



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament  
First Session**

**Wednesday, 21 August 2019**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Notices .....	1483
Presentation.....	1483
Business of the House.....	1483
Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land)	
Bill 2019.....	1483
Bills .....	1483
Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019 .....	1483
Second Reading Debate .....	1483
Third Reading .....	1494
Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019 .....	1494
Second Reading Debate .....	1494
Committees .....	1508
Public Accounts Committee (PAC).....	1508
Reports .....	1508
Legislation Review Committee.....	1509
Reports .....	1509
Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 3/57 .....	1511
Visitors.....	1512
Visitors.....	1512
Announcements.....	1512
Scarf Up for Scouting .....	1512
Question Time.....	1513
Sydney Metro Northwest .....	1513
Cost-Of-Living Savings .....	1514
Regional Cost of Living.....	1515
Forestry Corporation.....	1516
On Demand Transport.....	1517
Forestry Corporation.....	1518
Local Government .....	1520
Crown Resorts.....	1522
Waste Management.....	1522
Petitions.....	1524
Petitions Received.....	1524
Bills .....	1524
Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 .....	1524
First Reading.....	1524
Second Reading Speech.....	1524
Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019 .....	1528
Second Reading Debate .....	1528
Public Interest Debate .....	1538

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Manufacturing Jobs.....	1538
Bills .....	1547
Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019 .....	1547
Second Reading Debate .....	1547
Third Reading .....	1548
Private Members' Statements.....	1548
Pamela Alvarez .....	1548
Mascot Hotel Planning Proposal.....	1548
Essential Energy Job Cuts.....	1549
Pambula Hospital .....	1550
Homelessness .....	1550
Hope Mission Centre .....	1552
Mena Biscotti .....	1552
Girraween Public School .....	1553
Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards .....	1554
Manufacturing Industry .....	1555
Recycling .....	1556
Belmore Eagles Football Club .....	1556
Nurse Retraining .....	1557
St Clair United Soccer Club and St Clair Netball Club .....	1558
Universal Medicine .....	1559
Newtown Libraries.....	1560
Bondi Surf Bathing Life Saving Club .....	1561
Hawkesbury-Nepean Development .....	1561
Medical Practitioner Shortages .....	1562
Cancer Related Charities.....	1563
Tenancy Advisory Services .....	1564
Schofields Rural Fire Service .....	1564
Wollongong Electorate Infrastructure.....	1565
Northern Beaches Mental Health Summit .....	1566
Frank Baxter Juvenile Justice Centre.....	1567
Salvation Army Fairfield City Corps.....	1568
Community Recognition Statements .....	1569
Peter Hewett.....	1569
Police Association of NSW Commissioned Officers Dinner .....	1569
Daniel Fallins .....	1569
Towradgi Public School.....	1569
Bad Attitude Braided Creations .....	1569
Seventh Day Adventist Church Woy Woy .....	1570
Ku-ring-gai Netball Association.....	1570
Keith Payne VC Hostel.....	1570
Central Coast Crusaders.....	1570

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Private Beresford Paul Edwards .....	1570
Coffs Harbour Comets .....	1571
Albin and Irene Goetz.....	1571
Tresillian in Western Family Care Centre .....	1571
Sydney South West Dance for Cancer.....	1571
Lauren McDonald .....	1571
Aboriginal Writers Festival.....	1572
Arabella Logan.....	1572
Jo Palmer.....	1572
Wayne Bingham.....	1572
Port Stephens Koalas .....	1572
Cowra Red Cross Branch.....	1573
Tribute to Judy Mitchell.....	1573
Ku West Pymble Preschool .....	1573
Assyrian Martyr's Day .....	1573
Daffodil Day .....	1573
Tribute to Brennan Nean.....	1573
Ocean Harvest Festival .....	1574
Pearl Beach Progress Association.....	1574
George Chapman .....	1574
Australian Minnan Association.....	1574
Australian Mountain Biking Team .....	1574
Nelson Bay Country Women's Association Branch .....	1575
Rubena Amy Wilbow .....	1575
Woy Woy Country Women's Association Branch .....	1575
Northholm Grammar School Students.....	1575
Vietnam Veterans Association.....	1575
Power Women.....	1576
Cootamundra Electorate.....	1577
Southern Illawarra Music Festival.....	1577
Bravery in Hazardous Conditions Awards .....	1577
Mid Coast Business Awards .....	1578
Eid Al Adha .....	1578
2019 Sydney Market Fresh Awards.....	1578
Heart-Safe City .....	1579
Hello Koala .....	1579
Community 2168 Project .....	1579
Maitland Aroma Festival .....	1579
Southern Districts Soccer Football Association Presentation Night.....	1579
Just Bec-Cause Fundraiser.....	1580
Arpad and Elisabeth Maitz.....	1580
North Epping Rangers.....	1580

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Brisbane Water Police District Awards .....	1580
Local Land Services Schools Property Planning Competition .....	1581
Little Portugal in Petersham.....	1581
Byron Writers Festival .....	1581
Jersey Day .....	1581
Jo Palmer.....	1582
Komplete Kaos.....	1582
Lindi Kingdom.....	1582
Our Lady of Lebanon Parish.....	1582
David Lo .....	1582
Chris Glenn .....	1583
Warren Melling.....	1583
Vietnam Veterans Day .....	1583
Harmony Day .....	1583
Croom Regional Sporting Complex.....	1583
Waverton Hub .....	1584

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Wednesday, 21 August 2019**

**The Speaker (The Hon. Jonathan Richard O'Dea)** took the chair at 09:30.

**The Speaker** read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

*[Notices of motions given.]*

*Notices*

### PRESENTATION

*[During the giving of notices of motions]*

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. I will allow the motion the member for Prospect has given notice of. However, for the benefit of the House, it was too long. It was more of a statement than a motion. I warn members that in future I will pull members up if they give notice of such long motions.

*Later,*

**The SPEAKER:** The time has expired for the giving of general notices of motion. However, I note that Standing Order 137 has a spirit to it as well as a precision. I do not want notices of motions to become speeches. They should be delivered in a reasonably neutral way, rather than in a passionate or argumentative way. Standing Order 137 specifically says that notice of a motion containing argument, unbecoming expressions or otherwise not conforming to the practice of the House may be amended or not printed. In future I do not want notices of motions to be delivered in the way in which the member for Campbelltown and the member for Newcastle delivered their notices of motions.

*Business of the House*

### SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: LAKE MACQUARIE SMELTER SITE (PERPETUAL CARE OF LAND) BILL 2019

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the passage through all stages at this, or any subsequent sitting, of the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Bills*

### LAKE MACQUARIE SMELTER SITE (PERPETUAL CARE OF LAND) BILL 2019

#### Second Reading Debate

**Debate resumed from 20 August 2019.**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (09:49):** I speak on behalf of the Opposition on the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019. The bill will secure the long-term environmental management of the site on Cockle Creek. The Opposition understands the complexities of this particular parcel of land. Having grown up and worked in the Hunter region, I am acquainted with the unusual and unique circumstances of this site and its importance to our region. The Pasminco Cockle Creek Smelter [Pasminco] was a lead and zinc smelter that operated continuously in the northern part of Lake Macquarie from 1897 to 2003, not very far from my electorate of Swansea. Mining and manufacturing always played a strong role in the Hunter. In fact, the Cockle Creek Smelter was one of the Hunter region's first major industrial sites and for the past 120 years its operation contributed strongly to the New South Wales economy.

The smelter played an important role in the history of our lake and the Hunter region, producing materials for munitions during World War I and World War II. However, in 2001 the company that owned the smelter entered a voluntarily scheme of company administration and the smelter ceased to operate. In 2003 the Environmental Protection Authority issued a remediation order to Pasminco to remediate the site and in 2007 the then Minister for Planning approved remediation works, including the construction of a containment cell for the contaminated material excavated from this site. The site is important—it contains a capped containment cell spanning about 20 hectares and about 1.9 million tonnes of contaminated material. The site is one of the largest

brownfield parcels in the Hunter region with a potential for 80 hectares of residential land and 40 hectares of commercial land.

The site is located less than two kilometres from the emerging regional area of Cardiff-Glendale in the lower Hunter and forms part of Lake Macquarie's northwest catalyst area, which is an area identified in the State Government's Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan. These catalyst areas are places of metropolitan significance that warrant a collaborative approach to the delivery of new jobs and homes—something the Hunter sorely needs. They offer a pipeline of transformation across Greater Newcastle in the short to medium term. It is therefore important to consider the kinds of economic and social benefits remediation of this site can bring to our community. We have already seen the redevelopment of more than 20 hectares of land as light industrial development and the construction of a new Bunnings Warehouse. Bunnings is a good example of how freeing up this land can benefit the Hunter community. The company has invested more than \$34 million in the development, fit-out and stock of its new store. Most importantly, this store generates 200 local jobs in our community.

Lake Macquarie City Council is also investing in this area, including jointly funding a road project with the Federal Government. The final stages of the Munibung Road will allow access to the land and construction is expected to be completed in the next one to two years. I acknowledge the work of Lake Macquarie City Council—including Mayor Kay Fraser and the General Manager, Morven Cameron, and her team—in working with the site's administrator and the State Government to find a long-term solution for the environmental management of the containment cell. This has been many years coming and it would be remiss of me not to also acknowledge the work of past mayors on the project, Jodie Harrison and Greg Piper.

The member for Lake Macquarie has always been incredibly passionate about finding a resolution to this problem. He agrees with me about the economic significance of this parcel of land and ensuring that the local residents are cared for in the future. As I said, it has been many years coming and is a last resort option to ensure a long-term solution for environmental management. This land will be compulsorily acquired under the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991—a one-off acquisition, which the Opposition understands sets a precedent. However, I have been assured by the Government that this is an extraordinary circumstance that will not set off a broader acquisition program. I also acknowledge that acquisition of this site is a one-off that is necessary to ensure the ongoing protection of the environment, as well as being necessary for the economic growth of the Hunter region.

The bill will ensure a long-term solution by transferring the land remaining in Pasminco's ownership at the former smelter site to the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation. The net proceeds from the sale of the land zoned for urban purposes will be paid into the Containment Cell Perpetual Care Fund that is established by the bill. This money will be used for the perpetual care of the containment cell site and the surrounding land zoned for environmental conservation at the old smelter site. I implore the Minister in her reply to address and consider the needs of residents surround the Pasminco site. We know that many of these residents are subject to specific regulations from council regarding the disposal of contaminated soil because of their proximity to the site. We certainly do not want to see these people financially disadvantaged.

Last week over 200 local residents met to discuss the area and raised concerns about the health and environmental impacts of the site. I note that the bill addresses concerns within the site, however, I urge the Minister to consider what assurances can be given to the surrounding community to ensure their land also is protected and remediated in this process. These residents are living on the doorstep of this site and their concerns must be taken seriously and respectfully in this process. It is important that this Parliament and, indeed, this Government look at futureproofing the area for residents. This has been a longstanding issue and to rebuild trust with this community the Government needs to acknowledge the impacts and the community's needs.

The Labor Party supports creating good, stable jobs, as that is in the best interest of our communities. The one-off acquisition of this land is an opportunity to create new jobs for people in the Hunter region. With the closure of mines and manufacturing facilities in our local community, the prospect of new jobs in construction, retail and manufacturing will be of much relief to people in the Lake Macquarie and broader Hunter regions. This is just one piece of a larger pipeline of work to create new industries, new jobs and new communities in the Hunter region. The prospect of the rejuvenation of manufacturing and construction in our local community gives me much hope.

I was delighted to hear from Lake Macquarie City Council that an independent industry demographer has reviewed the plans for the Pasminco site and considers it to be a major driver for regional economic growth. This could be a once-in-a-generation opportunity for economic growth. This is evident when I see Lake Macquarie City Council's projections on the estimated number of jobs to be created in retail, construction and associated industries. It estimates this acquisition could create 1,650 permanent ongoing jobs, with 1,320 additional multiplier-induced employment opportunities. In addition, approximately 1,125 direct construction jobs will be created, with 2,093 additional multiplier-induced employment opportunities.

The bill will deliver \$1.8 billion in economic benefits to the region and the State. It will be no surprise to my colleagues or those across the Chamber that I am a fervent supporter of manufacturing. I hope that some of the \$1.8 billion will be generated in this sector. The Hunter region has always been proud of its heritage in this area and I hope that it can continue to be proud in the future. More manufacturing and skilled jobs in our community would be a real win for the community more broadly.

This has been a long time coming. It has taken a significant amount of work to get to this point and I would like to take this time to acknowledge the work of Lake Macquarie City councillors, the general manager and her team, the local members of Parliament in the Hunter region, residents and the New South Wales Government in being able to deliver this long-term, one-off solution that will deliver significant economic benefit for the community and our State. I also take this opportunity to thank the Minister for being so genuine in coming forward and assisting with this piece of legislation which the community has needed. I know that the Minister has worked closely also with the member for Lake Macquarie, knowing his great input into this piece of legislation and ongoing interest in this area, and with the Labor Opposition. I truly thank the Minister for being so genuine in this as we all know that it will be for the betterment of the State. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (10:00):** I speak in support of the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019, which will ensure that land at the site of the former lead and zinc smelter at Boolaroo, Lake Macquarie, is properly managed in perpetuity to not only protect the environment and the community but also economically benefit Lake Macquarie and the Hunter region. The bill will transfer ownership of the land at the former smelter site to the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation [HCCDC]. In addition to ensuring the appropriate environmental management and funding mechanisms are in place, HCCDC will facilitate the subdivision and sale of developable lands on the site for job-creating businesses and homes for local people.

We have already seen the benefits from the development of other parts of the former smelter site. Following site audits, remediated areas of the site have been excised from the remediation order and rezoned for light industrial, business and residential purposes. Good light industrial land not only provides the basis for jobs and jobs growth but also can be a great investment for business owners looking to invest in their own businesses. This investment further fuels growth and strengthens our local economies. Along with industrial and business growth we also need to keep pace with more residential land. This bill will allow for that to happen. Housing affordability is a real issue for many people across New South Wales.

