qualified nurses available to treat children's cancer in regional and outer metropolitan areas. This partnership with the BNT competition and the Sporting Chance Cancer Foundation is an excellent example of community involvement and co-operation and I wish the boys success in the remainder of the competition.

BRETT LOVETT

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (17:10): Today I pay tribute to paramedic Brett Lovett, who has served the people of the Hunter Region for almost 36 years—27 of them operating the rescue truck at Rutherford Ambulance Station in my electorate of Maitland. Brett recently retired from the Ambulance Service of NSW to embark on a new chapter in life—one that will, as I understand, revolve around playing golf and travelling. It is a well-earned respite for a man whose career as a first responder has touched and saved the lives of so many. During his decades of service Brett has seen the role evolve and expand. Once armed with just a basic Oxy-Viva and some laughing gas, he went on and learnt to administer a variety of medications and operate lifesaving equipment. Brett devoted his working life to helping others in their greatest hours of need. He has responded to countless incidents and accidents, including some of the darkest days our community has endured. He was one of the first paramedics to arrive on the scene after the collapse of the Newcastle Workers' Club, which crumbled during the 1989 earthquake. Congratulations on your retirement, Brett, and thank you for your service to our community.

MITCHELL HARVEY

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:11): Mitchell Harvey carries with him the hopes of the Coffs Coast this week. Mitchell, a valued member of Marine Rescue Woolgoolga and a fellow star of a recent ABC *Back Roads* episode, is a finalist in the prestigious 2019 Rotary District and Clubs of NSW Emergency Services Community Awards. Winners will be announced at a presentation dinner at the Bankstown Sports Club tomorrow night, 2 August. I wish Mitchell well. More than 24 emergency service workers with more than 406 years of combined service are finalists. They come from many walks of life, including Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Ambulance, NSW State Emergency Service, NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Volunteer Rescue Association and Marine Rescue NSW. Our emergency service workers and volunteers give so much of themselves to our communities and ask for so little in return. We are indebted to all of our unsung heroes and we will never take for granted their commitment to protect us.

THE AUSTRALIAN MAN CAVE

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:12): It was great to be at The Australian Man Cave monthly gathering, salami-making day, on Sunday 28 July 2019 at the Cornerstone Café, Bringelly. I am proud to support my fellow man cavers in their quest to start conversations to stop male suicide. Man cavers come together to support other men in a friendly and non-judgemental setting. Unfortunately six men commit suicide in Australia every day. That statistic is a national shame. If you know a male who is doing it tough start a conversation and seek professional help. There are so many great support services to assist males; do not do it alone. I thank Pastor Agostino Gattellari and Pastor Lou Greco for their ongoing work to assist males in need.

WESTERN REGION ACADEMY OF SPORT

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (17:13): Today I will recognise the achievements of some local members of the Western Region Academy of Sport: 18-year-old Kurt Eather and 16-year-old Danny Barber. They have been part of the academy's cycling squad for the past four years and have recently been offered scholarships to the NSW Institute of Sport. This follows their outstanding performances at the 2019 State and National Track Championships. Both Kurt and Danny have demonstrated dominance in track cycling over a number of years, with Danny breaking an Australian record at the national championships earlier this year. Outstanding! In AFL 17-year-old Eloise Hiller-Stanbrook recently represented NSW/ACT at the 2019 AFL women's under 18 titles. It is an incredible achievement considering Eloise has played AFL for less than two years. I congratulate these athletes on their amazing achievements and wish them all the best in their future competitions.

CHATTOGRAM CLUB

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (17:14): I was delighted to recently attend Chattogram Club Australia's 2019 Mezban and Eid reunion festivities. The feast brought together thousands from within the local Bangladesh community in south-west Sydney and beyond. My long association with the Bangladesh community is something I greatly value and I am fortunate to count many Bangladesh Australians as my friends. I admire the Chattogram Club Australia's commitment to honouring and celebrating their community's rich Bangladesh culture and heritage while striving to highlight the common values between Australia and Bangladesh. Events such as the 2019 Mezban serve as a great reminder that our community is strengthened and enriched by our diversity. I congratulate the executive and the organisers from Chattogram Club Australia on hosting such a successful event and I look forward to attending future events hosted by the organisers.

PETER AND ELIZABETH VERSLUIS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:15): I recognise two exceptionally dedicated healthcare professionals in my electorate, Peter and Elizabeth Versluis, and acknowledge their significant contribution to the health profession and to our community. Recognised by their peers as inspirational and motivated, the pair decided to call it quits in July, recognising that now is the right time to transition into the next chapter of their lives. Peter and Elizabeth moved to the Camden Haven 25 years ago and have been candid about the privileges and benefits they have experienced from being part of a welcoming and connected community. Peter accepted a role as the Station Manager for the Ambulance Service of NSW in Laurieton 18 years ago and has relished the opportunity to serve the people of the Camden Haven.

Meanwhile Elizabeth, or Liz, will be missed by her colleagues at Port Macquarie Base Hospital as the longest serving emergency department employee. She is renowned for her methodical approach, innate common sense, extensive knowledge and efficient manner as she faced the complex situations that arise in a demanding emergency care role. On behalf of our community I extend sincerest thanks to Peter and Elizabeth for their longstanding commitment to health care in our community and wish them all the best in their retirement.

GROWING URBAN SHADE TREES

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:16): I congratulate and thank a fantastic community group in my electorate, Growing Urban Shade Trees, or GUST. Recently GUST coordinated a successful tree planting morning on Ocean Beach Road at Umina Beach to align with the wider National Tree Day campaign. The group's members, Debbie Sunartha, Melissa Chandler and Jen Wilder, worked alongside other tree-enthused community members to plant a number of native trees along the southern end of Ocean Beach Road. The group is passionate about bringing trees back to the hot and barren urban environments. The benefits to the community are far and wide. Recent research by Planet Ark has demonstrated that just a 5 per cent increase in tree cover can reduce nearby daytime temperatures by 2.3 degrees and time spent in nature reduces stress and improves happiness, wellbeing and productivity. Moreover, a large, healthy tree is capable of sequestering up to 93 kilograms of CO₂ and 1.4 kilograms of air pollution a year—how great are trees! To the community members that participated on the day and to the members of GUST, I commend you on a job well done and congratulate you all on a well coordinated, successful National Tree Day planting.

BRISBANE WATER POLICE DISTRICT

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:17): On 23 July I had the pleasure of representing police Minister David Elliott at the Brisbane Water Police District medal and awards presentation ceremony, which was held at the Davistown RSL Club in my electorate of Terrigal. I was joined by Police Commissioner Mick Fuller and Superintendent Tony Joyce to congratulate over 75 police officers for their ongoing service, including five police officers from my electorate of Terrigal.

Senior Constable Mark Grzunov received the National Police Service Medal, Senior Constable Bradley Clarkson received a New South Wales Police Medal and clasp set, Sergeant Stewart Franks received a fourth clasp and also a district commander's unit citation, Detective Sergeant Stephen Davis received a second clasp and Deborah Warwick received a district commander's certificate of appreciation. Our emergency services personnel are truly phenomenal people. They run towards danger when everyone else is running away. I, and the rest of the community, thank all of our police men and women for the outstanding service they provide to our community every single day.

IRISH ECHO

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:18): I congratulate the *Irish Echo* on its thirtieth birthday. For 30 years the *Irish Echo* has given a voice to Irish Australians, celebrating the shared culture between the two great nations. Born out of large amounts of Irish immigration to Australia in the 1980s following the Irish recession, the *Irish Echo* tells the stories of expat life. Originally called *The Irish Exile*, the newspaper was renamed in 1992 to what it is now called. The *Irish Echo* is well read in my electorate, which comes as no surprise, as Coogee boasts the second largest Irish community in New South Wales. People with Irish heritage, like myself, make up 13 per cent of the Coogee population, with 5 per cent of the population actually born in the Emerald Isle.

To this day the *Irish Echo* remains a trusted source of news and information for Irish people in Australia, with monthly print editions and regular online articles. I would like to thank Owen Feeney, the Consul General of Ireland in Sydney, for having me at such a significant event. I extend my congratulations to the *Irish Echo* on its thirtieth birthday and to the Irish Australian community for all of their contributions to our shared Australian culture.

MOSMAN PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:19): Last week I had the great pleasure of joining the students and school community of Mosman Preparatory School to welcome the new headmaster, Mr Peter Grimes, at St Clement's Anglican Church in Mosman. I recently spoke about the retirement of headmaster Mr Garry Brown, OAM, after 26 years of excellent service to the school and the community and thanked him for his service. I was very happy to see him at this service when we welcomed Mr Grimes. I thank the Most Reverend Dr Glenn Davies—a Mosman old boy and head of the Anglican Church—for joining us, and the Reverend Stuart Smith, rector of St Clement's Church, who led a wonderful service on the day. I offer my congratulations to Peter as he takes up the mantle of new headmaster. Peter is passionate about ensuring children reach their potential and develop a love of learning. I am sure that Mr Grimes will continue to make certain that Mosman Prep remains an exciting place of learning, challenge and achievement in our local community. I wish him the very best in his new position.

MAITLAND RSL SUB-BRANCH

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (17:20): Last century the inaugural members of the Maitland RSL Sub-Branch pledged to "assist and be a fortress of solitude for current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force-Allied Personnel, and to assist the community in the commemoration of important dates in Australia's military history". What an achievement. I put on the parliamentary record the deep thanks of the people of Maitland who have benefitted from this commitment over the past 100 years. The first annual meeting of the West Maitland Sub-Branch of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League took place at the West Maitland School of Arts on 7 July 1919. On 10 July I was privileged to be among more than 100 guests from around the State who gathered to celebrate the sub-branch's centenary with a lunch at Club Maitland City. I pay particular tribute to Maitland RSL Sub-Branch executive team members Henry Meskauskas, Fred Goode, Eric Bell and Graham Solomons for their exemplary dedication. I particularly thank RSL acting president Ray James and the auxiliary member Mrs Pauline James.

MARK MAGRATH

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (17:21): I acknowledge the retirement of Mr Mark Magrath, Chief Inspector at Sutherland Shire Police Area Command. Mark started his career in the police force in 1984 and took up positions at both Cronulla and Miranda local area commands [LAC]. He was an effective communicator in his role as a police leader in the Sutherland Shire and he was very strong at connecting the local police with the community. For example, in 2016 he was part of Miranda LAC's Community Awareness of Policing Program along with other officers from various units, who delivered an engaging program to inform the community about various aspects of police work. I thank Mark sincerely for his service to the community and I wish him well in his retirement.