Cardiff Central Industrial Estate, along an extended Munibung Road, comprises 22 lots. A Bunnings Warehouse store has been operating since 2015 and there are plans for more residential development. Further development of parts of the site will bring jobs, homes and business services for local people and broader economic benefits for the region. This site is located in North West Lake Macquarie, which the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan identifies as a strategic gateway to Greater Newcastle. The site is in the Munibung Precinct, which the plan notes is where Lake Macquarie City Council plans to facilitate urban renewal through increasing housing density and mixed commercial use including large-format retail and office use. The plan has targets for 1,800 new jobs and 3,700 new dwellings by 2036. Unlocking this site will assist in the realisation of those targets. It will also facilitate Lake Macquarie City Council's plan for jobs growth and housing in its North West Growth Area, as outlined in its strategic plan "Imagine Lake Mac 2050 and Beyond". It supports the plan's intention to influence public and private investment to enhance the wellbeing of people and the environment. Council notes in its plan:

The North West Growth Area's central and accessible location within the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area provides opportunity to generate significant jobs, housing, and services to the broader region. Its proximity to the rail line and access to the arterial road network provides a solid foundation for a wide range of economic growth opportunities.

We cannot let this economically important site sit idle. Estimates provided by Lake Macquarie City Council show the site could generate almost 3,000 ongoing jobs and approximately 1,000 construction-related jobs, allowing for multiplier effects. These will be important jobs for the people of Lake Macquarie and the Hunter. Development of the site also includes potential for at least 600 homes. Housing is needed to help people live close to where they work. This not only reduces commute times but also allows workers to have more time to spend with families and loved ones. It also allows children to live near their parents if they choose and vice versa. Lake Macquarie is an important and fast-growing city within the Hunter region. Through the bill the Government is taking appropriate action to protect the environment and community in the long term, as well as facilitating economic development that will produce welcome local jobs and homes. I have fond memories of the Lake Macquarie area and have stayed at the Squid's Ink motel during university games that were held in Melbourne. I have an iconic photo of our football team standing on the pier and having a few beers after a long day on the footy field.

**Mrs Melinda Pavey:** Did you win?

**Mr GURMESH SINGH:** Of course we won. I commend the Minister for introducing the bill.

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (10:05):** I could not be happier to be speaking in debate on the very important Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019. I acknowledge that the Minister is in the chair and I will refer more to the Government's role and the Minister's role as I progress. I acknowledge that we have some important guests in the public gallery. While I might not have all of their names, I note that we have Darren Van Aardt from the Green Capital Group, Abdul Deeb and Patrick Noone from Costco, Mr Tom Tang, Gwen—Darren's personal assistant—and Stephen Wills from the Department of Premier and Cabinet. I thank those people for coming along. If we get an opportunity later on, we might be able to have them meet with the Minister; I am not sure what her day is like. I acknowledge them because they are a very important part of the story and the future of this important part of northern Lake Macquarie.

I will speak in some detail to elements of the bill, but if members will indulge me a little I will go back a bit. I have been around for quite a while. For the Minister's knowledge, I was elected to council in 1991 and before that I was involved in the local environmental movement. One of the big issues for Lake Macquarie at the time was how to deal with what was a behemoth of an outdated lead and zinc smelter that—not through any fault of its own but just through the natural progression of development—had become tightly surrounded by residential and business development. As time moved on, we realised that those two land uses are incompatible with human health, particularly with the development potential of children. It was very important that we addressed the future of the Cockle Creek Smelter.

That created a lot of conflict and conflicted emotions in the local community because the smelter had been there for over 100 years, having kicked off in 1896. It employed an awful lot of people in the area. People were saying, "Hang on, we grew up here. This is our town. Are you saying there is something wrong with us because we grew up here?" We were not saying that; we were saying that statistics show that children who have elevated blood lead levels have a high risk of reduced IQ and learning outcomes. We had to address that concern and that meant there was a huge loss to the local economy by way of a loss of jobs. We moved into another phase then, which was the decommissioning and remediation of the site. The site was transferred from Pasminco when they decamped the area, to use a polite term for it, and left the community with a largely unresolved problem. It was taken over by the deed administrators, Ferrier Hodgson, who I have had a lot to do with over the years—very little of it I would say was enjoyable. They have frustrated the community, the council and the State Government in not being able to deliver the good outcomes that the community of northern Lake Macquarie and the region deserves.

This bill sets out to address those problems. I would not say that successive Governments have failed because I think that you have to walk the path, see what can be done and try to work in good faith with those who are there, but it gets to a point where you have to draw the line and say, "We cannot continue with business as usual." To their credit, this Government and this Minister have stepped forward to resolve that issue. The Minister's second reading speech covered the issues exceptionally well and I have spoken to representatives from Lake Macquarie City Council who were very pleased with what they heard. I think they felt that the Government really had dealt with the detail of what they were trying to resolve for our community.

**Mrs Melinda Pavey:** The essence.

**Mr GREG PIPER:** The essence, that is right. It distilled the essence of what we were after. I also acknowledge the Opposition spokesperson. [*Extension of time*]

I want to acknowledge the member for Swansea, the Opposition spokesperson in this instance. I have had discussions with her about the bigger picture of this area. There are still issues around the old township sites and I am working with the Government, particularly through the Minister for the environment, on those matters. I will continue to do that. This is a discrete matter that is going to be a game changer for the local community, the greater community and the region. I acknowledge that. I go back to the bill. The Government will be acquiring about 92 hectares of land formerly owned by the Pasminco lead and zinc smelter. Clause 5 of the bill is going to see control the land transferred to Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation [HCCDC] which will oversee the sale of parcels of land.

Clause 7 of the bill provides for the long-term management of the contaminated land, in particular the 45-metre-deep cell which contains some 1.9 million tonnes of contaminated soil that has been excavated from the site. Clause 7 requires the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation to prepare and implement a long-term environmental management plan for the cell. The Waste Assets Management Corporation will take over the day-to-day management and monitoring of the cell. Clause 8 contains similar requirements for the rest of the land including land zoned for housing, commercial or retail and environmental land such as Munibung Hill. Clause 10 ensures that all money raised through the sale of land parcels is quarantined for the purpose of managing the cell in perpetuity and establishes the Containment Cell Perpetual Care Fund.

There has been a little bit of talk about the history, mainly from the member for Swansea who spoke to it in some detail, but I reiterate that this smelter was established in 1896. It operated for more than 100 years until it closed in 2003. As the mayor, I remember sitting up on Munibung Hill at the invitation of Fitzwalter Group—I think it was—to watch the demolition of the stack. That was a momentous occasion for residents of Lake Macquarie because that was a clear indication that things were changing. Let us not forget that this smelter provided a lot of jobs over many years and that should be recognised. It also provided a lot of economic stimulus, not just to our area but to New South Wales and Australia. Having been involved in the environmental remediation of Lake Macquarie, I can tell you there is an awful lot of lead still in Lake Macquarie, which shows just how much went through there. It did not all come out of the stack; a lot of it went into the local water. Core tests from Lake Macquarie can still identify the high production periods of World War I and World War II. So you can see that it was a very important part of the local and Australian economies.

But times move on. The company decamped from the site and in 2003 the Environment Protection Agency [EPA] issued a remediation order. In 2007 the then Minister with responsibility for planning approved plans to remediate the site and to construct a containment cell. There was controversy around some of these things. I will not get into it in great detail, but for the record there was a lead abatement strategy [LAS], which was implemented by the Minister in 2006. I will soon be revisiting that strategy with the Minister. Lake Macquarie City Council did not support the LAS. Possibly we did not get the best outcome for the community but it is what it is, and we now have to move forward.

I believe local residents will be very pleased with what is happening here. The deed administrator might not be quite so happy about it, but I am not too concerned about that. I understand that the creditors have received significant dividends over the period. I understand that eight dividends were provided so I think it is time for the administrators to leave and for the security of the site to be transferred back to the people through the State. It is really important that we provide security of tenure over the containment cell. It needs to be managed in perpetuity. There has been a huge discrepancy between what the deed administrator says needs to be set aside for that purpose and what the State has identified as being more realistic.

The process that we are going through now will allow for the funds that have accumulated through the sale of these land assets to go into a sinking fund to manage the matter and therefore reduce the sovereign risk for the State. I believe that that is smart. The main thing that people will notice is the change to the landscape as the site is redeveloped. The member for Coffs Harbour referred to Munibung Road, which will be a very important link through to the Cardiff industrial estate. That is a key part of the plans that Lake Macquarie City Council and the State Government have been working on. This bill brings together a host of benefits. There is a specific provision for green capital. That is not a secret; the Minister referenced this in her second reading speech, and the bill is very explicit about the ability for the State and Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation to trade in that land with those parties that have been involved and have shown faith in our local area for some time.

Once again, I thank those people who have stayed the course. Obviously there would have been opportunity costs if these matters had not been resolved reasonably quickly; hopefully they have been resolved early enough for all the companies to perceive that they can profit and benefit from being in our community. I know our community will benefit from those companies being there. I thank the people involved for being here today. I look forward to talking to them later today. I would particularly like to thank some of the people who have been involved, including Stephen Wills from the Department of Premier and Cabinet. It has been a pleasure to work with him. I thank Peter Francis, the Chief Executive Officer of Lake Macquarie City Council's economic development arm Dantia. I thank the people from Lake Macquarie City Council, including Chief Executive Officer Morven Cameron. Morven and I have sat through many meetings together on this.

This bill is a great outcome but we may not have achieved such a good outcome if we had not had the imprimatur and the assistance of the Premier. I thank her. I have driven her past the site in the car and said, "Premier, just look out there. This is Boolaroo, the Pasminco site; we need to fix this." At every opportunity I raised the matter with the Premier and the Minister. I thank the Minister and her staff for everything they have done. This will be a great boost for the Boolaroo, Speers Point, Argenton and Macquarie Hills area. It is going to lift the stigma from Boolaroo. If you google Boolaroo you will find a dirty old smelter, but no longer. Hopefully in time when people look at the satellite image it will show a renewed site providing thousands of local jobs and a huge economic stimulus to our community. I thank everybody very much.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (10:20):** I speak in support of the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019. The bill will ensure the land at the site of the former lead and zinc smelter at Boolaroo, Lake Macquarie, is properly managed in perpetuity to protect the environment and the community. It is fair to say that we all agree the smelter itself has played an important role over the years, but times have moved on. I acknowledge the special guests in the gallery and thank them for taking an interest in this debate. Specifically

I will speak about the role of the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation [HCCDC] in unlocking the potential of this extremely valuable site.

The bill will transfer ownership of land to HCCDC. The agency will have three key roles. First, it will manage the containment cell site and the environmental conservation land, such as Munibung Hill, to protect the environment and the public. Secondly, it will facilitate the development of other land on the site for job creating businesses and, importantly, homes for local people. Thirdly, it will administer the Containment Cell Perpetual Care Fund to which proceeds from land sales will be deposited. HCCDC is a Government agency established under the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act 1974. It is responsible for the planning and delivery of economic and urban development in the Hunter and Central Coast regions.

HCCDC is uniquely positioned to carry out those important roles. It is based in the Hunter and has a sound track record in managing land and urban development as well as remediated sites. Ownership and management of this site aligns with HCCDC's vision for the Hunter region, which is to provide more employment opportunities and more housing. In managing the Government's significant investment in the development of the Hunter region, HCCDC has worked collaboratively with other government agencies, councils and key stakeholders to understand and best deliver outcomes that benefit and enhance communities.

In Newcastle it has led the \$650 million Revitalising Newcastle program and the Honeysuckle renewal project. The Honeysuckle project is an ongoing urban transformation success story, which is turning 50 hectares of former industrial maritime land into a centre for education, tourism, recreation and employment. HCCDC has led significant remediation and rehabilitation projects on former BHP steelworks sites. This includes the \$110 million remediation of the steelworks site at Mayfield and the ongoing closure of the Kooragang Island Waste Emplacement Facility, which was BHP's former landfill site. This experience means HCCDC understands the issues relating to contaminated land and has experience in working with and involving other agencies and the private sector in managing such lands. On the former smelter site, HCCDC will partner with the Government's Waste Assets Management Corporation to manage the environmental needs of the site.

HCCDC also has experience in funds administration, which is an important part of the process. It has included the Newcastle Port Community Contribution Fund and the Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Fund. HCCDC currently administers the \$17 million Newcastle Mines Grouting Fund. It has responsibility for overseeing the Hunter Regional Plan to guide the Government's land use planning priorities and decisions until 2036, providing a framework to guide more detailed plans, development proposals and infrastructure funding decisions. The Hunter Regional Plan focuses on new housing and jobs, targeting growth and strategic centres and renewal corridors. The Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation is the appropriate organisation to take ownership, leadership and management of this important land asset on behalf of the people of Lake Macquarie, the Hunter region and New South Wales.

As stated by other speakers, including the member for Coffs Harbour, development of the site includes potential for at least 600 homes. Housing is needed to help local people live close to where they work. This not only reduces commuting times but it also allows workers to have more time to spend with families and loved ones. Lake Macquarie is an important and fast-growing city within the Hunter region. The Government is taking appropriate action through the bill to protect the environment and the community in the long term, as well as facilitating economic development to produce welcome local jobs and many more homes. I commend the Minister for bringing forward the bill and commend the bill to the House.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** I thank the member for Dubbo. Before I call the member for Wallsend I acknowledge a number of members of the Lake Macquarie community in the public gallery who have an interest in the bill being debated today—the member for Lake Macquarie has acknowledged a number of them. I also acknowledge Steve Adamson from Ikea who is here today on behalf of the member for Lake Macquarie.

**Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (10:25):** I support the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019. As former shadow Minister for the Hunter and having had a large section of this land formerly part of the Wallsend electorate I welcome the bill to secure the long-term environmental management of the containment cell at the former Pasminco site. I will not speak to the bill for very long. However, I will say that it has a long history for me, having been brought up on Salty Creek on the outer reaches of Cockle Creek at Edgeworth. It is a place where my dad used to swim before it was contaminated. My uncle was an electrician at Sulphide Corporation and many people I grew up with at West Wallsend High School worked at Sulphide, so we know it very well. The bill will mitigate the risk to the environment and the community from the residual contamination resulting from more than 100 years of the smelter's operation. It is a win for residents right across the north-west region of Lake Macquarie, including Wallsend. Reports in the media today point towards 2,600 jobs being created—which we welcome—and \$1.8 billion dollars in economic benefit to the region, which is also terrific.

Of course, there is one more step that the Government needs to take into consideration—that is, the remediation of residential properties affected by decades of pollution. It is something we need to consider for the future. I agree with the member for Lake Macquarie that there is an awful lot of lead in the area. We need to remember that the cost of cleaning up pollution from Pasminco in the surrounding suburbs has been placed on the home owners. The Government needs to look at this very carefully. I also like what the member said about looking forward to the Munibung link to Cardiff Industrial Estate. It has been a long time coming and very important for all of the workers in the area. I note that the member for Dubbo spoke extensively about the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation and its role in this site, which is wonderful.

When talking about Pasminco and the Sulphide site, I hope that the Hunter development corporation will ensure that it has a great involvement in the expediting of the Glendale transport interchange, which is right in this area. It will be great for residents to be able to access it when they move into their homes in the Boolaroo area. I look forward to the passage of the bill. I congratulate the Government and the member for Lake Macquarie. I know from working with him when he was both mayor and member that he has worked really hard in this area—not only for Munibung Hill but for Pasminco, for the community and for Glendale. It is a success and win for the member in the best way and I congratulate him.

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (10:29):** I am pleased to speak in support of the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019. In doing so, I recognise that this legislation has no direct impact on my electorate; however, as a member for a regional electorate, I recognise the hard work done by the member for Lake Macquarie and by the Minister for Water, Property and Housing and her team in responding to this matter. I cannot recount with joy similar tales to that of the member for Coffs Harbour about the Squids Ink Motel; however, like the member for Wallsend, I think it is important to recognise comments around regional jobs. It is an unfortunate truth that the Lake Macquarie community has had long-term concerns about the management of the Pasminco site. This bill promises to change that by finally giving confidence in the way that the former smelter site will be managed in perpetuity.

As the member for Swansea touched upon, the Pasminco Cockle Creek Smelter operated between 1897 and 2003, processing ore rich in lead and zinc from mines as far away as Broken Hill. Through the operation of the smelter, significant volumes of waste were produced, much of which was stored on the site in a slag heap. In 2007 a project approval was given to encapsulate this slag heap and other contaminated material from elsewhere on the site into a contamination cell. This cell now contains almost two million cubic metres of material with a footprint of approximately 20 hectares. A water treatment plant was installed to service the cell, making sure that no contaminated run-off enters the underlying groundwater. The Government has advised that the current environmental controls are working effectively. However, the external administrators of the company that owns the site have not provided for the long-term maintenance and management of the cell and other land. Any lapse in maintenance could result in damage to the system and escalated costs to repair the cell or extraction system.

Both the cell and the water treatment plant require constant maintenance and management to ensure the contamination remains in the cell and does not impact the surrounding environment or neighbouring sites. The ongoing maintenance required includes: the upkeep of healthy native vegetation over the cell to prevent erosion of the capping material; repairs to any damaged capping; maintenance of the site's water management, including ongoing pump replacement; the operation and maintenance of the water treatment plant, including the disposal of liquid and solid waste products; ongoing water monitoring and management as required by the NSW Environmental Protection Authority [EPA] licence; ongoing site maintenance as required by the planning approval; and site security. In an ideal world, the company that created the contamination would be required to pay for the long-term cost of the ongoing management of contamination contained on site. But, in this case, the company has been subject to a deed of company arrangement, with the prospect of it being wound up, for a long time before remediation work even commenced.

The bill demonstrates the Government's commitment to deliver the outcomes that the community needs, by ensuring that the in-perpetuity management of the cell and other land is not compromised despite the financial straits of the company. The bill will ensure that, following the vesting of the site in the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation [HCCDC], the development corporation will have to comply with the environmental regulatory framework for the site. The EPA will continue to monitor compliance with controls for which it is responsible. HCCDC in turn will utilise the expertise of the New South Wales Government's Waste Assets Management Corporation, which also currently manages the rehabilitation of former government landfills around Sydney.

The risk posed by not enacting this bill is that the external administrators of Pasminco do not fulfil their responsibility and the site is left derelict, during which time a multitude of issues could emerge for the surrounding residents or environment. In particular, in this bill the New South Wales Government is taking on an important responsibility to ensure that the community and environment of north Lake Macquarie remain protected from the

contained smelter waste. As the member for a regional electorate, I recognise the importance of taking seriously our responsibility to our environment and our sense of custodianship. I commend the Minister for introducing this bill.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (10:34):** Well, well, well—Vive la Révolution, comrades! Government intervention required to socialise justice. Who would've thunk it? Who would have thunk that we needed to intervene in a failing market? Who could possibly have predicted that?

**Mr Greg Piper:** Jesus.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR:** Thank you very much.

**Mrs Melinda Pavey:** Those NIDA lessons are going well.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR:** Vive la Révolution, comrade! Welcome. I support the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019. I welcome the Coalition's recognition of the need on occasions for government intervention where a market fails. This site has been badly administered over a number of years. Since becoming the member for Cessnock, and now as the shadow Minister for the Hunter, I have had the misfortune of seeing a number of administration process take place and now this situation. I find them perverse and not accountable to anybody in particular. In that process they bring about the best possible outcome for one person only—the administrator. Everybody else suffers at the hands of its actions. I do not know where the solution lies with this process of administration, but we certainly have to do more. For example, some clubs in my electorate have gone into administration and it seems the community at large is the last to benefit from this process. I appreciate the Government's intervention in this case.

I recognise and call out a very common form of white collar crime—namely, to identify an asset or part of the operation that is no longer wanted, separate it from the larger business, the mothership, and then leave it in the death throes of an unfinanced liability to everybody. That also needs to be dealt with because it happens frequently. I commend this opportunity to draw a line in the sand, to take control and ownership of this site and to bring about a broader socialised prosperity, which will include jobs and improve environmental outcomes. It will also bring prosperity to businesses that want to do the right thing and treat the community with the respect it is entitled to and deserves. The final point in my very short welcoming of the revolution today, is that there are ongoing contamination issues for local residents. The member for Lake Macquarie has indicated there are continuing discussions.

**Mrs Melinda Pavey:** And the member for Swansea.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR:** Yes, and the member for Swansea. The Government is aware of those issues but this is not the end of that conversation. This will be ongoing and I appreciate everybody's efforts on that front. When we get to the end of this story there has to be justice for the residents. I support the bill and I support the attendance to the revolution.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (10:37):** I speak in support of the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019. The bill will ensure that land at the site of the former lead and zinc smelter at Boolaroo, Lake Macquarie, is properly managed in perpetuity to protect the environment and the community. I can see the member for Lake Macquarie is ecstatic about this. Earlier I was thinking that maybe we should sing *Oh Happy Day*. I remind the member for Cessnock that there has been maladministration ever since Eve bit into the apple. Sometimes there needs to be intervention, government and beyond government; at other times we can let the market work it out for itself. I am thrilled that the Government is acting because this is a longstanding wound for the people of Lake Macquarie. I thank the people who are here today, showing an interest in the amenity of the place in which they live and the future of the area where they want to raise their children and grandchildren.

**Mr Greg Piper:** They are our corporate investors.

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS:** Investors are welcome in Lake Macquarie. Their investment ensures that this community will maintain the life style and standard of living enjoyed by all in this country. Specifically, I wish to speak about the data that shows how beneficial unlocking the land of the former smelter site will be to the local and regional economy. Lake Macquarie City Council has considered the positive impact that commercial activation of this site could bring. It is estimated, based on a capital investment of \$250 million, that the development of the site will generate 1,650 long-term jobs, with a further 1,320 multiplier induced jobs across the broader economic area.

Approximately 1,000 construction jobs will likely be generated, with an additional multiplier induced employment of approximately 2,000. That is a total of almost 3,000 ongoing jobs and approximately 3,000 construction-related jobs—important jobs for the people of Lake Macquarie and the Hunter. We all know

how difficult it is to get a job in regional New South Wales. We need to value those jobs and to commend those people who are prepared to invest in regional New South Wales. In every regional area job growth is essential to stabilising or growing local communities and ensuring that the future potential in the area is realised. Without the passage of this bill, we would be waiting indefinitely for the unlocking of this significant site for development. There are no other clear means of resolving this impasse with the external administrators of the company.

In addition to the jobs and services offered to the community by those businesses that invest in the site, there are also plans for a subdivision that could see around 600 homes being built on the site. We need more housing in north-west Lake Macquarie to increase the supply of housing for the region, but specifically so people working in that part of Lake Macquarie can live close to where they work. The Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan has a target of 1,800 new jobs and 3,700 new dwellings by 2036 in north-west Lake Macquarie. Unlocking this site will greatly assist in the realisation of these targets.

I note that Lake Macquarie is the fastest growing city in the Hunter region and, with a population of more than 200,000, it is one of the largest cities in New South Wales. The assessment provided to the council shows the importance of this bill in providing a way forward for long-term environmental and community protection, as well as supporting the plans of State and local governments for economic growth and development. This bill has been a long time coming. I commend the Minister for Water, Property and Housing for introducing it.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (10:42):** I support the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019. It is not often that I support the comments of the member for Cessnock; on this rare occasion I do. I give full credit to the member for Lake Macquarie. He indicated that this matter has been afoot since about 2003, but it has been around since approximately 1980. I also praise local residents because all too often when we buy into areas we believe the Government and its agencies will make sure that our environment is safe for our families. I note that a number of local residents are in the public gallery. All too often large companies become insolvent and overlook their responsibilities to provide a safe environment for the local community. Residents do not want to live in a poisonous environment or to drink polluted water. The effects of long-term lead poisoning are well known. Those companies are often faceless. They wash their hands of their responsibilities and walk away. The residents are then left to pick up the tab for the very expensive remediation of those lands.

I also praise Minister Pavey for her ongoing commitment across party lines to ensure that communities are looked after and provided for. The site was formerly the lead and zinc smelter. It had been in existence for many years but I will not outline the details as other members have done so. Through being proactive, the Government, with the support of the Opposition, will produce a very positive outcome for the people not only of Lake Macquarie but also for the people of New South Wales. Advice obtained by the Government indicates that about \$67 million will need to be set aside and invested to support the perpetual care of the containment cell and other lands. That is likely to exceed the value of the land zoned for urban uses.

It is expected that Pasminco will be wound up in the near future and it is inevitable that the Government will need to assume responsibility for the maintenance of the containment cell. I am pleased to be part of a government that is stepping up to the plate to do that. The member for Lake Macquarie has the full support of his local area. He and the primary stakeholders are to be applauded. We come into this place to improve the lives of our constituents where we can. We are not always successful. There are many ups and downs, there are many robust debates but on this occasion common sense has prevailed—common sense by the Minister and by the member for Lake Macquarie. Indeed, both sides of the House have come together to achieve a positive outcome. As earlier speakers have indicated, this is not the first area that has had contamination; the building industry at the moment is going through difficult times.

Some 50 or 60 years ago common sense and protection of the environment was not a priority for many mining sites and very old sites. However, today we are setting a high benchmark across the State. We are also sending a warning to the multinational companies that no longer will that approach be tolerated. If legislation is required to protect the environment and communities around mining sites it will be introduced—and we should be applauded for doing so. I am pleased to see that the Minister and the Government are actively involved. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (10:47):** I am pleased to support the Lake Macquarie Smelter Site (Perpetual Care of Land) Bill 2019. I acknowledge the member for Lake Macquarie and his work with the Government on this issue. The member outlined articulately that this has been an ongoing issue for the people of the Lake Macquarie electorate. I commend him for his work and also the Minister and her team for their work. I note that the Minister has been in the Chamber all morning. That is an indication of how keen she is for the legislation to be passed. It is pleasing to see bipartisan support for the bill. As the member for Tweed stated, this is about the people of New South Wales coming first. This Government is always about the people of New South Wales coming first and this bill reinforces that aim.

The bill has been designed to provide for the operation and maintenance of infrastructure that is critical to the Lake Macquarie area for the long term. When the Government was re-elected in March one of its key commitments was to continue to deliver the infrastructure that the people of New South Wales need for the future—communities in Sydney and the regions, including the Central Coast, Lake Macquarie and the Hunter. Much of this infrastructure is incredibly high profile—whether it be the Sydney Metro, Sydney Metro Northwest, road upgrades or the \$387 million for the Central Coast Highway that the Minister and I announced on the Central Coast. These are high-profile projects, including water pipelines. This Government has given an \$80 billion commitment, but it is also committed to ensuring that infrastructure that is not visible or high profile like major roads is also in place and provides long-term protection.

The bill deals with the management of the infrastructure that is critical to the long-term wellbeing of the people of Lake Macquarie. When Pasminco went into voluntary administration back in 2001, the site was significantly contaminated with heavy metals from over 100 years of smelter operations. In 2003 the Environment Protection Authority ordered remediation of the site. In 2007 a planning approval was granted for the construction and operation of a containment cell at the site and a water treatment plant to ensure that there was no contamination of either the groundwater or the neighbouring areas.

That cell has now been built. Contaminated material from all over the site was moved into a 20-hectare zone, which was then capped with an impervious layer of clay and covered with native vegetation. Although construction of the cell is complete, its integrity needs to be monitored over the long term to ensure that the capping is not compromised in any way, providing future surety for the people of Lake Macquarie. The on-site managers need to have the experience and skills to manage the site appropriately. Importantly, they also need the funding to rectify any potential damage or replace the capping entirely, should this be necessary in the future.

To ensure that there is no groundwater contamination in the surrounding areas, a water treatment plant draws the groundwater from the perimeter of the cell and pumps it through the treatment system itself, removing and disposing of contaminants and then reusing the treated water for irrigation. Again, the management arrangements and funding need to be in place to ensure that the treatment plant continues to operate in perpetuity, protecting the local community and, of course, the important surrounding environment.