JASON WEINSTEIN

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:22): On behalf of the greater Fairfield community I welcome the new area commander of the Fairfield City Police Area Command, Detective Superintendent Jason Weinstein. Jason comes to Fairfield with a wealth of experience and knowledge. The community and I look forward to working with Superintendent Weinstein to improve our local area, while supporting the hardworking police officers of the Fairfield City Police Area Command.

HAWKESBURY CITY NETBALL ASSOCIATION

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (17:22): It is my pleasure to update the House on my attendance on 4 May at the Hawkesbury City Netball Association's official opening day. Netball is the number one team sport for girls in Australia when it comes to participation. I am a big fan of the sport, having played for four decades—that sounds a long time. I experienced firsthand the benefits that netball has for health and social wellbeing. It was a pleasure to be part of the opening parade and witness the passion and competitive spirit of the Hawkesbury netballers. I thank all the volunteers, players and their family and friends for the roles they play in the sport and wish them all the very best for the season.

RANDWICK CITY COUNCIL

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:23): I congratulate Randwick City Council for its positive acknowledgment of Refugee Week. The council organised a screening at Randwick's Ritz Cinema of *Human Flow*, highlighting the plight of refugees. Refugee Week provides a platform where positive images of refugees can be promoted in order to create a welcoming culture throughout Australia. The ultimate aim is to foster cultural understanding between communities. This will encourage successful integration, enabling refugees to live in harmony and continue to make valuable contributions to Australian society. Randwick City Council became a Refugee Welcome Zone in October 2005.

A Refugee Welcome Zone is a local government area which has made a commitment to welcoming refugees, upholding their human rights, demonstrating compassion and enhancing cultural and religious diversity in the community. The Refugee Welcome Zone initiative began in 2002 as part of Refugee Week celebrations. I acknowledge the presenters on the night and thank them for their incredible community-building work—Alison Ryan, a supervising senior solicitor at the Refugee Advice and Casework Service; Philip Feinstein from Music for Refugees; and Rigzin Yuthok, a multicultural youth worker from Sydney Multicultural Community Services.

ASH HARRIGAN AND JEREMY BREDEEN

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (17:24): I acknowledge two great men, Ash Harrigan and Jeremy Breden, who have been awarded life memberships of the Thornleigh Baseball Club. Ash's passion for Thornleigh Baseball Club is without question. He currently serves as president, coach of the A-grade squad and coach of the first grade junior team. His hard work and determination has ensured the club continues to grow and succeed, both in the senior and junior ranks. He is always willing to give up his time to coach aspiring young baseball players and pass on the love of the sport. His A-grade team was successful this year in winning the premierships trophy for the first time in 10 years.

Jeremy first joined the club as a coach for his daughter's T-ball team. It did not take long before he joined a senior team, bringing with him 20 new players. In the 17 years Jeremy has been with the club there has been only one year in which he has not served on the committee, having started as a senior co-ordinator 16 years ago, which is a role he continues today. Although Jeremy no longer plays he continues to umpire senior games, which is where I saw him recently when I attended the Liz McKewin Pink Day. I congratulate Ash and Jeremy and thank them for everything they do. I am certain Thornleigh Baseball Club would not be the successful club it is without their hard work and dedication.

VICKI WATERS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (17:26): Ku-ring-gai has the best public and private schools in Australia. I note the recent departure of one of its principals, Vicki Waters, who has just stepped down after nearly 12 years at the helm of Pymble Ladies College. The college has always boasted a strong academic record and exceptional co-curricular programs. As the head of more than 2,000 students and 600 staff, Vicki introduced a twenty-first century learning culture to the college, providing a more personalised education for the girls, prioritising people and culture and emphasising sustainability and community. Vicki was behind the school's Towards 2020 strategic vision, which has, among other things, enabled the establishment of a forward-facing curriculum that more effectively prepares students for the future with a desire and ability to make a difference in

the world. Rather than guiding her students towards traditional career paths, Vicki has always maintained that, in her words:

Our business is educating the entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders of the future.

I congratulate Vicki on her positive transformation of the college and I wish her well in her future endeavours. I also congratulate the new principal, Dr Kate Hadwen, on her appointment and I look forward to meeting her in the near future.

SAM COBURN AND ALAN CIZZIO

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (17:27): I congratulate Maitland Grossmann High School teacher, Sam Coburn, who has received training at Google's headquarters from maths teacher Eddie Woo, who has his own famous YouTube page with over 600,000 subscribers. This training will assist Ms Coburn to increase the reach of her YouTube channel to assist students across the world. Her channel is called *Geography Explained Online* and was created by Ms Coburn and Alan Cizzio, another geography teacher at Maitland Grossmann. Ms Coburn and Mr Cizzio also utilise other online resources such as giving their students weekly Google classroom quizzes. If a student gets a question wrong, a video is displayed on how to answer the question correctly. Ms Coburn was one of five New South Wales teachers who won the Learning Edge competition, a joint initiative by Teachers Mutual Bank and the NSW Department of Education. Each of the five teachers received \$2,000 for hardware and software needs. It is great news to see teachers at one of Maitland's local high schools being recognised for their efforts in engaging in online teaching methods. I wish them all the best for their hard work and future endeavours.

STUDIO A

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:28): Last week I was delighted to join the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services to visit Studio A at Crows Nest. Studio A is a supported studio that tackles barriers that artists living with intellectual disability face in accessing conventional education, professional development pathways and opportunities needed to be successful and renowned visual artists. I thank the Minister for joining me on the day. I introduced the Minister to Thom Roberts, whom I had met before. He is a performance and graphic artist who is able to quickly translate landscapes and portraits in a traditional and representational style. Most recently Thom was one of 70 artists chosen for the National 2019: New Australian Art at Carriageworks, Eveleigh. For this exhibition he created a series of 16 paintings titled *Thom Roberts Counts Trains*. We also met with Meagan Pelham. Members would have seen her in the recent ABC documentary about Studio A. Studio A helps to reduce the stigma associated with people with disability, increases diversity and inclusion, and helps commercialise their artwork.

Private Members' Statements

DETECTIVE SUPERINTENDENT PETER LENNON RETIREMENT

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:29): On Friday 26 July 2019 the Fairfield community stopped in its tracks to honour Detective Superintendent Peter Lennon, APM, who retired after 40 years of unwavering dedication to the NSW Police Force. With a guard of honour from Fairfield police personnel, mounted police, a Pol-Air helicopter hovering overhead and a fleet of historic patrol vehicles on display, Mr Lennon emerged from the police station for the final time as a superintendent to the touching sound of *Auld Lang Syne* being played on bagpipes and he marched with dignity into retirement. Watched on by the Fairfield community that came out in droves to witness the occasion—many of who were moved to tears simply to witness the event—Mr Lennon was given a final salute by the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force, Mick Fuller. Such was the magnitude of the tremendous send-off that Smart Street—one of the main streets in the Fairfield central business district—was closed to traffic. It was an emotional and fitting send-off for a wonderful leader in the community. I was happy to see that Mr Lennon's family was on hand not only to personally honour him but also to witness the high regard in which he is held by the Fairfield community, where he served for nine years.

Following the march out, Mr Lennon gathered with his family, police representatives, community leaders and guests at Fairfield RSL for speeches and an official farewell. The gathering was a great opportunity for everyone to come together to honour Mr Lennon's work and legacy. Fairfield Police Area Command [PAC] Crime Manager Inspector Ed Walsh was the master of ceremonies and certainly gave the proceedings the respect they thoroughly deserved. The stage was adorned with many framed pieces of police memorabilia highlighting Mr Lennon's achievements over his 40-year career. The pieces were meticulously framed and presented. The gifts of appreciation to Mr Lennon were wonderful tributes to his work during his police career. Speakers included Commissioner Michael Fuller, Deputy Commissioner Jeff Loy, South West Metropolitan Region Commander Assistant Commissioner Peter Thurtell, NSW Police Association President Tony King, Service for the Treatment

and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors CEO Jorge Aroche, Chaldean League President Samir Yousif and several Fairfield PAC officers.

Mr Lennon was always available to engage with all members of the community. To facilitate that engagement in a relaxed atmosphere, rather than what can sometimes be the confronting environment of a police station, he pioneered the "Coffee with a Cop" initiative, which has been running since 2012. Such was its success that it was adopted across New South Wales and, as a result, everyone has the opportunity to have a chat with a police officer in their area over a cup of coffee. Mr Lennon was also the driving force behind the "We are You" campaign and the annual police engagement days. Again, Mr Lennon designed those initiatives with the community in mind to ensure that every opportunity was given for people to express their voice in a comfortable and somewhat social environment. In spite of the struggles that many migrant and refugee families face when settling into a new country, Mr Lennon was a unifying beacon for those people in the Fairfield community. He was a passionate advocate for multicultural families and went well above the call of duty to understand their struggles and ensure that they could truly call Fairfield home.

On behalf of the Fairfield community, I wish Mr Lennon well in his retirement. He more than deserves some well-earned time with his family, who have no doubt made countless sacrifices while he tirelessly served our community. He will be sorely missed and greatly remembered as a pillar of strength who did his utmost to ensure that the community in which we live and work is safe. Under his leadership crime rates in Fairfield have bucked the national trend and have declined in many key areas. The guidance he gave to all those under his command will live on in the officers who continue to serve in the Fairfield PAC. His vision, honesty, caring attitude and loyalty are benchmarks that will no doubt be met by those men and women because they, and the community as a whole, respect him immensely and hold him in such high regard. Goodbye, my friend. The legacy you have left behind will ensure that you will never be forgotten by the Fairfield community.

HARRINGTON LIONS CLUB

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:34): I recognise a valued community service organisation in my electorate that has diligently served the people of Harrington in so many ways for over 43 years—the Harrington Lions Club. Chartered on 15 October 1976 by Lion Paul Flanagan as Charter President, with the support of their "mother club" Taree to guide them, the Harrington Lions Club became the architects behind much project development in the town. The Harrington Lions Club has raised over \$800,000 through the generosity and support of the community, with \$250,000 having been donated to local charities, welfare support groups, sporting bodies, service and community organisations and all the schools, including the annual doorknock appeals for the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and the Royal Society for the Blind. Today the members continue the tradition of putting the community first, securing approximately \$44,000 in government grants and committing over 48,000 man-hours of voluntary work towards community-based projects.

After taking the turn-off from the Pacific Highway into Harrington it is not long before coming across an infrastructure project that has had some affiliation with the local Lions Club. The funding investment given back to the community since the club's inception is simply mind-blowing and includes playground equipment in the Gordon Smith Reserve, landscape design from Club Harrington to the Harrington Boat Ramp, exercise equipment along river pathways, ongoing maintenance at Pilot Hill, construction of a stage at the John Oxley Reserve, the Coopernook forest hut construction, heart defibrillators, emergency lighting for the elderly living alone, bus shelters and literally much more.

In 2019-20 the club is led by President Lion Eric Mason, who is supported by his hardworking directors and members. The club prides itself on the values of "We Serve"—and the fact that nothing could be more true is evidenced by the work the club members have carried out across the community. Whenever there is an event on the community calendar we know that the Harrington Lions Club will be there to lend a hand. Last year the Harrington Lions Club was instrumental in the 2018 John Oxley celebrations that marked the area's settlement by British naval officer John William Molesworth Oxley, who discovered the east coast of northern New South Wales on 19 October 1818. The organisation played a pivotal role during the event, which included street parades and town criers as well as behind-the-scenes preparation to ensure the biggest event in the town's history was a huge success.

Each year the people of Harrington mark on their calendar the annual Carols by Candlelight that is enjoyed by all ages, with sausage sizzles, music and entertainment—and of course it is coordinated by the local Lions Club. On Harrington Heritage Day the Lions members are again out in force, putting their master chef skills to the test, offering hot dogs and hamburgers with proceeds going towards local charities and planned projects for the region. Of course, it would not be a Lions Club without the primary cooking skills required to chargrill the snags and fry the onions! I can vouch from experience that the Harrington Lions are the masterminds of the barbecue.

In the last round of the Community Building Partnerships program it was a pleasure to announce a grant of \$18,000 towards a new barbecue trailer for the club to use for catering purposes. At this year's Anzac Day dawn service in Harrington, I was delighted to see the new trailer put to the test as locals flocked for breakfast at a cost of a gold coin donation. Cooking up a storm that morning was Lions outgoing President Mike Kelly, incoming President Eric Mason, the president of the RSL, and Lions members Bill Burgess, Steve Mason, Arthur Hudson, Rick Higgins and Darryl Steer. If there were ever a club to be honoured for its service and commitment to people in need and to the community at large, it would have to be the Harrington Lions Club. The town is all the richer to have the Lions Club and its members. I sincerely thank each of them for their contribution that really does rival most others—not just locally, but on the national stage.

DEBORAH HUTCHENS

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections) (17:37): Albeit an honour, it is with some sadness that I draw to the attention of friends in this House and the people of New South Wales one of my dearest friends and a devoted servant of Lane Cove, Deborah Hutchens. Even as the steady drumbeat of time marches on, one thing is permanent in Lane Cove—its natural abundance of constituents who are ready to roll up their sleeves and who are selflessly dedicated to our beautiful little corner of New South Wales. Deborah is truly one of those souls. Born in Adelaide, Deborah had a fortunate upbringing and enjoyed a successful commercial career throughout several industries. She helped run a computer bureau and served as an executive assistant with a few high -profile companies.

At age 52, Deborah decided to fulfil a lifelong dream and became a hairdresser. She capped off her training at 54 by being awarded the State Junior Hairdressing Champion title—further confirmation of my belief that she has always been a cut above the rest! Fortunately for us in Lane Cove, 29 years ago Deborah saw the light and moved to our electorate where she and her husband, Robin, raised two beautiful daughters. She threw herself into our community, serving as a teacher's assistant for children with disability and contributing to police liaison groups as well as her local branch of Neighbourhood Watch for 10 years. Deborah is a director for Sydney Community Services, which provides excellent services such as Meals on Wheels to many. Deborah is a board member on the Lane Cove Retirement Units Association, where she has gone above and beyond, taking time to meet and chat with applicants who are financially struggling so she can provide as much tailored assistance as possible.

It is no surprise with Deborah's lineage that she felt a calling for politics. Her grandfather was the Mayor of Kensington in Adelaide, and her father served as a councillor on Burnside council. Elected with a wave of public support, Deborah has now served as a councillor for seven years, including two as mayor. Her achievements include introducing the Lane Cove Food and Wine Festival, creating localised events for International Women's Day and developing the Hold My Hand initiative, which is focused on improving children's safety around motor vehicles. In her role of mayor, she also led the defence against the proposed amalgamations. As per her character, Deborah's showed age is but a number; she attended her first protest rally at Martin Place at 68 years of age. It is symbolic of Deborah's character that she always lives life to the fullest.

Unfortunately, Deborah is now recovering from her third stroke. It came as no surprise to those who know Deborah to see the entire community come out to support her. The town choir, council workers, small business owners, community groups and locals have come out in droves to send their love, thoughts and prayers to her in this tough period. Deborah, I offer you the words of Saint Francis, "Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you'll be doing the impossible." Know that every step of the way we will be there, side by side. We look forward to Deborah returning to her service on Lane Cove Council shortly and to serving on those boards in the community.

ALPINE UNITING CHURCH

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (17:41): I inform the House about an amazing community organisation in the Monaro, the Alpine Uniting Church, Jindabyne. We are fortunate to have some incredibly hardworking volunteers and community groups who selflessly give back to their community. Last Friday the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans, the Hon. John Sidoti, and I met with members of the church to tour its newly opened op shop and speak to them about its work in the community. It is truly incredible what the church achieves, and I am always humbled to have the opportunity to meet with community champions. The motto of the church is to redeem, re-use and recycle, which encapsulates its efforts to ensure sustainability of its work.

The op shop, which was officially opened on Monday 22 July, has an incredible amount on offer—for the Alpine Uniting Church facility "op shop" is an understatement. The op shop is more of an emporium that has a variety of things to offer—from toys and shoes to clothing and necessities for the snow. There is just about everything in the shop. It is not just the op shop that offers locals and visitors a great experience; on Mondays,

Wednesdays and Saturdays during the busy winter period the church runs a soul food kitchen. It provides a number of meals for people in Jindabyne and for those who visit. I could not believe it when we were told that over a four-week period it had served approximately 1, 600 meals. The church has 10 seasonal volunteers, and in total 42 people actively volunteer their time in the op shop or the community kitchen. Some of the youngest volunteers are still in school, which is a fantastic reflection of community supporting community. I also think the diverse range of people who are involved with the good work that the Alpine Uniting Church undertakes goes beyond church members; it is more the broader community.

The church accepts the equivalent of nine shipping containers of donated goods per year and, on average, will feed approximately 4,000 meals a year. Recently they partnered with Foodbank—a significant organisation that reaches all corners of this State—to assist the Jindabyne region. For those who do not know, late last year the New South Wales Government partnered with Foodbank and we are picking up the tab for freight. Previously any organisation partnered with Foodbank had to pay \$50 a pallet for food to go to regional New South Wales. We believed that was a disadvantage so we are funding the freight component. Since then, as part of an election commitment, we have partnered with Foodbank to offer schoolchildren breakfast in 500 schools across the State. That is another initiative of this Government to work with communities.

A banner on the wall of the Alpine Uniting Church says, "It's over our services and food that hearts are opened, fears are revealed and love is expressed". I think that quote is truly reflective of the nature of churches, community groups and organisations in rural and regional Australia. As the son of Italian parents, we do everything through food—we celebrate through food, we commiserate through food and we love through food. The quote on that banner touched me. It really did send the message home as to what happens in my community. I commend the Alpine Uniting Church for their success and I wish them the very best for the future. I truly believe they are there for the betterment of the community. Often in public discourse churches are used for political debate. The truth is that churches have underpinned rural and regional communities for many decades. They have been the safety net for our communities. They have been the organisations supporting communities when government has not been there. I believe that in rural and regional New South Wales—and Australia—it is the churches that do their utmost to make sure our communities are not left behind. That is no different with the Alpine Uniting Church in Jindabyne.

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENT SCHEME

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (17:45): I raise the concerns of many of my local constituents following the rollout of the Additional Assistance Payment Scheme. When the Point to Point Transport (Taxi and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016 was passed by the New South Wales Parliament industry participants, such as taxi licence-plate holders, were promised that they would be fairly compensated by the Government as part of the deregulation of their industry. While it is bad enough that the final tranche of compensation payments promised at that time were only rolled out by 30 June this year—three years after they were first promised—there remain a number of major issues causing significant hardship to those members of our community who invested in this government-backed and regulated asset in good faith.

Firstly, there remains an urgent need for the State Government to make representations to their Federal counterparts regarding the tax treatment and Centrelink assessment of the additional assistance payments. As I have said repeatedly, it is only fair that since taxi plate owners are essentially being compensated for the significant decline in their asset value, the State Government should declare all payments under the compensation scheme be considered capital adjustments. This did not happen with the \$20,000-per-plate transitional assistance payment. As a result, taxi plate holders generally had to pay out thousands of dollars in tax as part of their assessable income when they received those payments. It is truly unfortunate that the Government made the same mistake again with the Additional Assistance Payment Scheme. Once again, significant portions of these payments are going straight to Federal revenue.

Worse still, while the State Government eventually reached an agreement that transitional assistance payments would not be assessed for the purposes of Centrelink payments, pensioners are once again going through incredible heartache with additional assistance payments being included as income for Centrelink purposes. The combined effects of these two factors mean that one of my constituents who has received \$72,000 in additional assistance payments will receive a net benefit of just \$19,000, once you consider the loss of his and his wife's part pension and the tax they will have to pay. Here is a basic tip for those members opposite: It is not normal in our Federation for State Governments to subsidise the Feds!