New South Wales Government experts have analysed the cell, the water treatment plant and other maintenance needs of the site. They have assessed that the annual cost of providing for the needs of this infrastructure is slightly more than \$1 million. Both pieces of infrastructure are of enormous significance to the people of Lake Macquarie. Local residents need to have the confidence that in 50, 100 or even 200 years both the cell and the treatment plant will be operating as efficiently as they are operating now and that the funding will be there for the infrastructure itself.

Under the 2007 project approval, Pasminco was required to make provision for funding with a covenant put in place prior to the completion of the containment cell. That has not occurred. The external administrators of the company proposed to Government in 2017 that \$21½ million was sufficient to provide for the long-term needs of the vital infrastructure that I outlined. Meanwhile, financial modelling done for the Government has established that the long-term funding requirement is actually in excess of \$67 million. The Government believes that the needs of the infrastructure can or should be compromised and that a secure source of funding should be put in place right now. This bill, in providing for the vesting of the infrastructure in the Government, will give the Lake Macquarie community confidence that it can be provided for into the future.

Government experts from the Waste Assets Management Corporation have the appropriate skills to manage the site. The bill also quarantines any proceeds of the sale of land surrounding the cell for the future management of the infrastructure. I note contributions from members earlier about the professionalism of the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation. I commend the Minister for having the foresight to put the ownership of the smelter site under the direction of that development corporation, which has a very clear and successful history of delivering for both the Hunter region and the Central Coast. It is an exceptional organisation in which to vest the project.

It is good that both sides of the Chamber recognise that the bill is an important piece of legislation that needs to be agreed to effectively and quickly to implement the necessary protections that the member for Lake Macquarie has outlined. Residents of the Central Coast share the concerns addressed by the bill. It is great to see members coming together. The member for Cessnock made an animated contribution this morning: It was good of him to come in so energised so early in the morning. Matters of this type are where Government members, Opposition members and crossbenchers come together to deliver the best outcomes for our local communities. As has been said before, this is all about putting the people of New South Wales first. The bill is a very clear indication of how this Minister and her team and this Government are doing exactly that. I commend the member for Lake Macquarie for his diligence and passion when it comes to his electorate. I also commend the Minister and her team for bringing this excellent legislation to the House.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (10:54):** In reply: I very genuinely thank all members who contributed to debate on the bill. It is important to acknowledge that this has been a very traumatic period for the community affected by the smelter site. I know the relief felt by the member for Lake Macquarie. Although we have had conversations, to see the Government's plan and the detail of the bill was a very profound moment for him. I acknowledge in the gallery people from IKEA and Costco. As said by the member for Swansea, good jobs and opportunities must be provided in our communities. This bill is about fast-tracking opportunity while at the same time using proceeds from the sale of the land to continue management of a very difficult site.

During some of our conversations the member for Lake Macquarie let me know that in a very strange place he had encountered some executives from Costco. They were walking away. They were frustrated and annoyed, but the member for Lake Macquarie took it upon himself to convince them to stay with the process. I thank them for doing so. I genuinely appreciated the contribution to debate by the member for Cessnock—as dramatic and theatrical as it was—because sometimes the market fails us. I particularly acknowledge the officials who have been working on this project for some time, and I will do so in more detail at a later stage. I thank for their contributions to the debate the members for the electorates of Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Albury, Clarence, Tweed, Wallsend and Terrigal.

All those contributions were worthy and important. It is nice to see a bit of bonhomie in this House, especially considering what we are dealing with, and to see us working together for the betterment of our communities. In response to the serious matters raised by the member for Swansea, I will highlight the situation as it stands. Of course there will be continued care and support for the affected communities but the bill relates only to former smelter land that is currently owned by Pasminco. The Government has lost confidence that the external administrators have the funds, as we know, to deliver the appropriate long-term management of the containment cell, including the water treatment plant. Government advisers expect that Pasminco will be wound up shortly. The Government is introducing this bill to ensure that the environment and community continue to be protected from the contaminants.

Assistance to manage lead in soil was provided to owners of land in what is known as the Lead Abatement Strategy area between 2007 and 2013, when there was a Labor Government. I am sure Labor Opposition members are well aware of the programs that were put in place. There are approximately 2,000 residential properties within this area. Around the time that the smelter was being decommissioned, the external administrators implemented a lead abatement strategy for those properties. Free lead soil assessments were offered and free abatement works were provided where the assessment indicated it was required. Approximately 63 per cent of eligible properties participated in the lead abatement strategy.

Abatement works prevented exposure to lead in soils but did not remove all lead contaminated soil from properties. When these properties are redeveloped, the Lake Macquarie City Council will have a responsibility to ensure the land is suitable for the proposed use and it will have to consider the likelihood of lead contamination on the land. In response to community concerns relating to historical lead contamination in the Lead Abatement Strategy area, the Environment Protection Authority [EPA] established a lead expert working group to consider the effectiveness of the strategy and appropriate future actions to reduce lead exposure in local children.

In December 2016 the group made 22 recommendations for managing residual lead contamination. The Government supported and financed all 22 recommendations and allocated \$1.8 million over four years. This includes \$800,000 for the council. Recommendations included lead awareness initiatives, research projects, establishment of a statewide lead strategy group, mechanisms for the local council to manage contamination and the grant to council. One recommendation was for the council to develop a standard remedial action plan to make it easier and cheaper for residents to manage lead contamination when developing their land. Council has been consulting on its draft standard plan. The Environment Protection Authority [EPA] has offered technical assistance to council when it considers submissions on the draft plan.

The Lead Expert Working Group also recommended that a community grant be made available to provide residents with financial assistance to fund the assessment and remediation of properties where there are identified health issues, such as elevated blood lead levels. A total of \$400,000 has been allocated to the community grant program as part of an \$800,000 grant provided to council by the EPA over four years. Assistance has also been provided to the community through an arrangement with the Summerhill Waste Management Centre, operated by Newcastle City Council and located within 20 kilometres, to accept lead-contaminated soil and lead smelter slag from the area, which significantly reduces disposal fees as contaminated soil might otherwise have to be transported to Sydney for disposal if it were classified as hazardous waste, which is much more expensive to dispose of.

Those buying into the area after completion of the lead abatement strategy have purchased their properties with the knowledge that their land is or may be contaminated with lead, or has been remediated, or was tested and

is not contaminated, as council includes this information on planning certificates issued as part of the conveyancing processes. Ultimately, the administrators of the former Pasminco site at Cockle Creek have failed to put in place the funding needed to manage its long-term environmental needs. I thank my colleagues and members across the Chamber for seeing the benefits of this bill for the local community. Without the funding in place the community has been left uncertain as to the future, and the jobs and housing that could be delivered to the area are yet to be realised.

In introducing the bill, the Government is demonstrating its commitment to resolving the hard issues and helping regional communities prosper. By vesting the site in the Hunter & Central Coast Development Corporation, the Government will give the community confidence that its long-term environmental needs will be managed and that the site will be developed to its full potential. Government experts are ready to take on the environmental management. They have the skills and knowledge to do so, which will deliver confidence. This is a very complicated bill. In my second reading speech, members would have heard the complexities and the number of agencies that had to come to this solution.

The director of the project, Brendon Jenkins, who is the Director of Legal Services in Planning, and project lead Peter Hurley, who is Director of Property NSW, must be singled out for their support. Michael Cassel will have a lot of work in front of him as he heads up the development corporation. I know he is respected in the Hunter and that he will do a good job. I thank others who have worked on the bill: Valentina Misevska, Anne Coates, Susan Lee, Chris Ritchie and Arminda Ryan. The fact that we have been able to bring the bill together in a relatively short time frame is a sign that our new government machinery is working with Planning, EPA, the Office of Environment and Heritage, and the Department of Industry in the same cluster. The bill is an example of why that should be and how it works. Everybody who has worked hard should be proud. I commend the bill to the House.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

**Motion agreed to.**

### **Third Reading**

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

**Motion agreed to.**

## **TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT (RMS DISSOLUTION) BILL 2019**

### **Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from 20 August 2019.**

**Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (11:03):** I am pleased to speak in support of the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019 and to outline to members the benefits that reorganisation of the Transport cluster will bring to the people of this State. In early April the Premier announced the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government's key priorities for this term of government. Transport has a critical role to play in delivering on a number of those priorities, including building a stronger economy, delivering well-connected communities with quality local environments and making the customer the centre of everything we do.

A range of changes have been made to the New South Wales government sector that are designed to deliver on the Government's priorities and commitments to the community by giving an even greater focus to social reforms and regional New South Wales. The reorganisation of Transport for NSW is designed to create a fully integrated transport agency that is capable of delivering on the Government's commitments. Integrating Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] is a sensible and logical next step for Transport for NSW as the lead agency in the Transport cluster. It will fully integrate every area of transport under a single and unified banner, and break down any residual silos that frustrate effective service delivery, particularly in regional areas.

The bill is an important element in achieving that aim. It will put beyond doubt the merging of the functions of Roads and Maritime Services into the Transport cluster and ensure that there are no gaps in the proper exercise of those functions. The Government is determined to continue to deliver on its integrated transport plans for New South Wales, in particular the outcomes set out in Future Transport 2056 strategy, which is an update of the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan that involves a suite of strategies and plans for transport developed in concert with the Greater Sydney Commission's Greater Sydney Region Plan, Infrastructure NSW's State Infrastructure Strategy, and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's regional plans to provide an integrated vision for the State. The Future Transport 2056 strategy sets a 40-year vision, directions and outcomes

framework for customer mobility in New South Wales, which will guide transport investment over the long term. It will be delivered through a series of supporting plans. To continue to deliver on those plans we must change the way we work.

It is critical that New South Wales government agencies in the Transport cluster operate and work differently together. A key ingredient is Transport having the right structure in place to ensure that the various areas work more closely together, and focus on the different needs of urban and regional New South Wales in a holistic way that puts the needs of the customer before the mode of transport. The second is a focus on being smarter with taxpayers' money. The Government recognises that Transport for NSW needs to be smarter with the way it uses taxpayers' money so it can spend more time delivering better customer service.

Lastly, but by no means least importantly, the Government must focus on the people—the hardworking public servants in the Transport service—so that it can deliver on its commitments to the communities of our great State. Transport is committed to improving the experience of working at Transport for NSW by making it a place where everyone can listen, act, think and lead for the benefit of customers and communities. The program of change began in April this year. Significantly, staff and unions have been engaged in the process every step of the way. Staff and union comments and insights informed the final design of the divisional structure, including, in particular, the settlement of the boundary between the Greater Sydney division and the regional and outer metropolitan division. Unions were provided with the boundary proposal and the opportunity to ask questions about how it would work; the questions were formally responded to.

Staff feedback emphasised the safety function of the Transport cluster and the significance of its environmental impact, which led to the designation of the safety, environment and regulation division. Creating new divisions and assigning staff to them is an important first step, but it is hardly the end of the story. The transformation of Transport for NSW into an integrated transport agency that takes a holistic approach to the challenge of facilitating multimodal, safe and sustainable transport services for the urban and regional communities of this State will take time and further input from staff and unions. I am informed that senior managers at Transport for NSW are holding regular briefing sessions with staff, informing them of developments and details of the process, and providing opportunities for feedback and input into the establishment of the new divisions. At the same time, senior leaders of the cluster are holding regular consultation sessions with employee representative bodies in accordance with the provisions of relevant industrial awards.

This collaborative approach is to be applauded. Bringing staff together on designing and delivering customer-centred, safe and sustainable services is the way forward. I said earlier that the bill is necessary, but it is not a sufficient factor in ensuring that Transport for NSW is best placed to deliver on the priorities of the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government. This is Parliament's opportunity to ensure that the great collaborative and customer-focused work being done within the cluster itself is adequately supported by the appropriate legislative framework. I also add to that some of the larger programs that are happening within my electorate of Heathcote.

**Mr Mark Coure:** Your achievements.

**Mr LEE EVANS:** Projects, achievements—they are happening. I have \$300 million of Pinch Point programs, or part of, happening within the Heathcote electorate. Other programs include a major upgrade of Heathcote Road, which is shared with my colleague the member for Holsworthy; a \$173 million upgrade of Heathcote Road, including the Heathcote Bridge; Linden Street upgrade—which I spoke of yesterday in my private members' statement—which will have a major impact on travel times for constituents, not only in my electorate, but also for those in the electorates of Holsworthy and Miranda, of up to eight minutes a day going to and from work, which I have been told is a major achievement for such a little amount of money.

Although I am talking about \$40 million, apparently it usually costs about \$100 million to achieve an eight-minute saving in travel time, so I am very pleased by that. Those programs have been rolling out over the past couple of years. As I speak, some major works through Kirrawee—shared with the member for Miranda—are transforming a four-lane road into an eight-lane road. It is fantastic to see that work being done by the Roads and Maritime Services [RMS], but it will be even better when it is integrated into Transport for NSW. I commend the bill to the House.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (11:12):** I make a brief contribution to the second reading debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. As the member for Kogarah has indicated, the Opposition will not oppose the bill. I hope the bill will ensure a holistic approach to transport and ensure that transport silos do not develop, whether we are talking about buses or trains, or all forms of active transport. I note, though, that the legislation was introduced suddenly—and perhaps quite unexpectedly—while the Government was in the midst of negotiations with unions and key workers in the sector. I am aware that several of the issues presented to the Government have been agreed to, but they remain absent from the legislation at this

time. I also note the contributions of members, such as the member for North Shore, who outlined how the services in her area have improved.

Given her contribution, it would be remiss of me if I did not take this opportunity to not talk about the unfortunate cuts to transportation in the Coogee electorate—cuts that continue without community consultation. Cuts like those to the well-used 378 and 361 bus services, which have run for decades and took community members where they needed to go—hospitals, libraries, their friends and their families. Public transport is such an important part of our communities to ensure that people remain connected to their communities and are not isolated. Changes to the 361 service mean that people who live on Tamarama Marine Drive must now walk up the Tamarama stairs to catch the 360 to get to work. Commuters can catch the new 381, but it takes 20 minutes longer than the previous 361 service. Mr Temporary Speaker Evans, have you ever climbed the Tamarama stairs? It is not easy, let alone in a suit, with an ailment, with small children or in high heels. During the election the Government made a commitment to reinstate the 378 bus service. It has been six months since that announcement, yet we have not heard a whimper from the Government about when it will be reinstated. When we asked, we were told:

A number of service improvements are planned for Sydney as part of the Government's commitment to introduce 14,000 additional weekly services across Sydney, the Illawarra, Hunter and Central Coast over the next four years.