The second major issue continues to be the gross inadequacy of compensation offered to taxi plate owners. Taxi plates have historically been a government-regulated asset. The State Government sold many of those plates, and was happy to accept the revenue generated or gave them away to deserving groups such as war widows. With those sales came the promise that the Government would regulate and protect the point-to-point transport sector—that what people were investing in was similar to a government bond. In September 2012 taxi

plates were trading at an average of \$430,000 each—this being prior to the rise of ridesharing services in Sydney. It was not uncommon for retirees, particularly those from migrant backgrounds, to invest their life savings in taxi plates because they were seen as a secure way to fund their retirements.

Today those same taxi plates are trading at well under \$100,000 each, amounting to a loss in capital value of more than \$350,000 per plate. That is a huge loss for any investor and is almost incomprehensible for many retirees who thought the Government had promised to look after them when they invested in taxi plates. When the Government has paid out an average of only around \$50,000 per plate in compensation for losses of up to \$350,000 it makes one question whether the Government scheme can even be called compensation. I understand that the holders of hire car licences have been compensated fully based on the cost of their investment so I do not understand why taxi plate holders do not deserve the same consideration. Currently the State Government levies \$1 per point-to-point journey to fund the scheme. Extending the levy until the taxi plate holders are fully paid out on their good-faith investment is all it would take to compensate them more fairly.

STARS OF PARRAMATTA EVENT

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (17:50): It gives me great pleasure to talk about an important Cancer Council charity event, Stars of Parramatta – Dance for Cancer, that was held on Saturday 27 July at Parramatta RSL. Stars of Parramatta aims to bring together the community and create awareness about the Cancer Council's important work in research, prevention and advocacy, and provide information and support programs in the Parramatta region. The event organisers hope that raising awareness and funds will ensure that those services continue into the future. The massive \$95,000 that the Cancer Council raised from this event will go towards world-class research.

I acknowledge the community stars of the evening: Annika Hedge, volunteer at Westmead Cancer Council; Brian Chamroeun, cafe all-rounder at Coffee Emporium; Teresa D'Amico, owner of Td'a Mobile Hairdressing; Darryn Capes-Davis, head of operations at the Children's Medical Research Institute; Luis Martinez, owner of Vision Personal Training in Parramatta; Natalie Kessell, founder of Pink Hibiscus; Sherwin Djamil, owner of Soul Origin; Sergeant Marcus Collins from Parramatta Police Area Command; Rachel Ferris, human resources manager at Castle Hill RSL Group; and Senior Constable Rebecca Monin from Parramatta Police Area Command.

The "stars" trained for eight to 12 weeks with a professional dancer to learn a routine. I applaud Ismat and Zahid, directors of Zara World Travel and the first ever star-duo entry. The event would not be possible without the support of local dance studios and dancers, including Arthur Murray Parramatta, Powerhouse Dance Factory, Move with Me Dance Studio and Nartan Institute of Performing Arts. The dance genres that the stars performed ranged from Bollywood to Brazilian samba, musical theatre to jazz and modern contemporary to tango.

It was a fun and entertaining evening but there was a serious message. In Australia one in two men and one in three women will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85. Cancer is the leading cause of death in the country and accounts for about three in 10 deaths. The number of new cancer cases diagnosed will rise from 130,470 to 150,000 by 2020. The Cancer Council is 95 per cent community funded. It makes a difference by providing information and support services to all people affected by cancer. The support services include the Cancer Council Information Service at Westmead Hospital's Crown Princess Mary Cancer Centre, where Cancer Council volunteers provide support to more than 3,000 cancer patients every year. The event and many other wonderful activities organised by the Cancer Council would not have been possible without the hard work of the dedicated employees and volunteers at the Cancer Council.

I recognise community relations coordinator Hanna Moore and volunteer MP liaison officer Caroline Raunjak for their contributions. I congratulate Caroline on four years of tireless work to support the Cancer Council and its activities. Tomorrow is Jeans for Genes Day and I commend Caroline for manning the Jeans for Genes booth from 6.00 a.m. at Parramatta station. I look forward to seeing Caroline and all the volunteers and staff from the Cancer Council, who are raising significant funds. Caroline is not backward in coming forward. She tells the Government what it needs to know and she advocates for very important issues such as immunotherapy treatments and palliative care responsibilities in the community. Caroline has my utmost respect for all the work she does. I have related her personal story before in Parliament to highlight the important work of the Cancer Council. On behalf of all members in this place, I congratulate the Cancer Council and Caroline on their contributions.

RANDWICK BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL AND RANDWICK GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:55): Today I speak about Randwick Boys' High School and Randwick Girls' High School. During the 2019 State election campaign the Government admitted that there was both a capacity problem and an infrastructure problem in high schools across the Eastern Suburbs. To address

this, the Liberal Party and its candidate for Coogee committed to major upgrades to both Randwick Boys High School and Randwick Girls' High School—a well overdue and welcome announcement. I make particular reference to the specific use of the word "major", which is both on the campaign site for the Liberal candidate for Coogee and on the party's printed campaign material. This word, although of broad use, has a very particular meaning when included as a line item in the State budget.

Therefore, it was incredibly disappointing to see that in the 2019-20 budget the Government has significantly downgraded its commitment and budgeted only for minor upgrades. Terminology, as the people in this place well know, is significant. Major upgrades are classified as works costing in excess of \$250,000 while minor upgrades are those costing less than \$250,000. This downgrade is a complete backflip on the Government's election position and its promise to bring much-needed infrastructure improvements and upgrades to the only public high schools in my electorate. This Government is failing to properly provide modern infrastructure and properly fund schools for the people of Coogee.

I am committed to ensuring that the public high schools in my electorate are properly funded and resourced. Having spoken at length with representatives of both P&Cs, local educators and students, it is clear that the community is crying out for these major infrastructure upgrades. The decision to downgrade the funding is a cause for significant concern among students, staff and local residents alike. What is even more concerning than the downgrade is that the Government has attempted to use a first-year accounting trick to sneak further underfunding under the radar. Randwick Girls' and Randwick Boys high schools are two separate high schools serving different needs. Yet they have been included in the same line item in the 2019-20 budget, meaning that not only have the promised upgrades been downgraded from major to minor, but also the funds for those upgrades are now to be divided between the two schools.

As such, at an absolute maximum, each school will have access to only \$125,000 for upgrades in the next financial year—hardly enough to buy paint for either school, let alone pay the people to paint it. Do the Premier and the education Minister have such little concern for the people of Coogee that they believe less than \$250,000 divided between two schools is enough to solve their significant infrastructure issues? What is this backflip about? The underhanded accounting shows us that the Government does not care for public schools in New South Wales, especially now in the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney and my electorate of Coogee.

I am here to represent the Randwick Boys and Randwick Girls' school communities who are frustrated with the ongoing delays to their upgrades and that this Government is not listening to their concerns. Many believe this delay is a result of the community consultation process that occurred recently regarding the potential to convert Randwick Boys to a co-educational school. This decision is still pending, despite the department telling the community that it was to be made in the first half of this year. It is also impossible to get any clarification of the decision. A recent freedom of information request made by my office was refused by the education department due to "a conclusive presumption of an overriding public interest consideration against disclosure".

The notice of decision goes on to explain that disclosure of the information would reveal the position the Minister would likely take on the matter. Of course, the purpose of the Government Information (Public Access) Act request was to determine whether the Government has a plan for a public high school in the Eastern Suburbs and, if so, what it is. If the Government will not give us an answer through the departmental channels then the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning should provide some answers through the parliamentary channels.

This week I asked the Minister a question on notice on public schooling in the Eastern Suburbs. I have also written to her office about the decision to downgrade the funding commitments to Randwick Boys and Randwick Girls' high schools. Today I speak on the same topic. I urge the Premier and the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning to reconsider their approach to upgrades—or downgrades—to Randwick Boys and Randwick Girls' high schools for the sake of children across the Eastern Suburbs. The Government said, "We can have it all." Well, where is it?

TRIBUTE TO MARY TARR

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (18:00): I acknowledge the spirit, commitment, contribution and sheer drive of a wonderful country lady who recently passed on in Kempsey. Mary Evelyn Tarr, nee Davies, was born on 19 May 1934, the first child and only daughter of the late Stan and Mary Davies. Mary, together with her three brothers, who she adored, was reared on the family beef cattle property in Upper Macleay, 63 miles upriver from Kempsey and the same distance from Armidale.

Mary had much good in her life, but she also experienced tragedy. In 2010 her brother Bruce lost his life in tragic circumstances in a home invasion in Kempsey. The event scarred her and her family tremendously. The perpetrators were caught and are serving time but it had a horrendous impact on the family and community. Mary

received her education via correspondence school. Her mother supervised the lessons, which were sent from Sydney by mail and then returned for comment and correction. She ceased formal education at 14 but was one of the most articulate and well-read people I have ever met.

She remained on the farm until her early twenties, working with cattle and horses, for which she developed a great love. Mary taught herself office work and typing, which led to her obtaining the first office position available for a female at the Kempsey Macleay RSL Club. She had a year's stint at Radio 2KM—which is where my electorate office is located—followed by 10 years of office work at South West Rocks Country Club. She used to travel the 30 kilometres to and from the club on a motor scooter in all weathers. Mary was strong and stood up for what she believed. A staunch anti-unionist, she was asked to join the union that serviced the club, but she resisted fiercely. The situation escalated to the point where the club was going to close if she did not sign up. On the day of reckoning she rode to work as usual to find that the club had decided to employ her as management staff, thereby avoiding the union.

Mary was a wonderful wife. She cared for her husband, Rod, a returned veteran who had serious health problems. Following Rod's passing, Mary spent another 10 years working and finally retired at the age of 67. She was never without a book or newspaper. Later in her life, with time on her hands, she became a newsagents' delight. She was track-side on racecourses across eastern Australia. It was a rare Saturday that she missed her racing. For years she served on Kempsey Race Club committees and was awarded Committee Person of the Year for the Mid North Coast Racing Association. Such was her commitment that at one time she was a registered breeder, owner, strapper, trustee for Warwick Park, race club committee member, keen punter and journalist, writing Kempsey race meeting reports for newspapers.

Mary was a regular blood donor and was the first local female to reach 100 donations through the Kempsey blood bank. She was appointed a justice of the peace for New South Wales at the age of 22 and was said to be the youngest female in the State to hold the position. In 1963 Mary joined the Kempsey Macleay RSL women's auxiliary and worked to better the lot of servicemen for the rest of her life. She held every office bearer's position and was awarded life membership. She was an Olympic torch carrier in the 2000 games, nearly 50 years after her brothers were torch carriers in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics.