Sometime over the next four years the Government will make good on its commitment. That is great news for the people of Bronte. In addition to bus services in the electorate that have already been cut, we now know that there are many more cuts to come. The proposed changes to bus services as a result of the light rail are yet to be fully released in their entirety; however, reading the close to 700-page environmental impact statement regarding the light rail, we know that the following buses are potentially on the chopping block: the 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 395, 396, 343, 397, M10, M50, 391, 392, 393, 394, 399 and the L94. Buses aside, let me be clear: I want the light rail to work more than anyone. Because if the Government is spending \$3 billion on it, it had better work. Let us also make clear that the Government had to pay out Acciona \$576 million because it botched the contract. Again, \$3 billion for infrastructure—it had better work. The Government is willing to find \$576 million to pay out Acciona because it messed up a contract, but it cannot find \$6 million to keep paediatric cardiac services at Sydney Children's Hospital. Again, I really hope the light rail works: I hope that those sacrifices pay off for the Government.

**Mr Mark Coure:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 76 on relevance. The member for Coogee is not talking about the bill at all, but is talking about the children's hospital at Randwick. As important as that is, it is not about transport at all.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** To the point of order: That is an irrelevant point of order. The member for Coogee is in order and is talking to the long title of the bill. She should continue. The member for Oatley should not interrupt her.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** I believe the bill related to the dissolution of the RMS. The member for Coogee will return to the leave of the bill.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** I am talking about the priorities of transportation funding.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** The leave of the 2019 bill is about the RMS and its dissolution. The member for Coogee will come back to the RMS.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** I will talk about buses then. Back to buses and—

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** I remind the member for Coogee that that is not the RMS.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** We are talking about transportation. Back to transportation and buses because this is about having a holistic approach to public transport so that things can be integrated and looked at properly.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order: It is not for the member for Coogee to cavil with your ruling. You made a clear ruling that what the member for Coogee was talking about was irrelevant and did not relate to the bill. The member for Coogee ought to follow your direction or, perhaps, you should be put her on a call to order.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** The member for Coogee will return to the leave of the bill, which is the dissolution of the RMS. If you do not I will sit you down.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** Back to buses then and back to the RMS. I hope to see a holistic approach to public transport because buses, particularly in the Coogee electorate, are so important and will be an important

part of how public transport and the RMS work together. Buses are currently quicker than the light rail. The estimated travel time for the light—

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order: The member for Coogee is completely flouting your ruling. She is not talking to the bill. She ought to be made to talk to the bill or you should sit her down, as you have told her you would.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** To the point of order—

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** I have not given the member for Canterbury the call. What is the member for Ku-ring-gai's point of order?

**Mr Alister Henskens:** My point is that the member for Coogee is not talking to the bill. You have ruled that she is not talking to the bill, yet she continues to not talk to the bill. She ought to be made to talk to the bill. My point of order is on relevancy. She ought to be relevant to the bill.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** Could you stop the clock, Mr Temporary Speaker? This is wasting the member's time, and she has a lot to say about the dissolution of the RMS.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** As long as she speaks about the dissolution and to the bill, which I—

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** The member for Coogee is speaking to the long title of the bill. She has every right to talk about the coordination of transport in her community.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** I remind the member for Canterbury that I am speaking and ruling on—

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** Yes, Mr Temporary Speaker.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** I have already asked the member for Coogee to return to the leave of the bill. She spoke briefly and then the member for Ku-ring-gai took a point of order. I again ask the member for Coogee to return to the leave of the bill, which is about the transport administration amendment and the dissolution of the RMS.

**Mr Chris Minns:** The Minister referenced this in his second reading speech.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** Is the member for Kogarah seeking the call or just talking from his seat?

**Mr Chris Minns:** The Minister referenced these issues in his second reading speech. To the point of order: It is clearly within the leave of the bill because the Minister's speech referenced it. We have been listening to this entire debate.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** The member for Coogee will return to the leave of the bill.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** Talking about the coordination of public transport in the electorate of Coogee, it is incredibly important that buses remain as a part of how transportation works within the Eastern Suburbs. The first reason is that buses are currently quicker than the light rail. The current estimated travel time for light rail from Randwick to Circular Quay is 38 minutes on average, while the X73 bus is under 20 minutes on average. The second reason is seating capacity. Bus capacity is 80 per cent sitting and 20 per cent standing, while light rail has 20 per cent sitting and 80 per cent standing. With an ageing population, it is important that we have transportation that is integrated and works for the diverse needs of our community. After attending a number of roundtables with the department, I have been told that the community will be given only four weeks' notice about how its bus services will change. When asked why such a limited time would be given, I have been given the same answer time and time again: People get confused. Silly little people in the Sydney suburbs, aren't they? How little faith this Government has in the people of Sydney. [*Extension of time*]

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** Order! I call the member for Ku-ring-gai to order for the first time. I call the member for Kogarah to order for the first time. I call the member for Ku-ring-gai to order for the second time.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** While the Opposition supports this bill in principle, I reiterate the concern and fear articulated so clearly yesterday by the member for Maroubra that this bill may have a hidden agenda, which is the Government's systematic dumbing down of the public service and the shedding of 20,000 to 30,000 public sector jobs. The fact is that the people of New South Wales are now paying through the nose for

the sort of work that skilled and capable public servants once did. These skilled and capable public servants are out there to give frank and fearless advice to the government of the day—advice like not building pet projects.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (11:23):** I am pleased to speak in support of the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. I note that many of those opposite who have made contributions to this debate support the bill in principle. The bill will facilitate changes to the transport cluster operating model that are designed to deliver better integrated services across all modes, to keep driving better customer outcomes and to put a greater focus on creating better places for people across New South Wales no matter where they live. Those opposite will tell you a number of things about this bill. We have heard everything from privatisation through to the dumbing down of the sector, the degradation of public servants, and the lack of skilled, frank or fearless advice from government agencies. That is completely untrue. We have also heard some fantastic historical revisionism about the good old days of the Roads and Traffic Authority [RTA] and ultimately the [RMS]. This bill is simply a continuation of the evolution of government agencies that has taken place over decades. If we think back to the RTA, which evolved into the RMS, this is a logical extension of that process.

I have had the opportunity to work with both RMS and Transport for NSW on a number of projects in my electorate that have seen skilled public servants and skilled experts in both those agencies come together to work on some absolutely landmark and milestone public transport projects that service Manly and the entire Northern Beaches. One that I can speak to in particular is the B-Line, which brought together some incredibly passionate and wonderful experts in the transport space, who I met with regularly and routinely. It was a meshing of both Transport for NSW and RMS. They did an outstanding and wonderful job in delivering that project. However, it was apparent that if the merging of RMS and Transport for NSW had occurred before the delivery of the B-Line project, it would have assisted in the delivery and rollout of that project.

This bill is a good continuation of what good governments have done and will continue to do. The Government's record of delivering real public transport outcomes for the people of New South Wales shows that it can be trusted absolutely when delivering on public transport and transport generally. Since coming to Government in 2011, the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has grown the State's asset base by over \$100 billion. That is another point of interest. The suggestion that the bill is about privatisation or the diminishing of the public service is absolutely untrue. As the Minister for Transport and Roads has noted previously, collectively, transport agencies have built major new road and rail infrastructure, piloted and introduced new transport services and put a real focus on improving customer experience, which has resulted in sustained customer satisfaction—up from 79 per cent to 89 per cent.

Rail patronage is forecast to increase by 21 per cent over the next three years. Technology innovations and better use of data are opening up all sorts of possibilities to improve the customer experience. I can speak specifically to one of those examples, which is the trial and ultimately the rollout of the tap-and-go capability of the ferry network. Previously you would buy your ticket, then it went to Opal and now you can use your MasterCard or credit card to tap on that service and use the ferry. The opening of the Sydney Metro Northwest in May this year is an example of the Government's achievements. It is Australia's first fully automated rail network. Not a day goes by that the patronage and impressive nature of that project are not acknowledged. Passengers are showing how much they love the new metro system, with millions of trips having already been undertaken since it was opened only a few months ago.

Similarly, the opening of the M4 tunnel this month means that western Sydney commuters are saving 20 minutes on their daily commute. That is more precious time that people can spend with their families. There was a lot of debate and discussion from those opposite about the M4 tunnel before it opened, but now that it is open, it is working remarkably well. I had the benefit of using it recently when I visited some waste recycling facilities in Rydalmere. I used the M4 tunnel to come back home to the Northern Beaches. It was a sight to behold and saved a lot of time. But you do not hear that from those opposite. They are silent on that project. It was an issue of great debate before it was opened, but now that it is open and going incredibly well, not much is coming from those opposite.

The list of the Government's achievements goes on and on. Earlier I mentioned the introduction of the Opal and contactless payment for passengers as well as the opening of the Newcastle Light Rail. The Government has also committed over \$50 billion to congestion-busting initiatives, including new and upgraded roads, the Pinch Point and clearways programs, and new motorways, along with the installation of intelligent traffic lights at 500 key intersections designed to reduce the number of traffic stops by 15 per cent. Again, this is a combination of RMS and Transport for NSW bringing together two unique and different skill sets to improve the overall outcome for people across New South Wales. These initiatives allow the community to get where they need to be faster and more safely.

In July—consistent with our election promises—we also announced 2,850 new bus services on routes in Sydney, the Hunter and the South Coast over the next 12 months. These are the first of the 14,000 new bus services

we promised to deliver over the next four years. Meanwhile, the Mobility as a Service Innovation Challenge is already delivering services on the ground, which shows it is possible for government to work with industry to deliver technology-enabled transport services that people really want. All this is occurring while we are ensuring that safety remains our number one priority. These achievements make a huge contribution to the New South Wales economy and improve the quality of people's lives. Our economy is the envy of other States. But we do not hear much from members opposite about their transport achievements during their time in office—embarrassingly, there were few. Labor promised to build 12 rail lines in its 16 years in office—

**Mr Geoff Provest:** How many?

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** Twelve. Nearly one a year was promised but those opposite not deliver a single one. They tried three times to introduce paperless tickets, and I think we all remember the debacle that was the T-card. This Government has a vision for the future of New South Wales. The Future Transport 2056 strategy sets out our 40-year transport vision, directions and outcomes framework. It has been developed in conjunction with the NSW State Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038, the Greater Sydney Commission's Greater Sydney Region Plan and the Regional Development Framework. Under the Liberal-Nationals Government, genuinely integrated land use and transport planning is happening for the very first time in this State.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** Order! The member for Oatley will resume his seat. A standing order of the House states that members must remain seated while in the Chamber.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** I thought he was seated. This Government is in the business of delivering real transport solutions. Not only are we addressing the transport failings of those opposite when they were in government, but also we have an eye to the future. As the Minister for Transport and Roads often says, "Transport is a technology business".

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** You've been in government for nearly nine years.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** And we are doing an amazing job—rolling out as far as the eye can see. I have been through the M4, and it is a brilliant project. Up and down the northern beaches, where I come from, the B-Line is an example of a project that has dramatically improved people's lives. Yes, we have been in government for a while now, and that is showing: We are doing a great job, delivering a whole range of different projects. Given the rate technology is evolving, it is conceivable that in future our job will be providing not necessarily the physical carrier—the bus, the train, the ferry—but the technology linking people to those services. It is about seamless, customer-focused transport.

We understand that transport's operating environment is changing rapidly, and we need to change with it. The new operating model of Transport for NSW, as provided for in this bill, will mean that the sorts of transformational changes made to the transport network over the past decade can be delivered in an even more coordinated and agile way. As the Minister for Transport and Roads noted, the full integration of Roads and Maritime Services with Transport for NSW will mean there are no organisational barriers to realising the full benefits of integrated and coordinated services. It will ensure the breaking down of any residual silos that frustrate effective service delivery.

Finally, any comment from those opposite that this is about dumbing down, denuding or diminishing the public service is completely false. Over the past couple of years I have worked with some wonderful professionals in both RMS and Transport for NSW. They are passionate and do a great job. This bill goes a long way in supporting them to create an environment to do an ever better job on behalf of the people of New South Wales.

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (11:33):** I contribute to debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019 and acknowledge the work that has been done by our shadow Ministers the member for Kogarah and the Hon. John Graham. I heard what the members opposite have said about all their projects, but they do not talk about the project bumbles and blowouts. The Government tried to be sneaky and slip changes into the budget bills while at the same time talking to the workers and the public servants. Due respect must be paid to those workers and the public servants regarding significant changes to their conditions and processes that will affect millions of motorists across New South Wales.

Yes, I agree that having a coordinated government authority is essential for the proper management of roads, rail, transport and planning. But this legislation has been delayed by close to a decade—which is the time this Government has been in office. I am aware that negotiations with the relevant unions are continuing. Since its defeat in the other place on the budget bills—or perhaps because of that defeat—the Government has decided several issues but they remain absent from the legislation at this time. As the shadow Minister for Transport, Chris Minns, said, the Opposition does not oppose in principle merging the RMS with Transport for NSW. However, he foreshadowed a number of amendments to the bill.

We support a process of "reining in" the approach of RMS, which in many respects is due to our experiences with the department. In my electorate of Canterbury the Government, through the RMS, has made a number of changes to major roads with very little consultation. The Government is using a blunt instrument to get its way on a whole range of issues, without proper consultation or consideration. I do not want to stop or block progress, but consideration must be given to the environment and to the people who live on major roadways. Government members talk about the Sydney Clearways Strategy but there must be alternative traffic management arrangements on major roads so that people can access their driveways.

On 1 July the no-parking restrictions along Bexley Road, Campsie, were replaced with clearways in both directions. This made it difficult for many residents, particularly senior residents, many of who have lived in the area for nearly 40 years. The residents' representations were not listened to or considered. I hope that the merged RMS—the new entity—will take into consideration all such aspects before making changes. A few years ago there was concern about the RMS' extraordinary gung-ho approach and sense of entitlement in its treatment of my community. Under instruction from the roads Minister, bus stops were removed to accommodate the privatisation of Region 6 buses. Despite my speaking to RMS staff involved in the project, little consultation occurred—they had a job to do and simply rammed through the changes. This affected many elderly residents, students and others who rely on buses to get to medical appointments, school and the city.

Many elderly residents in my electorate also attend local welfare events and rely on buses for transport because they cannot afford a car or taxis. It is a problem, and the RMS did not listen to their concerns. We rallied and wrote to and rang the RMS. On a few occasions the staff listened, but they still did not take our wishes into consideration. I hope the Minister, his staff and key advisers are listening. That is what happened then, and I hope it does not happen again under the new entity—if it goes ahead. The Government's arrogant use of a blunt instrument to get its way does not serve the residents and the motorists of those areas.

Another example of the RMS ivory tower is the patchwork of roadworks along Canterbury Road. Canterbury Road is a key arterial road in Sydney that links the south-west to the inner west. Each day it carries 45,000 vehicles and thousands of people—our tradies, business people and thousands of school students. I urge the Government to listen to me and to give the local members who represent electorates along that road, as well as Government members, a briefing on the proposed roadworks and what integrated approach the Government will take to the roadworks and the proposed new entity. I have raised these issues about Canterbury Road previously and, again, the Government's response has been haphazard. I am in favour of a coordinated approach to planning, transport and traffic management.

I recall speeches made in this place and in the other place when the Government introduced the Infrastructure NSW bill, the Greater Sydney Commission bill and planning legislation. Members spoke about taking an integrated approach to transport, rail and roads but, unfortunately, that integration has not happened. Currently, development on Canterbury Road is haphazard. The Government allowed RMS to pursue that type of development on that arterial road without proper consultation, without proper discussion and without consideration of a business case. I would like to know—and hopefully one day we will find out—who from the RMS gave the green light to all the development on Canterbury Road without the appropriate infrastructure, consultation or consideration. Anybody who drives along Canterbury Road, regardless of their political affiliation, will tell you it is abysmal; they want to know how the RMS allowed it to happen. We will not let this matter go, and we will find out how this happened.

Another concern is that residents have been left out of consultation regarding Burwood Road and Punchbowl Road at Belfield. That is another example of RMS not consulting with the local council about traffic management. I urge the Minister and his department to examine and consider those issues. We support a coordinated approach to traffic management by RMS but there must also be consideration of residents. I do not want to see public services go backwards under this new entity and I do not want to see forced redundancies or workers being left out. I urge the Government to take those issues very seriously.

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (11:42):** I am pleased to speak today in support of the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019 and to outline to members the benefits that reorganisation of the Transport cluster will bring to the people of this State. Integrating Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] is a sensible and logical next step for Transport for NSW, as the lead agency in the Transport cluster. It will fully integrate every area of transport under a single and unified banner. Focusing on delivering the Government's commitments and ensuring that there is even greater focus on social reforms must be priorities. The Future Transport 2056 strategy sets out the 40-year vision, directions and outcomes framework for customer mobility in New South Wales, which will guide transport investment over the longer term and will be delivered through a series of supporting plans. To continue to deliver on those plans, we must change the way we operate. Adaptability is a trait of good government and the cornerstone philosophy of a Liberal-Nationals government.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** Order! Members will take their private conversations outside the Chamber.

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON:** New South Wales government agencies in the Transport cluster must function and work differently. A key factor is Transport having the right structure in place to ensure that the various areas work together more closely, focusing on the different needs of urban and regional New South Wales in a holistic way that puts the needs of the customer before the mode of transport. One very important factor is being conscious of the way that we use taxpayers' money. We acknowledge that Transport for NSW needs to do better at utilising taxpayers' money so we spend more time providing a better customer experience.

Making sure that those who work within the transport service are given the support and training they need during this transition is key to delivering a workplace where everyone can grow good work habits and demonstrate leadership—which, in turn, will benefit our customers and our communities. When I look close to home at the infrastructure projects that are currently active in Hawkesbury, it makes me proud to be a Liberal. The Windsor Bridge replacement project is due for completion in 2020. The project has been difficult to complete, with delays caused by some community groups objecting to the project and taking the Government to the Land and Environment Court, and an upper House inquiry. Those delays to the project have added to its cost. But I am pleased to say that the Windsor Bridge replacement project is now steamrolling ahead.

Another \$4 million has been allocated in the current budget for the design of the Pitt Town bypass following the land acquisition over the past 18 months. The Bells Line of Road improvements at North Richmond have made a huge difference to commuting times for locals during peak times. The Government has allocated another \$10 million to fund a business case for the third river crossing, and I am delighted that the Federal Government announced a contribution of \$200 million for the construction of the project. Many Hawkesbury locals are embracing the Sydney Metro Northwest, which is on Hawkesbury's doorstep and one of my pet loves. We are finding great ways to access that wonderful project, and I have seen an improvement in the congestion on the roads feeding into it. As I travel into the city on the M2, I also notice that the traffic is lighter because many more people are travelling on public transport than this Government promised and has delivered.

The Government should be applauded for investing in infrastructure to keep pace with the growth of this State. In considering the Transport Administration Bill 2019, Unions NSW and its affiliated unions were consulted and all parties acknowledge that the proposed legislation—schedule 5 to the State Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 and the dissolution of the RMS bill that is before the House—will not impinge on the RMS group of staff and the application or coverage of the Roads and Maritime Services awards.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** Before I call the member for Auburn, I remind the member for Ku-ring-gai that he is on three calls to order. I encourage members to allow those making contributions to the debate to be heard in silence.

**Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (11:45):** I join my colleagues in contributing to debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019, to which the Opposition will move amendments in the upper House. The object of the bill is to dissolve Roads and Maritime Services and transfer its rights, liabilities and functions to Transport for NSW, with the intention of improving cohesion between all modes of transport and delivering better coordination. Better coordination is vital in my electorate. While there have been many superlatives from the other side of the Chamber about transport, it seems that the electorate of Auburn—stuck at the start of western Sydney—has been left out of any coordination. Almost every project that has been mentioned has impacted on it in some way.

The member for Manly referred to WestConnex and said we were silent about how it is operating. The member for Manly must be living under a rock if he thinks that is the Opposition's view. He has failed to hear the concerns expressed by me and by the member for Granville about people missing tolls and the dangerous intersection at Church Street, Parramatta. There must be better coordination from the start—especially when the Government is building motorways, putting tolls on them and their reports are saying that people will leave the tollways in droves. The member for Manly must be living under a rock, because that is a real issue.

Yes, the WestConnex tunnel is operating smoothly. I have travelled on it a number of times. It is operating smoothly because nobody is on it—that is the reality. It is underutilised. The Government's figures show that before the introduction of tolls 196,000 vehicles travelled between the Parramatta exit and Concord Road. The other day I heard the Premier speak at length in this Chamber about how 88,000 people are using the tunnel. She did not mention how many were on the section between Parramatta Road and the tunnel. Previously there were 196,000 vehicles. What is the figure since the tolls were introduced? I would be interested to hear that, and the Government should tell us. All residents of the Auburn electorate know is that that piece of transport infrastructure has impacted on our roads.

There has been no coordination from the department of roads or the department of transport to deal with the congestion along Mona Street and Wellington Road, or the congestion on Parramatta Road at Lidcombe and Silverwater, which at certain times of the day—as I have said in this Chamber a number of times—is a parking lot. There has also been no coordination in terms of rail to deal with what the Government says are its great changes to the Inner West line. Over 1,000 people marched through the streets of Sydney protesting against the changes to the Inner West line. But it seems that some protests get more attention than other protests.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson):** The member for Oatley will allow the member for Auburn to be heard in silence.

**Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ:** The reality is that Berala and Regents Park stations are now ghost towns. They do not have trains running through them; the trains have been diverted. The Government is talking about ripping up the Sydenham to Bankstown line but I am yet to hear, or find anywhere on a Government website, what will happen to Yagoona and Birrong. There are two major high schools at Birrong that people from Berala and Regents Park travel to on the train. We know that the train line goes as far as Bankstown but what happens after that? I have put questions on notice about this. What will happen to Birrong and Yagoona and the trains that currently run through there?

People at Sefton who worked at Flemington used to catch one train but now they have to catch four trains. The Government is not telling us how students will get to Birrong boys and Birrong girls high schools when the rail line is ripped up. The Government cut the 401 bus service that used to be integrated with the wharf at Sydney Olympic Park and Newington; now it only goes to Sydney Olympic Park. Those are the great transport benefits that are coming to Auburn. Not one part of my electorate is not affected by this Government's lack of coordination in regard to transport. If this bill is about better communication between the Roads and Transport portfolios then a good place to start is Parramatta Light Rail stage two. There is a severe traffic problem on the corner of Bennelong Parkway and Hill Road due to the large number of properties now on the peninsula, and several accidents have occurred there. But no work is being done to resolve the problem because the council is waiting for the Government to confirm whether Parramatta Light Rail stage two will impact on the intersection.

I am quite fond of the Minister for transport, and I am sure he will get back to us with a response soon enough. In March the Government wrote that by mid-2019 it would be able to tell the council whether it could go ahead with its works. There is still no answer on that. But, more importantly, there is still no confirmation—although the Minister for transport has been asked numerous times in this Chamber—whether stage two of the Parramatta Light Rail will actually go ahead. If the Government is seeking coordinated transport and councils are dealing with huge traffic issues, the Minister needs to be transparent and upfront in this Chamber and let the electorate know what is going on. At the moment, the Minister for transport is refusing to confirm whether stage two of the Parramatta Light Rail is going ahead.

The Wentworth Point and Newington communities are not very happy about that lack of confirmation. They were promised that light rail stage two would be delivered much quicker than the metro line, but it is still 10 years away. Residents would like a metro line stop in their electorate, given how many cuts have been made to transport in the area. The reality is that better coordination will bring better results, but better coordination will only come with transparency from the Government and with advance planning. Access to WestConnex and the M4 extension is poor. There is no access to the M4 from the Lidcombe side of Hill Road, which forces people to do U-turns in front of oncoming traffic. As we know, drivers are exiting at Parramatta Road. There is a huge traffic problem there that has not been resolved. It is getting worse every single day.

The Government needs say how many people are using the M4 from the Parramatta Road exit—not in the tunnels, but from the exit—because that will give a clear indication of the impact on the electorate of Auburn and on South Granville. Better coordination would have informed the Government that better management of Mona Street and Wellington Road was needed. If the Government sends a transparent message about what it is trying to achieve then people will have no problems with better coordination between Transport for NSW and Roads and Maritime Services. But this Government has an extensive record of trying to hide any action it is taking, and Birrong and Yagoona stations are indicative of its failure to let the electorate know what is going on.

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (11:57):** I am pleased to support the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019 and to outline to members the benefits that the reorganisation of the Transport cluster will bring to this great State. In early April the Premier announced the Liberal-Nationals Government's key priorities for this term. Transport has a critical role to play in delivering on a number of those priorities, including building a stronger economy, delivering well-connected communities with quality local environments, and making the customer the centre of everything it does. A range of changes have been made to the government sector that are designed to deliver on our priorities and commitments to the community by giving an even greater focus to social reforms across the State.

The reorganisation of Transport for NSW is designed to create a fully integrated transport agency that is capable of delivering on the Government's commitments. Integrating Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] is a sensible and logical next step for Transport for NSW, as the lead agency in the Transport cluster. It will fully integrate every area of transport under a single, unified banner. It will break down any residual silos that frustrate effective service delivery across the State, but particularly in regional areas. The Government is determined to continue to deliver on its integrated transport plans, and in particular the outcomes set in the Future Transport 2056 strategy. The strategy is an update of the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan and involves a suite of strategies and plans for transport, developed in concert with the Greater Sydney Commission's Greater Sydney Region Plan, Infrastructure NSW's State Infrastructure Strategy, and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's regional plans, to provide an integrated vision for the State.

The Future Transport 2056 strategy sets the 40-year vision for the directions and outcomes framework for customer mobility in New South Wales. It is critical that the government agencies in the transport cluster operate together while working differently. A key ingredient is transport having the right structure in place to ensure the various areas work closely together, focusing on the different needs of urban and regional New South Wales in a holistic way that puts the needs of the customer before a mode of transport. The second is a focus on being smarter with taxpayers' money. Both sides of the House recognise that Transport for NSW needs to be smarter with the way it uses taxpayers' money so that it can spend more time delivering a better customer service.

Investment in our road transport network has been critical to ensure residents across New South Wales are spending less time commuting and more time with their family and friends. I acknowledge the member for Canterbury, who mentioned her electorate in her contribution. Across my electorate we are seeing investment in the widening of King Georges Road. This project has been talked about for generations. I remember as a young kid—some would say I am still young—a headline on the front page of the paper stating: Widening of King Georges Road. That was almost 35 to 40 years ago.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** You are not that old.

**Mr MARK COURE:** I am not that old; I acknowledge that interjection. For too long motorists have experienced significant congestion along this road corridor, particularly during weekday peak periods. King Georges Road connects the south-west to the south through to the Sutherland Shire. Our Government has recognised this congestion and it has acted. The proposed improvements are designed to deliver a faster and more reliable journey. King Georges Road will receive a \$40 million injection as well as money from the Federal Government for its widening between Stoney Creek Road, Beverly Hills and Forest Road, Hurstville. Thousands of motorists each day are set to benefit from the widening of 1.5 kilometres of King Georges Road to three lanes in each direction. This will significantly reduce congestion along this corridor.

Furthermore, the F6 extension will also ease congestion across our network, connecting President Avenue, Kogarah, to the new M5 motorway at Arncliffe. This project will remove over 2,000 trucks a day from surface roads, returning local streets to local communities. For this Government, it is about creating an integrated transport solution across New South Wales. This four kilometre underground motorway will ease congestion, allowing users to bypass up to 23 sets of traffic lights on the Princes Highway between St Peters and Kogarah. It will contribute to a more accessible, more liveable and productive Greater Sydney.