I knew Mary through my party, The Nationals. She was always a very strong figure within our party on the mid North Coast. I am very sad that she has gone because she brought belief, courage and a fierce determination for us to keep doing what we need to do to represent our constituents. She loved her Upper Macleay. She was a passionate supporter of bore hazard reduction. She was fearful for the Great Dividing Range and the challenges that we face. She was a fierce supporter of horses and of the timber industry. She loved her timber industry, the great cedar trees and the fact that now the timber from our region is in Barangaroo, providing decoration and floor boards and an industry and jobs. I will always hold her torch and her legacy, and fight for what she believed in. From our party, as a member of our party and of her community, I am so proud to have known her. I genuinely thank her and her family for all that she gave us.

TUGGERAH LAKES

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (18:05): I read from a speech about Tuggerah Lakes by Zaxson Eaton, a year 10 student from my area. The speech is called "Once Upon a Time" and encompasses some of the big issues facing our local lakes system. Zaxson says:

Tuggerah lakes were pristine with clear water, clean sand and full of an abundance of marine life like huge sea mullet, snapper, jewfish, red bream, sea horses, octopus you name it, Tuggerah Lakes had it!

But sadly this is a fairy tale to most!

People do not know what it used to be like or understand. And unless you are 70 years old plus, you probably don't know the truth or would not have seen it in its natural state.

Lack of flow due to changes by Munmorah power station and ash dams are the key problem commercialized pollution is mainly what has made it what it is today.

In reality, urban pollution is only part of the reason. And only happens when it rains.

Some other key reasons for Tuggerah lakes being this way are, infilled areas, urban pollution, rutile mining, farming, and stormwater runoff, But is mainly because of lack of responsibility by the government bureaucracy and big Businesses loopholes and urbanization.

If I were to talk about all of these I'd be here for years so I'm just going to talk about Munmorah power station.

Munmorah power station was a coal-fired electricity power station built in 1967 and has had a heavy impact on the lakes, but now is demolished. The station was located near Doyalson, on the shores of Lake Munmorah, and was owned and operated by Delta Electricity, a company owned by the New South Wales Government.

Munmorah power station drew cooling water from Lake Munmorah and discharged it into Budgewoi lake for condenser cooling. The power station circulated 4,600 ML of water per day which is equivalent to 25% of the total volume of water in Lake Munmorah.

Before the power station was built lake Munmorah and Budgewoi lake had separate water bodies. Munmorah power station had a measurable impact on the hydrology and limnology of Lake Munmorah and Budgewoi Lake which caused the two lakes to have a common water body and the natural circulation to change completely. This unnatural circulation continued for over 50 years.

Before the power station was built the main channel from Toukley bridge to the original point just before Budgewoi creek, was 6 feet deep at high tide and 2 feet at low tide. When the power station was first getting built they dredged the channel to 15 feet deep digging through the sand at the bottom into the mud and dredging most of the bottom of Lake Munmorah and lessening the effect of the tide.

This was done to provide sufficient circulation of cooling water for the power station.

This resulted in the temperature of the lake dropping. They trucked the diggings to surrounding wetlands and filled them to make land for all the sporting ovals in the area. They piped and pumped some of the dredgings across what was called the big sand and filled a stretch of wetland South of Budgewoi now used as the golf course. This area was recorded in historical documents from the early 1800s that it should be preserved and protected because it was a unique and important breeding ground.

Ash was produced by the burning of coal at the power station. They disposed of the ash by creating ash dams. The ash dam was made in natural wetlands although every other country line the ash dams we do not.

Back then we did not. The speech continues: People living within one mile of an unlined ash dam have a 1 in 50 risks of cancer. The ash dams are filled with various chemicals like asbestos, arsenic, lead, mercury, and selenium, as well as aluminium, barium, boron, and chlorine. All can be toxic. The ash dams are the Colongra Creek Dam and also Lake Mannering (which is Vales point ash dam). These ash dams seep into Lake Macquarie and Lake Munmorah. Damaging the lakes and killing lots of marine life not to mention health issues. Not long ago I went near the ash dam at Lake Mannering on a boat and all the environment surrounding the area of the ash dam is dead. It was like something out of a movie after a nuclear war. They are now filling in the ash dams using dirt they are getting from fill from building freeways.

Throughout the last 52 years, there have been 3 stages of ecosystems in the lakes. The first ecosystem is when the lakes were still in its original pristine untouched state before the power station was built. The second is the unnatural stage while the power station was built and running.

The third ecosystem is what it is now, after the power station has stopped pumping and left the lakes abandoned, leaving nature to fix their mistakes. In 2015 the NSW government sold the power station for 1 million dollars, selling their problems to the new owners, then just a year later was valued at 730 million.

The new owners have found a loophole so they don't have to fix anything, not on the land of the power station and there is a 70-year-old contract that says they don't have to fix anything till they have finished.

To explain to you about everything would take months because there are just so many changes made. What the power station has done to the lakes is wrong full stop!

They need to take responsibility and return it to how it was or there needs to be a royal commission on the lakes, Power station, Delta and the Government.

A very insightful speech from a year 10 student.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:10): As we celebrate Local Government Week this week, I recognise the important work carried out by our local councils each day. My electorate of Hawkesbury has three councils—Hornsby Shire Council, Hawkesbury City Council and The Hills Shire Council, on which I have served as a councillor for the past 10 years and as deputy mayor for a period. I am proud of our councils and take this opportunity to impress on this place that local government is so much more than rates, roads and rubbish. I am sure most members know that councils are, in essence, the backbone of our communities, delivering vital services and facilities to the areas and residents they represent.

As a whole, local government controls assets worth more than \$150 billion, which eclipses the net worth of Microsoft founder Bill Gates. The assets include 165,000 kilometres of road, 460 swimming pools and over 1,500 public halls. Combined with billions of dollars in buildings and structures and water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure, local government's asset holdings place it in a strong position in the community. Our councils provide a wide range of services and facilities to our local communities, including libraries, roads, waste collection, footpaths, parks, pools and animal shelters; I think I have seen them all in each of the three councils in my electorate. However, our modern-day councils go so much further, providing a diverse range of quality facilities and services, including art and cultural centres, regional sporting complexes, childcare centres, museums and galleries.

Not only do councils manage and deliver these essential services, structures and facilities, but also councils manage a strong workforce. Across New South Wales, local government employees total over 45,000 people, including architects, town planners, engineers, gardeners, landscapers, rangers and garbage collectors, to name a few. However, the success of our local councils would not be possible if not for the support of the New South Wales Government. Since coming to government in 2011 the Liberal-Nationals Government

has invested more than \$9 billion in local government to guarantee councils' success in delivering for their communities.

The Liberal-Nationals Government has made record investments in projects such as road upgrades, sporting facilities, community building projects and cycleways for the residents of the three councils in my electorate alone. The Government's support goes further since the passage of the Local Government Amendment Act 2019 in June this year. By improving the regulatory burden on both councils and the community, this significant piece of legislation will ensure that councils and ratepayers are better off. I thank Shelley Hancock, Minister for Local Government, for her passion and advocacy for local government. The Minister has been involved in local government for 16 years and I know that she will continue to ensure that this Government supports local councils. As I said earlier, local government is the backbone of our communities. Councils contribute massively to the landscapes of our cities and towns, approving development applications in consultation with the community. Councils bring about constructive collaboration between stakeholders and the community, which ensures that the services and infrastructure that are needed are delivered.

This year's Local Government Week theme is Your Council, and I encourage each of my colleagues in this place to take part in the many events that are happening across the State. I was fortunate to be able to start my political career in council, and I treasure the knowledge and experience I have gained in the last decade. Local government has always been, and will continue to be, a priority for this Government. I thank the New South Wales Government for its commitment in this space.

WENTWORTH POINT

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (18:14): Tonight I will speak about one particular part of my electorate—the area known as Wentworth Point, which is a peninsula on which there has been a State Government-led development. It was originally envisaged that it would have around 11,000 residences but there are now about 20,000 residences. The area is absolutely jam-packed and it is predicted that 45,000 people will move into the precinct. Given that the Government made the decisions about the development of the peninsula and the density of the housing, one could have expected good planning procedures to be followed and that infrastructure would have been built before, or at least concurrently with, the movement of people into the area—particularly when 20 new high-rise towers were being built. That has not happened at Wentworth Point.

Residents who originally bought housing after looking at the urban planning designs for the area will still be wondering why, years later, the beautiful parklands around the waterfront have not yet been built. It was promised that the waterfront park would be opened in 2016 before the public school, which was due to open in 2017. The public school did not open until 2018. The park is still essentially a blank site. The Government says that earthworks are now starting, three years after the date that the park was meant to be completed. The public school is already at capacity, and there is no money in the budget for the high school that the Government promised eight years ago. I have met with the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning, the Hon. Sarah Mitchell, who has undertaken to get the planning process started. I hope that, at least in that respect, we can give the residents of Sydney Olympic Park some good news.

My real concern is with the Government's plans for stage two of the light rail from Parramatta, which the Minister spoke about earlier today. The residents are not concerned so much about the time frame of stage two; they are more concerned that the amount of development on this peninsula has resulted in much more traffic. With 20,000 dwellings in the area and only one way out, the intersection of Hill Road and Bennelong Parkway has become extraordinarily dangerous. There have been a number of accidents there. One could have expected there to be some kind of traffic management for that road but at the moment there is none. That is because the council refuses to do anything until the Government comes clean about its plans for stage two and confirms them.

Representatives of the light rail project have written to City of Parramatta Council saying that they do not think the light rail will impact on the intersection. In March 2019 the program manager for Parramatta Light Rail wrote to the council stating that the light rail was unlikely to impact on the intersection as the alignment would pass behind the intersection. They undertook to confirm, by mid-2019, that this was the case. It is mid-2019 now, and that confirmation is yet to be received. We cannot allow this intersection to remain the way it is because it is already dangerous. Responsibility for the intersection has been shuffled between the State Government and the council. The council could quite easily say that it will not do any work because the State Government is holding it up.