This integrated network also includes the widening of the M5 and extension of the M4, resulting in thousands and thousands of quality jobs and reducing travel times across New South Wales. The newly constructed Belmore Road M5 on and off ramps are a game changer for my local community. I am sure residents in East Hills will use it as well. Local residents will get to and from work sooner. Those ramps are reducing congestion and improving the flow of traffic on the M5 motorway, helping the thousands of motorists who use this route every day to spend more time with their families rather than being stuck in traffic.

In conjunction with the widening of the M5 East and duplication of the M5 tunnels, this project will bring much-needed relief to thousands of motorists across Sydney. The new M5 will provide nine kilometre twin underground motorway tunnels from Kingsgrove to a new St Peters interchange at the site of the old Alexandria landfill facility. This is a game changer for Greater Sydney. Local streets and intersections around the St Peters interchange are also being upgraded to ensure there are safe and efficient connections to the M5. It is expected that the upgrades will be open to traffic some time in 2020. This is a great win for my local community.

As part of this M5 project my local community also saw upgrades to the King Georges Road interchange at Beverly Hills, which up until now has been a well-known bottleneck for south-western Sydney motorists. Another road project that has delivered significant benefits to the local area was the expanded overbridge at Lily Street, Allawah. This upgrade created better local traffic flow, pedestrian safety and access to local businesses. The project was the result of a \$16.5 million investment from Sydney Trains and Roads and Maritime

Services. Allawah has long been central to the vibrant community of South Sydney and the new overbridge, which is two to four years old, has increased traffic flow to the area and local businesses.

Those projects and other local road projects are aimed at improving road safety and ensuring that motorists return home from their destinations. I look forward to keeping the House informed in the months ahead about projects in my local area. In conclusion, this is a commonsense approach and ensures that there is better coordination between agencies. The Opposition members will vote for the bill, even though they are talking against it. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:05):** I make a contribution in debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. I note the Opposition is not opposing the bill in this place but reserves the right to make amendments in the other place, if necessary, to protect public servants working for what is currently referred to as Roads and Maritime Services [RMS]. The object of the bill is to dissolve Roads and Maritime Services and transfer its assets, rights, liabilities and functions to Transport for NSW, also known as TfNSW. Some members in this place who are as old as I am will remember that RMS was previously known as the Roads and Traffic Authority [RTA] and before that it was the Department of Main Roads [DMR].

The DMR had a long history as a provider of State roads and main roads throughout New South Wales. It had a proud history which was brought to termination by this Act. I pay tribute to all those public servants who served loyally and diligently with the DMR, RTA and RMS, providing service to my community and to the people of New South Wales. I wish those who are transferring to the new entity all the very best for the future. In the Minister's second reading speech he said the bill is about integrating transport and 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. After nine years, I would hope so.

My constituents will welcome any improvement on the current level of service delivery of transport projects in my electorate. I do not cavil with the reality that the Government is building things but there has been a distinct change in the way the community is consulted about those projects, particularly in my community. I know other members in the House have referred to this change as well. All members who have spoken on the bill have referred to projects in their community and I will do so as well. The rearrangement of the way the public service is structured to deliver those projects can have an impact on how services are delivered in our community. I refer to the Pacific Highway in my electorate. Under the former Labor Government stages 1 and 2 were delivered between 2009 and 2011. We are only up to finishing stage 3A under the current Government and it has taken it nine years. It has only just started on stage 3B. The upgrade of the Pacific Highway in my electorate was started by the former Labor Government and this government is taking a very long time continuing it. My community has experienced a distinct change in that upgrade.

The end result in all circumstances has been good. However, the planning that went into stages one and two involved the community much more closely than has been the case under the current Government. During stages one and two the heritage of Ourimbah railway station, which is located right next to the Pacific Highway, was integrated into the design. Extra parking was provided at Ourimbah station as part of the upgrade because the RTA, under the former Labor Government, realised that in widening and upgrading the Pacific Highway a whole bunch of informal parking that people used around the railway station would be removed by the widening of the highway. To counter that, extra parking was provided at Ourimbah railway station and the community got a better service. Ourimbah Public School got a better bus turnaround service. Ourimbah RSL got a new car park to replace the informal car parking on the highway verge that was built over as part of the Pacific Highway widening. The community was brought along in every step of the way and a good project resulted.

When stage 3A was finally built under this Government, all the informal parking in the Pacific Highway reserve, which was built over in the widening process and that had been used by the community, disappeared and the design did not account for that. People in my electorate had to mount a huge campaign to have that informal parking replaced and extra hotel parking provided for hotel patrons. We also campaigned for better parking access to be provided for my constituents who had informally parked on the old highway verge and who were going to lose that parking, which had not been accounted for in the initial design or even in the final design of that project. We campaigned to get the design revisited. The same is happening with stage 3B. During the early stages of the planning of that process, I alerted the Government that informal parking around Lisarow railway station would be lost as a result of the road widening. I got a bureaucratic response saying no parking would be lost from the Lisarow railway station car park. What that nonsense reply failed to acknowledge was the informal parking on the old highway verge that will disappear under the current widening of the Pacific Highway at Lisarow.

I have now been given an undertaking that the design will change, but this is evidence of the lack of planning and lack of consultation that has been the hallmark of this Government in its infrastructure delivery. Unfortunately, that delivery will not necessarily be fixed by this reorganisation. There is a philosophy of service delivery in the bill. In contributions from those opposite, they have spoken about the customer. They did not talk

about the delivery of a public service to a community. Instead, they talk about customers and they promote a very narrow managerialism in the delivery of public services. That creates very narrow accountabilities that are then contracted out to private providers to do the design. Those providers have no interest and no contractual obligation to consult the community. What results is a project that delivers a suboptimal service to our communities.

There is a better way. There needs to be better integration of planning. So far, the siloing that those opposite said would be removed has been a hallmark of how this Government has delivered all its transport projects. We only have to look at the Kangy Angy railway maintenance facility. It does not fit it with the regional plan for the Central Coast. This railway maintenance facility has been built in the middle of an area which, under the regional plan, was marked as environmental. It was not put anywhere near the area on the Central Coast marked for industrial development.

A \$50 million bridge has been built in an area where it was not needed; it should have been built in a different location. Planning needs to be better and it will not necessarily happen under the changes promoted by the bill. Greater emphasis needs to be given to public transport. Greater emphasis needs to be given in those projects to the rights of pedestrians. Whilst I welcome any small change in pursuit of better service delivery for the people of this State, the bill will not necessarily guarantee it. It is a philosophy of government that is absent from those opposite. It will only improve when there is a change of government in this State and Labor is returned to the Government benches.

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (12:15):** It gives me great pleasure to speak in debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. I must say that when I read the title of the bill a few days ago, I got rather excited when I saw the word "dissolution". I thought it meant the abolition of Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] and then I had a wry smile on my face when I read the first line that states that the purpose of the bill is to amend the Transport Administration Act 1988 to dissolve Roads and Maritime Services. There it was in writing. However, there was no full stop after "Services". Instead there was a comma. I jest because the purpose and intention of the bill is to transfer the assets, rights and liabilities of Roads and Maritime Services to Transport for NSW and to make consequential amendments to other legislation necessary to facilitate the change. The reason for my wry smile and mild excitement is that, as any member of Parliament or any councillor in any local government area knows, we think from time to time about the deliberations and dialogues—even in some cases heated discussions, arguments and fights—we all have had in deliberations with members of the RMS.

I recognise that we need a body like the RMS to implement some of the most important aspects of service delivery in New South Wales. The role of this body is fundamental to the smooth rollout and delivery of roads that are used by the people of New South Wales. It is a great pleasure to be part of the government that, through its delivery of \$90 billion worth of infrastructure over the next 3½ years—the remainder of this term—has invested a significant proportion of that funding in transport and roads. This legislation brings those two great authorities together under the one banner, and that can only provide greater outcomes and further efficiencies in delivering infrastructure for everybody in New South Wales. I certainly support the bill.

The version of the bill that has been introduced is exactly the same as schedule 5 of the State Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, other than with respect to a very minor amendment to the transitional provisions to delegate certain functions to Transport for NSW, rather than to the Transport Secretary. The bill is being introduced following further extensive consultation with the unions. This extensive consultation period does not surprise me. All good governments undertake extensive consultation with stakeholders, sometimes over a long period, and that is certainly the case with the bill. The changes proposed to the transport cluster are designed to deliver better integrated service delivery across all modes to keep driving better customer outcomes and to put a focus on creating better opportunities for people to access the places where they live. It is always this Government's intention to provide people, regardless of where they live across the broad Sydney metropolitan area, with the best living experience by minimising the time that they spend sitting in traffic. We are always trying to minimise the time they are away from their families.

I often joke that in our lives and in Government everything is about roads. Of course it is not everything, but it is a major portion of what government does because every day transport is vital to our communities. The better and safer we construct those roads, the better public transport we will have. People who live across our broad metropolitan area will have greater options to avoid using vehicles, such as cycleways and pathways. Those options need to be interconnected so that we can provide better places and ways for people to live their lives so that they ultimately have a greater quality of life.

Roads and Maritime Services is currently a standalone statutory authority under part 6 of the Transport Administration Act. The bill dissolves Roads and Maritime Services and transfers its functions to Transport for NSW under part 6, division 1B of the Transport Administration Act. This is done by amending schedule 1 to the Act, which sets out the functions of Transport for NSW. There will be no change to the functions of the Roads

and Maritime Services which will be exercised by Transport for NSW following the merger. There is a great need to have professional people from Roads and Maritime Services to continue overseeing the construction of roads and to continue the rollout and operation of the massive network of roads. They will also work collectively and collaboratively with our local government authorities to ensure that we have the best roads in New South Wales.

This includes the functions under the Transport Administration Act, the Roads Act 1993, the Road Transport Act 2013, the Heavy Vehicle National Law (NSW), the Passenger Transport Act 1990, the Passenger Transport Act 2014, the Marine Safety Act 1998, the Ports and Maritime Administration Act 1995 and all associated regulations. Similarly, there will be no change to the employment status of staff of the Roads and Maritime Services as a result of the merger. Last week in my office I had a discussion with senior members of the RMS about some of the very important road structures that are occurring now and in the future not only across my electorate but also in the north-west and western Sydney. We joked that we were about to abolish their services in a bill this week, but that is not the case. All those jobs will be maintained under the transfer that will occur as a result of the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019.

The bill will not cause award staff to lose their jobs. RMS staff are currently part of the transport service established under part 7A of the Transport Administration Act. This will remain the case after RMS is merged with Transport for NSW with the transport secretary continuing to exercise employer functions for all staff. The bill is an important piece of legislation that will rollout greater efficiency and create a more effective role for all expert personnel within RMS and Transport for NSW. There are great synergies within both of those agencies and I imagine there is also a duplication of roles. One way to ensure greater efficiency and outcomes is to bring those two agencies under the one banner.

I take this opportunity to refer to some wonderful outcomes that have been achieved right across New South Wales under this Government. I am an avid and regular user of our road network not only in my electorate but also more broadly across New South Wales. It is hard to travel more than 10 or 20 kilometres without seeing the extensive roadworks. Last week when I travelled to the lovely western areas of Scone I saw extensive roadworks on the Pacific Highway between Hornsby and Newcastle. The widening of lanes is extraordinary, together with the hundreds of millions of dollars that are being injected into those roads on behalf of the people of the Central Coast and certainly the Hunter Valley.

I was heading towards Scone so I then travelled on the Hunter Valley Expressway, which is an outstanding piece of highway. Anyone who has travelled on that road will know it is a safe road. This Government is proud to take credit for its construction very early when it came to the Treasury benches in 2011. A little closer to home, not only in my electorate but also western Sydney, some enormous outcomes have been achieved in road connectivity. I refer to the opening of the next stage of WestConnex. I have used all of its tunnels and the M4 and the outcome has made an improvement in traffic conditions. [*Extension of time*]

WestConnex has provided an enormous improvement in travel times particularly from Ashfield all the way out to Penrith. Immediately after its opening my wife, Wendy, experienced the outstanding tunnel. This Government continues to provide more roads for the people of New South Wales. WestConnex has an outstanding tunnel that will link the M1 or the old F3, to the M2, known as NorthConnex. We look forward to the opening of that road in 2020, which will provide an extraordinary outcome for people accessing the city. There have been some minor delays, as often happens with large projects, but this Government is meeting those challenges head-on. As I often say to my community, no longer will people sit for hours on end in a five kilometre traffic jam when returning to Sydney after a long weekend up the coast. It resonates with them because everybody at some stage travels up to the beautiful Central Coast and beyond to enjoy a holiday away with their family and when they return they are faced with the abhorrent traffic nightmare of Pennant Hills Road.

Pennant Hills Road is a three-lane road in both directions which cannot handle the amount of traffic that heads north and ultimately returns south after a long weekend. Local residents will benefit enormously from the removal of heavy vehicles along Pennant Hills Road. One only needs to travel on that road to see many thousands of vehicles using it because they have no alternative, but when its upgrade is completed they will be safely travelling in a tunnel. There will be a massive improvement to the quality of life for people living along that corridor because the emissions from heavy vehicles and cars will be distributed through exhaust ventilation, which is currently being emitted at street level while vehicles are idle on the road. The environment along that corridor will be improved and it will give back Pennant Hills Road to the local community. It will be a delight for people to use either Pennant Hills Road or NorthConnex. It will be a vast improvement similar to the way WestConnex operates at this point in time.

In my electorate I was proud to deliver a wonderful upgrade of Showground Road, which is the gateway to one of the greatest suburbs on earth—Castle Hill. It has one of the greatest shopping complexes in western Sydney, known as Castle Towers. Every weekend it seems that many people from western Sydney take advantage of travelling to Castle Towers. It is a very busy and appealing local shopping centre which is undergoing a major

facelift. I am proud to say that the first stage will open in time for Christmas shopping this year. In order to access Castle Towers we upgraded what was a single-lane goat track which was left by our predecessors, the Labor Party, for many decades.