The State Government only has to do one thing: confirm that its plans do not take the light rail through this intersection. Then we can get the council, which has this plan at the top of its list, to start work. The failure by the Government to do that creates a great risk to pedestrians of motor vehicle accidents at that intersection. We already have a number of problems with the M4. The Government has shown poor planning further along on Hill Road, where the southern side of the electorate cannot access the M4 because the Government has not put

any management in place. Let's not repeat the mistakes evident in Parramatta where poor planning on road infrastructure projects has led to a number of problems where fatalities and vehicle accidents have been the unfortunate result.

SYDNEY GAY AND LESBIAN MARDI GRAS WORLDPRIDE BID

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (18:20): I speak in support of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras bid to host WorldPride in 2023. As many members would know, Mardi Gras is a major tourism and cultural event for Sydney which attracts tens of thousands of visitors and raises tens of millions of dollars across our city. Should we host WorldPride in 2023, the Mardi Gras would be supercharged, with more money for local businesses and, indeed, more visitors across our great city. WorldPride is a massive LGBTIQ event of festivals, parades, activities and conferences that celebrates the achievements of past heroes who have helped produce reforms and the rich cultural diversity of LGBTIQ communities. It puts a focus on reforms needed to advance equality and remove discrimination across the world.

I was fortunate enough to attend the recently held WorldPride in New York, which commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the Stonewall riots of 1969, where tensions between police and gay residents erupted following a raid on the Stonewall Inn where officers lost control. From this came an activist movement that spread across the world. It was one of the contributing factors to the origins of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. WorldPride was hosted in Rome in 2000, Jerusalem in 2006, London in 2012, Toronto in 2014, Madrid in 2017 and, as I have already mentioned, New York City in 2019. In 2021 it will be held in Copenhagen. Sydney's bid for WorldPride is supported by all levels of government. The Federal Government and the Federal tourism Minister have supported the bid. I am proud to say the State Government has also supported the bid and our Lord Mayor and the City of Sydney are strong supporters of Sydney's bid for WorldPride in 2023.

As the member for Sydney I am hopeful that a successful bid for WorldPride 2023 will allow us the opportunity to showcase our city and what will have been achieved by that point. There has been a massive investment in the arts in Sydney. I pay tribute to the work done by the Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts, the Hon. Don Harwin, in this space. He is also a strong supporter of this bid. I look forward to my work with the committee inquiring into Sydney's late-night economy. I hope that we are able to revive Sydney's late-night economy in time for what I hope will be a successful bid for 2023. And, of course, the light rail is on track to be running at that time.

A lot of great stuff will be happening in Sydney. I think our city will be flourishing and it will be a wonderful time for us to showcase our city to international visitors. In addition to showcasing Sydney it will be important to have a focus on this part of the world for the global LGBTI activist community. We have seen the success that can be achieved when we focus our attention on one area by the successful campaign for marriage equality in Taiwan recently but there is a lot more to do. Throughout the Asia-Pacific region there are a number of countries in which being gay is still criminalised and there is a lot more work to do. Hosting WorldPride in Sydney will put the world's focus on the Asia-Pacific region and will encourage and bring together activists from around the world to make our region a fairer and more equal place for all. I encourage all members of this Parliament and all members of InterPride, the governing body that will decide who will have WorldPride in 2023, to support Sydney's bid and to vote for Sydney's bid for WorldPride. This would be the first time that WorldPride would be held in the Southern Hemisphere. What a wonderful and important time to bring the focus of the world to our region and to celebrate our great global city.

WORLD SCOUT DAY

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (18:24): I take the opportunity to highlight the importance of 1 August for 50 million people around the world—75,000 of them in Australia and more than a quarter of those in New South Wales. These people are Scouts and today is World Scout Day. Scouting began 111 years ago. It grew from a small camp of 20 boys in 1907 into a global movement resolved to help develop young people into the resilient, capable and compassionate leaders of the future. Some of the oldest and longest continually active Scout groups of Australia are in New South Wales. Today there are 415 Scout groups across our State in both metropolitan and regional areas, serving their local communities. Their diversity reflects the richness of our State.

To continue attracting members Scouting has had to change. Even today Scouting is introducing a new youth program and sharpening its focus on a program that is youth-led with adult support. These are the biggest changes in over a generation. No longer the Boy Scouts, females have been members since 1973 and today account for almost 40 per cent of youth involved. More than just camping, rope work and lighting fires, the modern scouting activity program is filled with outdoor adventure and community endeavours providing a learning environment and growth opportunity for every Scout, no matter their gender, heritage, location or age.

The protection of young people is of the highest priority for the nearly 5,000 Scout leaders in this State. The child protection policies and focus on youth safety underpins every aspect of the movement. Youth members know they have a right to feel safe and are confident to call out any situation where they may need support. Mental health is an important element of Scouting. With the increased prevalence of youth mental health issues in our communities, leaders and Rovers—the oldest youth members—are learning and teaching youth mental health first aid.

Diversity and inclusion are part of the Scouting DNA. In New South Wales the Scouts has faith-based groups, culture-based groups and ability-based groups. Service remains an important part of what Scouts do. Today service means considering the wider needs of communities, including the environment, seeking out ways to ensure inclusion and connectedness of people and demonstrating how today's youth can be part of decision-making for tomorrow. In New South Wales dedicated adults in Scouting provide 1.5 million hours of volunteering each year. It is just amazing. This equates to an annual injection of some \$66 million into the development of youth in this State. In a way Scouting is an essential service. Scouts are change agents helping to create a better world.

In my electorate of Hornsby I know we have some of the most dedicated volunteers in the Scout movement. I was proud to award the Hornsby Community Service Award for 2018 to Benowie District Scout leader Peter Quirke, known to everyone as Noddy. Peter has dedicated countless years to the Scouting movement, including organising the annual Easter district Scout camp, which I have attended for many years to take part in the flour and water fight. I am still finding flour in my car. I think Noddy enjoys a little too much seeing me get hammered in the flour fight. My friend Mel Knudson from Berowra Scouts is another volunteer who works exceptionally hard to ensure the success of her local group with her husband, Dave Antrim.

I have been proud to be part of many award ceremonies at Dural, Hornsby Heights and Berowra. I have seen firsthand the dedication of the volunteers and the joy kids get out of the programs run by their local Scout group. I also recently attended the Hornsby Gang Show and was blown away by the talent on stage. I congratulate production director Rebecca Canty, who was assisted by Lauren Webb, Julia Ranton and Cameron Porter. While show designers Erin Whyley and Kathleen Walker did an exceptional job of wowing the crowd, I know there are many more who were involved in the success of this production and each and every one should be immensely proud of what they achieved.

Over the last 12 months Scouts NSW has seen an increase in youth members of 3.4 per cent. This is the highest of any branch in Australia. Scouts NSW is today a much more confident organisation than it has been for a long time. I congratulate all the volunteer leaders and supporters of Scouts NSW for these wonderful results. In particular, I pay tribute to and congratulate Chief Commissioner Neville Tomkins, OAM, JP, as an outstanding leader and an outstanding individual. I thank him for his exceptional leadership in reviving scouting across New South Wales. We also compliment his leadership team of region commissioners, deputy chief commissioners and State commissioners, as well as the Scouts Australia NSW Board of Directors and professional staff. I know from personal experience it has been a strong team effort.

Today young people and adult volunteers are wearing the Scout scarf with great pride to mark World Scout Day. The Scout scarf is a strong symbol. It stands for a promise that Scouts have made and a law to which they have committed. Their promise is to commit to honour, duty and helping others. The Scout law states: "Be respectful, Do what is right, Believe in myself". I urge all members to support Scouting across our State and to give it the support it deserves. Scouting is not only the largest youth development organisation in New South Wales but is also one of the great values-based institutions of our time. I commend the extraordinary work of the Scouting community across New South Wales.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (18:29): I speak about a very important industry that spends over \$11 billion a year on infrastructure, facilities and services and affects everyone on a daily basis. It is only fitting that I take this opportunity in Local Government Week to speak about the necessary work carried out by local governments every day, of which many of us are unaware. Local councils play important roles in our community—from collecting our rubbish bins to maintaining our pathways and parklands—which can often be taken for granted. Who knew it was such a big organisation? As a councillor and former mayor, I am only too aware of the significant impact councils have on our communities.

With 128 councils across the State, local government employs over 45,000 people in New South Wales, which is equivalent to the global workforce of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. Those jobs vary extensively, from engineers and town planners to gardeners and rangers. Local government provides myriad employment opportunities. As a regional member I am all too aware that rural councils are in many cases the largest employer in town; they are the lifeblood of our local communities. In conjunction with employment and investment, local

government controls assets worth more than \$150 billion, which includes 165,000 kilometres of roads, 460 swimming pools and 1,835 public halls. Local government also has billions of dollars invested in building infrastructure and water, sewerage and stormwater infrastructure.

But councils cannot do it alone. That is why the New South Wales Government has invested over \$9 billion in councils since 2011 to help them deliver and improve local infrastructure, services and facilities. In my area alone, which includes Goulburn Mulwaree Council, Hilltops Council, Upper Lachlan Shire Council, Wingecarribee Council and Yass Valley Council, the New South Wales Government has invested a record amount of funding to ensure that councils are supported for the future. That investment could only have been possible through the strong economic position of this Government. Financial support from this Government has ensured that projects such as road upgrades, water services and sporting grounds are delivered for the residents in the communities of my electorate.

Local government is on the ground and is acutely aware of what matters and what is important in communities. The New South Wales Government is committed to councils and to strengthening the relationship between State Government and local government, particularly in regional areas. That is why this Government has established a network of 13 joint organisations, comprising 86 member councils, to improve delivery of infrastructure and services to regional New South Wales. I am proud to be part of a government which is getting on with the job of delivering for communities, especially those in regional New South Wales.

Our councils are the backbone of our communities. I go beyond the old motto of "roads, rates and rubbish". They are key to delivering for their areas and the support of this Government guarantees that projects are delivered. I encourage each member in this place to take part in Local Government Week in their electorates. When it comes to achieving for our great State, we need to maintain our strong collaboration with local councils so that the people of New South Wales can benefit from the strongest governments that deliver for them.

TRIBUTE TO IAN TREVOR MARTIN

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:33): Tonight in the people's Parliament of New South Wales I reflect on the life of Pearl Beach resident Ian Trevor Martin. Ian was a poet and artist who loved and cared for his kids and was very proud of their achievements. Ian was a proud Aboriginal man, a Labor Party member, a NSW Teachers Federation representative and a member of our local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group [AECG]. He sought out nature's wildest solitude in which to dream. He did so often because, in Ian's words, the landscape reflected his own heart. He began his career as a poet and an artist during his high school days in Essendon. With the creative encouragement of his teacher, Ian began linking the remote, desolate interior of Australia to his painting, possibly through his intuitive connection with his Aboriginality. Ian wrote:

The loneliness of this feeling for the outback is my deepest influence in art; I am part of it. Like a desert rock or a gumtree, it teaches me to see.

During his high school years he painted *Together We Stand*, which conveyed the power of people standing together to achieve their common aims. Perhaps this was an early connection to his later role in the union movement. Ian left school in 1967 when he was 17 and not sure what to do. Of that time he wrote:

I had no job, no career, no hope, no dreams. All my parents said was, "All you do is dream. You don't get up until 10 a.m., you stay up all night.

So depressed, Ian was going to end it. He said, "I thought, what's the only thing you're good at? I thought, art. Okay, I'll become an artist." And he did. Ian travelled to Queensland to pursue his career, sketching and reading extensively. In 1972 he left Australia and started studying at the Wimbledon School of Arts in the UK. He went on to attend the Kingston Polytechnic College and in 1977 studied a Bachelor of Fine Art, Honours.

He felt grateful to have studied in Europe and embraced the opportunity to visit esteemed galleries and museums in a number of European countries. Ian returned home and lectured at the Mitchell School of Arts in Bathurst from 1977 to 1982, where his work was mainly in the field of printmaking and sculpture. He had many successful exhibitions in Bathurst at that time. From 1983 to 1985 he was a lecturer in painting and sculpture at Port Hedland, where he went on to become the head teacher of art at the Hedland College. In 1988 Ian travelled to Perth to take up a position as an artist-in-residence at Claremont School of Art. Western Australia was certainly an inspirational location for Ian, with many of his paintings inspired by the desert landscape. In the early eighties he visited Pearl Beach in the Gosford electorate for the first time and was a regular visitor there. Ian met his first wife in Western Australia. They made their way to Canberra and eventually came to Pearl Beach.

Ian kept in contact with this talented young artist, who was the mother of his first child, Guy Martin, who was born in 1990. He was the apple of Ian's eye. He wrote poems and many sketches were drawn of Guy playing or sleeping. Guy attended the National Art School in Darlinghurst. Ian was extremely proud of Guy and his work. Although Guy visited Paris, one of Ian's hopes for his son was to see New York and its art galleries. In 1991 Ian

started teaching aspiring artists at the Tamworth TAFE campus and started developing and evaluating the curriculum. Eventually he became head teacher. He also taught at the Information Technology Art Media Educational Services division of TAFE and researched memetics, consciousness studies, cognitive psychology, artificial intelligence and consciousness and creativity. Ian worked tirelessly and exhibited numerous times in Bathurst, Port Hedland and Claremont, as well as receiving a number of Invitation Art Prizes and working for charity in the arts.

While working in Hornsby he met Fiona and her two children, Michael and Paige. I give my salutations to those kids. Fiona moved to Pearl Beach and soon after Hugh Isaac Martin was born, followed a year later by Tobias Ian Martin—known as Toby. He was totally smitten with those two boys and all Ian's friends knew how much he loved "the boys". At the time Ian often drew pictures in his sketchbook of Hugh or Toby playing at the beach and enjoying what Pearl Beach had to offer. Ian was often downhearted that he did not see as much of the boys as he hoped. He was also an important part of the local Aboriginal community and a representative in the Mिंगaletta men's group and on our AECG. He was a part of Pearl Beach and Pearl Beach became part of Ian. Ian was an artist, a teacher, a thinker, a creator, a philosopher, a collector, a listener and a leader. Most of all, Ian was proud to be Aboriginal, a member of the Labor Party and a father. He sought out Pearl Beach to be his solitude and the landscape reflects his heart. Farewell, brother Ian, your spirit will live on.

KU-RING-GAI ELECTORATE ROTARY CLUBS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (18:39): In June this year I attended the changeover dinners of Ku-ring-gai's three Rotary clubs, welcomed their new presidents and committees and expressed my appreciation for the wonderful contribution those voluntary associations make both in our local community and further afield. I reflect today on the valuable role that our Rotary clubs play. Established in Australia in 1921, Australian Rotary clubs are part of an international network of business, professional and community leaders who strive to make the world a better place through practical efforts. Today there are over 1,100 Rotary clubs in Australia and approximately 30,000 Rotarians. I have previously spoken in this House of how fortunate I was to be the beneficiary of a Rotary Foundation scholarship that enabled me to study overseas for a year and to complete a Master of Laws degree.

Ku-ring-gai's three Rotary clubs—Turramurra, Wahroonga and Ku-ring-gai—are very active in the areas of youth services, community services, vocational services and internationally. Often they work together on a common objective. The most obvious example of that in my electorate is their organisation—together with the Rotary Club of St Ives—of the Bobbin Head Cycle Classic, which has raised millions of dollars for charities over the past eight years. In 2017 the three local Rotary clubs teamed up with their colleagues from Beecroft, Carlingford, Hornsby, Lindfield, Roseville Chase, St Ives and West Pennant Hills, as well as the local, State and Federal governments, to jointly finance the purchase of a new refrigerated van for Ku-ring-gai Meals on Wheels. The van enables Meals on Wheels to transport food from bulk storage in Hornsby to its kitchen in Turramurra for the preparation of several thousand meals daily.

The Rotary Club of Turramurra was chartered in 1968, initially with 27 members. Since then it has initiated many projects, some of which have been adopted by other Australian Rotary Clubs. The Pride of Workmanship awards, for example, which recognise exceptional service of individuals in local business, were started by Turramurra's Don Trood, while the club's Trees for Survival shade house project has been taken up by over 300 clubs and has received international recognition as the best Rotary project supporting the environment. Other notable Turramurra Rotary projects include the Qantas Jumbo Joy Flight for disabled and disadvantaged children, the Turramurra Youth Centre for youth aged 12 to 18 and the Graffiti Removal Project—another program that, at the request of the New South Wales Government, has been rolled out across the State.

Every year the club hosts an international exchange student who attends Turramurra High School and it sponsors an Australian student on an overseas exchange. Other youth programs which are also supported by the Rotary clubs of Wahroonga and Ku-ring-gai include the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment and the National Youth Science Forum. The Rotary Club of Turramurra is also very proud of its international projects. They include the children's orphanage in Banda Aceh, which was built after the Boxing Day tsunami in 2004 after the club had raised over \$1.4 million, and the Bo Children's Hospital in Sierra Leone—the lifelong dream of respected paediatrician and Turramurra Rotary member Dr Nuli Lemoh.

The Rotary Club of Wahroonga was chartered in 1975 and, like Turramurra, provides an extensive range of youth services, perhaps most prominently the Novus Foundation. That joint project between the club, the San hospital and McCarroll's Automotive Group has raised in excess of \$1.2 million to support local youth-oriented organisations. The club provides scholarships for special needs children at St Lucy's and St Edmund's schools, works with Knox Grammar and Abbotsleigh schools to run the ABBOX Sony camp for children with disability aged five to 15, and is closely involved with KYDS Youth Development Service, Our Kids Our Mob, Operation Hope, PCYC Kids at Risk, StreetWork and Studio ARTES. The Rotary Club of Wahroonga also annually

celebrates achievement and excellence in vocational employment, provides support and encouragement to professional endeavour through a number of awards and runs a public speaking competition for local year 10 students. Internationally it has a focus on schools in the Gorkha district of Nepal, especially teacher training and school rebuilding after the 2015 earthquakes. It supports orphanages in Sri Lanka and Mongolia, education for children in Cambodia and a women's collective in Kopanang, an impoverished township near Johannesburg.

In 1959, 26 charter members launched the Rotary Club of Ku-ring-gai and for over 60 years it has supported young people in difficult times, celebrated academic excellence, mentored young community leaders, assisted the disabled and those with special needs, supported local charities, recognised local business and tradespeople and generally been a very visible and hands-on presence in Ku-ring-gai. Of particular interest to me is the club's support of Camp Breakaway on the Central Coast, which provides respite care for people with disabilities and their carers, and its presentation of the club's Benefic Award to one year 9 student at each of Turramurra, Ku-ring-gai and Killara high schools who displays a "favourable influence" among their peers.

The Rotary Club of Ku-ring-gai is also justifiably proud of its role in facilitating the connection of electricity to the Katuuso Primary and Vocational School in Uganda by providing solar power and a back-up generator. That project followed its funding of a maternity hospital in Sierra Leone and a youth leadership training program in East Timor. It is easy to focus only on these substantial contributions, but the Rotary club members greatly enjoy giving their generous and ongoing support to our community. It is this unique combination of community and international contribution, camaraderie, fun and encouragement that makes it so valuable for people to join Rotary and make the world a better place by embodying the Rotary slogan "Service Above Self".

WAGE THEFT

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (18:44): I have a confession—I watch *MasterChef*. I was a fan at the start, but as the years have gone on much has caused me concern and has tainted my viewing. One of those things has been the lack of diversity of the hosts, but far more concerning is the presence of George Calombaris, who has been very publicly exposed as failing to properly pay the people who worked for him. Thousands of people who live in the electorate of Newtown work in hospitality. It is the fourth most common industry of workers in our area, according to the latest census. Like me, many others would have done their time in that industry too. And while George and *MasterChef* are no longer a thing, what is a thing is that George got sprung underpaying his employees by \$7.8 million. Let us be clear: If a worker stole \$7.8 million, they would expect to go to jail. But what will happen to George? I am pleased to put on record that the people of Newtown do not support or endorse that kind of behaviour. After reports of the situation first emerged Calombaris opened his Jimmy Grants Souvlaki shop—notably just behind the 7-Eleven—on King Street in Newtown, but it did not last long. It seems that the community I represent is not particularly keen on backing burglary by bosses.

While it may be a bit of a shock to some, to anyone who has worked in the hospitality industry—including so many of those who live in the electorate of Newtown—the extent of this kind of wage theft is utterly unsurprising. I have done my time in restaurants, cafes and bars—waiting on tables of suits and fine diners in Sydney, pouring champagne for celebs and high rollers in London and making my fair share of coffees. While in some cases I was one of the lucky ones who was paid well and treated well, in others I was expected to work for only tips or not to get paid extra on the weekend. For many the situation is much, much worse. The fact that wage theft is so rife in some workplaces is unacceptable. It impacts particularly hard on young people, people in casual or insecure work and people from migrant or non-English-speaking backgrounds.

The "tough on law and order" megaphone we usually hear in this place from Liberals and conservatives in relation to some things—think policing people at festivals or fining pedestrians who jaywalk—seems eerily silent when it comes to cracking down on wage theft. As my Greens colleague in the Federal Parliament Adam Bandt tweeted early today, "If you've got a blue collar this government throws the book at you, but if you've got a white collar they turn a blind eye." In response to the news that Calombaris finally got the chop, Australian Council of Trade Unions President Michele O'Neil said, "Working people have had enough of their wages being stolen and their rights being ignored, especially when those involved have made their fortunes off the back of their workers." For migrant workers the situation is so bad that wage theft is much more often the norm rather than the exception.

There is a clear reason why we are seeing wage theft rise, and that is the increase in casual and insecure work and the ever increasing restrictions placed on trade unions to be able to do their work organising, defending and protecting workers' rights in workplaces. I am a proud member of the Australian Services Union and have always been a member of my union—previously the Community and Public Sector Union and the National Tertiary Education Union. I know many who live in the Newtown electorate and in the inner west are active and proud union members. It used to be that unions could turn up and do spot checks to ensure that workers were being paid correctly. Now they must give 24 hours' notice, meaning that a dodgy employer may have time to cover or hide any wrongdoing. Now what should be basic workers' rights—freedom of association, the right to organise

as well as, crucially, the right to strike—are being undermined and, in some cases, criminalised. The Greens oppose those moves and back unions and workers fully, including in their right to organise and their right to strike.

Lots of hospitality workers who know that they are being subjected to wage theft go to the Fair Work Ombudsman, but that body is so underfunded that it only has the capacity to take action against the most serious and major wage thieves, leaving employees of smaller businesses completely on their own or with significant delays. The New South Wales Liberals talk the talk on jobs, but they fail to actually care about the people who have those jobs—the 4,200 people working in the hospitality industry in the electorate of Newtown and the many more across New South Wales. All of those people deserve better protections from the greedy Georges of the world. The best way for us to do that is to strengthen laws against wage theft and reform laws to allow unions to do their work protecting the workers of New South Wales.

WASTE AND RESOURCE RECOVERY

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (18:49): I speak on the important issue of waste and resource recovery, and in doing so recognise the state-of-the-art recycling facility operated by Handybin in your electorate of Coffs Harbour, Mr Temporary Speaker. For many of us in this place, just like the constituents we represent, the sense of goodwill and doing our bit that comes from separating our household waste, paper, cardboard, bottles and glass into the various coloured bins given to us by our council is built on the expectation that our waste is somehow and somewhere recycled or put to better use. The expectation that our recyclables are recycled and our household waste is dealt with appropriately is what leads many of us to give little or no more thought to our waste once it leaves the kerbside of our street.

The New South Wales Government is currently developing a 20-year waste strategy based upon circular economy principles. It will set a long-term vision for reducing waste, driving sustainable recycling markets, and identifying and improving the State and regional infrastructure network. Earlier this month I had an eye-opening, and at times nose-stinging, experience touring a number of leading waste resource facilities across Greater Sydney. Touring those facilities gave me an insight into the process that takes place from when the garbage truck turns up, to the sorting, crushing and baling of recyclables. One subset of waste of particular importance and interest is plastic. The Morgan Stanley Institute for Sustainable Investing has done a terrific amount of research in this space, and I quote the institute in saying, "plastic is a valuable material that has contributed to global economic growth since the 1950s. It has helped transform sectors as wide-ranging as health, transportation, packaging and electronics."

Morgan Stanley points out that, due to an increased awareness about the impacts of plastics, there is a change in consumer habits, which is in turn driving companies to better manage their plastic footprints. Importantly, Morgan Stanley—alongside a host of leading global think tanks and bodies such as the World Economic Forum—notes that it is not the banning of plastics that ultimately will solve the problem they cause, but embracing how we can best capture the economic and material value of plastic waste rather than allowing it to enter the environment. Hence, the importance of the circular economy and the principles on which this Government is developing its 20-year waste strategy.

That brings me back to the floor of the sorting facility in Rydalmere, where tonnes of bales of plastics stood stacked to the ceiling. We must work alongside a host of stakeholders to develop a system-wide approach that creates a secondary market for recycled plastic and incentives for business and the largest waste operators in the world to support this action. I note that the World Economic Forum, in partnership with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, has formed the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment. This commitment unites businesses, governments and other organisations behind a common vision and targets to address plastic waste and pollution at its source.

They succinctly outline that the problem with plastic starts long before it reaches our oceans, rivers and beaches, and so must the solutions. This commitment has mobilised over 400 signatories that are determined to start building a circular economy for plastic. These companies ultimately represent 20 per cent of all plastic packaging produced globally. Some are well-known businesses, such as L'Oréal, Mars, Pepsi, the Coca-Cola Company and Unilever; as well as major packaging producers such as Amcor, plastic producers including Novamont and resource management specialist Veolia. This is a challenging moment in time for dealing with plastics and waste but it is also a moment of considerable opportunity. By working collaboratively with business, consumer groups, environmental groups and the waste industry, we can deliver positive change.

I thank my local leaders in this space, who have been pioneers in waste recovery and plastics: Sustainable Organisations of Manly, Surfrider Foundation Australia, 4 Pines Brewing Company, Hemingway's Manly, Ruby Lane, Dive Centre Manly, Manly Ocean Foods, Infinity Bakery, Plastic Free Manly, Boomerang Bags Manly and Manly Longboards Co. Those organisations have each led a grassroots movement that has now reached the tipping point. I also thank Morgan Stanley Australia for giving me its time and insights into the important role

that capital markets and institutions will play in bringing about a system-wide approach for reducing plastic waste by bringing innovations to market and scaling solutions across the plastics value chain. Without doubt, smart policy is required here, and I am confident that the New South Wales Government will lead the way as we work towards the finalisation of our long-term waste strategy—something that I will continue to champion.

SUN EXPOSURE

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (18:54): I refer to an important issue in my community—a community that loves sport, sand, surf and sailing all under the harsh sun of the Southern Hemisphere. Several concerned parents and teachers within my community have raised with me the impacts of unnecessary sun exposure on young people. For example, recently I met with the much-loved former principal of Mona Vale Public School, Greg Jones, and concerned parents to discuss issues around sun safety at school. As the member for Pittwater and a former Minister for Education, I always look forward to my discussions with Greg, who has been a champion of education in my electorate and an important and wise custodian of the next generation of Pittwater residents. I also note his extraordinary service as a member of the Macquarie University Council. He is a passionate educator and a man whose opinion on matters of education I have always respected.

In our meeting Greg talked of the importance of sun safety at school, particularly in school sports. Most schools in my electorate hold organised weekly sport on a Friday afternoon after lunch as part of Primary Schools Sports Association [PSSA] membership. That means our students are out in the sun in the hottest and the highest ultraviolet [UV] part of the day between 1.00 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. The challenge with this selection of time for participating in organised sporting activities is that it goes against general school advice and Department of Education guidelines to be sun safe. There are plenty of ways the Department of Education and our schools are already protecting our kids from the harmful effects of sun exposure. For example, local schools have options for covered play areas and "no hat, no play" policies at recess and lunch. Some schools in my electorate have also adjusted daily play times to be half an hour each for recess and lunch, rather than a traditional longer lunch time, so that kids are not spending a long time outside in the hottest part of the day. New school builds, in particular, require covered outdoor learning and play areas to protect kids from the harsh Australian sun when they are not in the classroom.

However, school sport in Pittwater's public primary schools takes place during the heat of the day in the strongest UV radiation, on open courts or fields with fast-paced sports when it is often not deemed practical to wear a hat. The Cancer Council says that children are at particular risk to damage by the sun. Exposure to UV radiation during the first 15 years of life greatly increases the risk of developing skin cancer later in life. Similarly, academic research indicates that the majority of sunburn studies suggest a positive association between early age sunburn and a subsequent risk of melanoma. Dr Tony Bernard, one of our accident and emergency doctors at Mona Vale Hospital, has made that point very forcefully to me. He has long been advocating for the need to provide younger children with additional protection from exposure to the harsh rays of the sun, particularly in an organised environment such as at school. People like Dr Bernard, Greg Jones and others are advocating, for example, that Friday afternoon sport be moved to Friday morning sport to mitigate these issues. This would mean school sport would start at 9.30 a.m. or 10.00 a.m. and finish by the end of recess. At that time the UV rating is lower, and therefore our kids will be better protected from the effects of the heat of the day.

While there has been some resistance to change due to the general belief that kids switch off following sport, Greg and other proponents cite studies that suggest that it actually has the opposite effect, unlocking endorphins and making our students more responsive to learning in the afternoon. Greg tells me that schools in Ku-ring-gai and Warringah have successfully been holding sport in the morning for over a decade, following similar discussions about the appropriate time to hold sport in light of when UV exposure is at its most extreme. Perhaps a trial for schools throughout Pittwater would be a positive way to test whether this idea, which can better protect our students from prolonged exposure to sun, is a way forward. Another way forward might be to determine the matter by a vote of the public primary schools across Pittwater so that a change would need a majority of schools to proceed. What could be more democratic than that?

A small change we can make to begin with is to move PSSA gala days to winter and early spring or late autumn, instead at the height of summer. As a former education Minister and the member for Pittwater, I thank Greg and the many parents who have come to see me about this matter. I hope the new Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning, who is doing an incredible job, also reflects on this idea to better protect our kids and students from the negative effects of prolonged sun exposure in the future. The last thing we want is for New South Wales to be a nanny State, but we want to organise our activities to ensure that people make wise decisions and to make sure that in the ordinary routine of life the decisions we make are more protective of our most vulnerable and precious citizens, which includes our young people. I thank Hazel Williams and Caitlin Vasica from my local Cancer Council for their continued advocacy.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:00 until
Tuesday 6 August 2019 at 12:00.**