Two years ago the Government delivered a wonderful \$41 million upgrade of Showground Road. It is an outstanding piece of road infrastructure. The second and final stage between Pennant Street and Old Northern Road that is currently underway will be completed together with the opening of the first stage of the Castle Towers redevelopment. That will be welcomed by the broader community. I have not even mentioned our wonderful Sydney Metro Northwest. I was pleased to read only yesterday that some 66,000 people are using that facility on a daily basis. It is an outstanding piece of infrastructure. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (12:30):** I make a contribution to the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. The member for Kogarah has indicated the Opposition's position with respect to the bill. I endorse his remarks, whatever they might have been. Nothing I say should be taken to be, either expressly or by implication, inconsistent with those remarks. The bill was before Parliament a month or so ago as a cognate bill to the budget bills to give effect to a machinery change. It is designed to effectively merge two transport instrumentalities into one in an effort to provide an integrated efficient transport agency.

I understand why the Minister for Transport and Roads wishes to merge those two instrumentalities. As a matter of theory, one would think that doing so would result in efficiencies, but the caution that I give the Government in respect of these types of bureaucratic mergers is that they create huge bureaucracies that remove the Minister even further away from the decision-making process. The bigger a bureaucracy, the harder it is for the Minister to control. The bigger a bureaucracy gets, the happier that bureaucracy is, but the more difficult it becomes for the Minister. The current Transport portfolio is huge. For decades transport Ministers have struggled to manage that huge portfolio. Not only is the portfolio huge, but so, too, are the boards involved in managing the portfolio.

The Ministers are so far removed from the day-to-day functions to have the ability to immediately intervene when required to do so. For example, one of the grave difficulties the State finds itself in with respect to the current Transport portfolio is the merging and absorbing of ports into that portfolio. Members might recall that for a number of decades ports were a separate administration with a separate ports Minister. Ports are an essential part of not only the New South Wales economy but also Australia's economy. Ensuring the efficiency of ports in New South Wales has been immensely difficult, mainly because Australia's second-largest port and the State's largest port at Port Botany has been constructed and hemmed in to an area bounded by Botany Bay and Sydney Airport. Governments have struggled regularly to provide efficient transport to and from that port.

If you track back through decisions about ports over the last 20 years, it is apparent that any real innovation has been occasioned by ports Ministers, not by the bureaucracy which has been single-handedly unsuccessful in efficiently managing New South Wales ports. For example, the decision made at a political level by the ports Minister at the time to move the importation of cars to Port Kembla may not have been an efficient decision that the bureaucracy wanted but it effectively rescued the Illawarra following the collapse of the steel industry. The current debate in the Hunter about the status of the container port in Newcastle, compared to the lease arrangements the Government entered into in respect of Port Kembla and Port Botany, might be more easily resolved and the Government might be far more responsive if there was a separate ports Minister.

The management of the Roads portfolio is extremely difficult. It has been made more difficult by the reduction in professional staff at Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] and the Roads and Traffic Authority [RTA] over many years: 10 or 11 years ago, the then RTA had an entire unit that constantly looked at traffic problems within the State. It constantly prepared various options for solutions and various funding models for the Minister. That part of the organisation is gone. Now, every time a solution is required, the RMS has to outsource the work because it has not got the requisite resources. Prior to losing those resources, no matter who the Minister was or the Minister's political priorities, the RTA's professionalism, ability and costing models were available to the Minister of the day, offering a variety of solutions.

If you talk to the current roads Minister and previous roads Ministers in this Government prior to 2011, they and their staff will tell you privately about their frustrations with the lack of resources within that organisation to provide the necessary professional advice. In making that observation, I do not want to criticise the RMS per se because I can say that, as a member of this House for some seven years, I could not have asked for better cooperation from roads Ministers, nor from RMS officials, with respect to my issues. My issue is that they need to be resourced. If you stick them together in one transport agency then ministerial oversight of the Roads portfolio will be far more removed. In his second reading speech, the Minister for Transport and Roads said:

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.

In theory, that seems to highlight a government function, rather than an instrumentality function. It should be the Ministers talking to each other because transportation involves not just public transport or roads, but also freight. Transport is also part of State overall planning when referring to schools, police, emergency services or hospitals: These are all part of an oversight planning policy. So you would not stick schools, police and water in the same portfolio as trains, buses, ferries and roads, but they are all part of and support one planning function.

I understand what the Minister is trying to achieve but he is effectively creating a huge bureaucracy that will be extremely difficult for him and whoever follows him to manage. The other part of the proposed merger is Transport for NSW. I have a poor view of Transport for NSW and some significant decisions the Government makes. As I have indicated, the portfolio is so huge it is difficult for the government of the day. In 2012 the O'Farrell Government announced the \$1.2 billion CBD and South East Light Rail contrary to the advice of Infrastructure NSW, which gave a variety of warnings about the consequences of proceeding down that route. By pure chance, all those warnings have eventuated and the Government continues to pay a political price for not heeding them. Despite the Infrastructure NSW recommendations, the local members who were impacted by the light rail project were not opposed to it—it was like a \$1.2 billion gift. It was the view of the council and ourselves to make the project work. [*Extension of time*]

Randwick City Council employed transport planners to examine the project thoroughly and advocated effective changes to then transport Minister and now Premier Gladys Berejiklian to make the light rail project better and more efficient. The member for Maroubra, the then member for Coogee and I supported those changes that were designed to make the Government's project work better. Those recommendations were not expensive. Randwick City Council was prepared to fund the light rail project to extend it to Maroubra Junction along a road that was designed to have a tram—it probably still has tram tracks there.

Transport for NSW was completely intransigent every step along the way without providing detailed explanations because the views of the council, the then member for Coogee, the member for Maroubra and me were unarguable. Had the Government and Transport for NSW listened, they would not have received the grief—and rightly so—about the destruction of hundred-year-old trees on Anzac Parade and Alison Road and about various parts of the route. Transport for NSW is an arrogant agency. In December it made substantial changes to bus routes in my electorate, with three days' notice, by sticking bits of paper at bus stops. It did not engage in consultation. Thousands of people who are severely impacted by changes in bus routes and destinations are still signing petitions.

That organisation, which has a track record of arrogance and of dismissal of the views of local government and local members who want projects to work, will now merge with RMS, which, although under-resourced, is quite cooperative. Those hopeless people will also get responsibility for the ports. Port Botany is already in crisis because Transport for NSW has no way of taking the Sydney Gateway and WestConnex to it, which was the very objective of the WestConnex project when it was announced in 2012. The issues I raise in my contribution have been raised with the government of the day. I have to concede that the size of the portfolios and the complexity of the issues are such that there is no prospect of one Minister being able to be accountable to the Parliament for the function of this huge bureaucracy.

Prior to the election in March, WestConnex was a separate ministerial portfolio. It was hived off from the transport portfolio and given to the member for Penrith because a project of that size could not be handled on its own by the roads Minister; it required separate ministerial oversight. That project has been given back to the RMS. The roads ministry is now the transport ministry—I do not argue with that; that is a matter for the Premier. Now the Government will put together the two agencies and even include ports, which are a shambles in this State—the port lessees are gouging money by adding the price to imports and exports—and expect one Minister to hold those agencies to account through this massive bureaucracy and to be accountable to the House. As a matter of practice it will not happen. The bill and the cognate bill that was adopted by the House as part of the budget bills provide victory to Sir Humphrey Appleby. *Yes Minister* is alive and well.

**Debate interrupted.**

*Committees*

## **PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (PAC)**

### **Reports**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner):** The question is that the House take note of the report.

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (12:46):** As Chair: I am proud to contribute to the take-note debate on the wonderful *History of the Public Accounts Committee 1902 – 2018*, which I am sure every member in this House would have read.

**Mr Stephen Bromhead:** Absolutely.

**Mr GREG PIPER:** It makes for compelling reading, particularly for anyone who has been on a public accounts committee. I acknowledge the member for Myall Lakes who was on the committee through the period of history that the report references. The report supplements an earlier report that was tabled in 2003 and has been updated to reflect the work of the committee since then. I am not quite sure when I should mention it but presenting this report from this side of the House is notable. While it is not physically referenced in the report, I have signed the Chairman's foreword in the report and, therefore, it forms a part of that history. I acknowledge the Premier and the Government for having the courage to appoint a non-government member—not an Independent—as Chairman of this most significant committee.

**Ms Gabrielle Upton:** It is a measure of the talent.

**Mr GREG PIPER:** I thank the member for Vacluse. The New South Wales Public Accounts Committee is the longest continually operating public accounts committee in Australia, having been established in 1902. That is a significant milestone. The report says that there was an earlier established public accounts committee in the Victorian Parliament in 1895 but it was disbanded in 1932, ostensibly due to the Depression, and not reconstituted until 1955. To have that continuous oversight of a public accounts committee is no small feat. In the first 80 years of its existence the committee's main role was to examine the public accounts and, in particular, the reason for expenditure beyond the level appropriated by Parliament.

I understand that it did that for all figures, large and small. I imagine it would have been quite an excruciating process because it did not have the modern facilities available in the Parliament now. The 1980s saw the committee's revitalisation as part of the fundamental changes to financial management of the public sector and the committee's powers were expanded. It was able to initiate its own inquiries. Importantly, it was also given the support of a permanent secretariat, rather than relying on part-time clerks and information supplied by Treasury. Make no mistake, since that time the Public Accounts Committee has been a significant player in the probity of the Parliament. In its new guise, the committee undertook a number of inquiries into accountability arrangements with departments and statutory bodies.

The committee's work led to immediate improvements in annual reporting requirements, as well as the introduction of accrual accounting in the New South Wales public sector. It is important to point out the role the committee's relationship with the Auditor-General has played through its history. I think members would agree that the Auditor-General is a very important part of the oversight provisions of the public sector and the Executive Government. We have a very constructive and interesting relationship because it is at arm's length. The Public Accounts Committee is not there to influence, rather to assist the Auditor-General to do her work.

Over this last period, the committee has had a very good working relationship with Auditor-General Margaret Crawford, as we have had with previous auditors-general. I acknowledge the staff who make it possible for us to do our work. I notice that the member for North Shore, a member of the committee, is in the Chamber. I imagine she will contribute. We all benefit from the wonderful assistance and expertise of the parliamentary committee staff. I acknowledge Elaine Schofield in that role. I also particularly acknowledge the secretary, Mr Bjarne Nordin, who guided and supported the committee for a long time. With that, I complete my contribution. I commend the *History of the Public Accounts Committee: 1902-2018* to the House. I thank the Premier and the Government for their faith in allowing me to be appointed as chair of the committee.

**Report noted.**

## LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

### Reports

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** I move:

That in accordance with Standing Order 306 (7) the reports of the Legislation Review Committee, being orders of the day (committee reports) Nos 2 and 3 be considered together.

**Motion agreed to.**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery):** The question is that the House take note of the reports.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:53):** As Chair: I address the House on behalf of the Legislation Review Committee for the Fifty-Seventh Parliament and speak to the reports entitled *Legislation*

*Review Digest No. 1/57 and Legislation Review Digest No. 2/57.* The committee scrutinises all bills introduced to Parliament and all regulations subject to disallowance in accordance with the criteria established under the Legislation Review Act 1987. This process informs members and the community about the potential impact of bills and regulations on their personal rights and liberties, and whether they enable the inappropriate use of government or legislative power.

I am pleased to have the Hon. Trevor Khan, MLC, as deputy chair, along with a number of other learned colleagues supporting the committee. Thank you also to the committee staff for the work they do. I turn now to the Committee's first and second digests for this Parliament, tabled on 6 August 2019. In digest No. 1/57 the committee examined the first 18 bills introduced in this Parliament and commented on seven of them. The Committee also identified issues in 24 regulations. I draw the House's attention to some of the key issues raised in the first digest. The Ageing and Disability Commissioner Bill 2019 seeks to protect and promote the rights of adults with disability and older adults. It establishes the office and functions of the Ageing and Disability Commissioner and an Ageing and Disability Advisory Board.

The bill provides that the commissioner is not subject to the control or direction of the Minister in the exercise of the following functions: Conducting investigations under part 3; advising or making recommendations to the Minister; and preparing annual reports and special reports under part 5. The committee noted that the commissioner may be subject to control or direction of the Minister in exercising functions outside those listed. As a result, the rights of those subject to the bill may be unduly dependent on the insufficiently defined administrative powers of the Minister. The committee therefore referred the matter to Parliament for consideration. The Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Amendment (Inmate Behaviour) Bill 2019 permits the Corrective Services Commissioner to adopt behaviour management policies for inmates of correctional centres.

These policies may specify circumstances in which certain privileges provided to inmates may be modified, even if they relate to a criminal or correctional centre offence. The committee noted that it is an important rule of law that a person not be punished twice for the same offence. If privileges are withdrawn and the inmate is also subject to penalties arising from criminal justice or disciplinary proceedings, he or she may effectively be punished twice for the same offence. The Crimes (Appeal and Review) Amendment (Double Jeopardy) Bill 2019, a private member's bill, extends an exception to the rule against double jeopardy. The rule provides that no-one can be retried for an alleged offence for which they have been acquitted or convicted. The bill extends the circumstances under which a person can be retried for a life sentence offence. The committee referred this matter to Parliament, as the double jeopardy rule is designed to prevent the State, with its considerable power and resources, from making repeated attempts to convict an individual, thereby subjecting him or her to a continued state of uncertainty.

I draw the House's attention to some of the key issues raised in the second digest, in which the committee commented on three bills. The Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill 2019 enables a termination of pregnancy to be performed by a medical practitioner on a person who is not more than 22 weeks pregnant, or on a person who is more than 22 weeks pregnant in certain circumstances. It repeals criminal offences relating to abortion and abolishes any common law rules relating to abortion. The bill requires a registered health practitioner, who has a conscientious objection to performing a termination, to disclose that belief. It also requires the health practitioner to refer a person requesting a termination to a health practitioner who he or she believes can provide the service, and who does not hold a conscientious objection to it.

The committee noted that this requirement to refer may impact on the health practitioner's right to freedom of conscience as he or she is required to participate in a process to which he or she has a conscientious objection. However, the committee noted that the right of a woman to lawfully access termination services must also be considered and that the requirement is consistent with the existing code of conduct issued by the Medical Board of Australia. Similarly, the health practitioner is not required to advise on or perform the termination, rather to refer or transfer care of the person. In the circumstances, the committee made no further comment.

I turn to one of the regulations the committee reported on in its first digest. The Criminal Procedure Amendment (Penalty Notices for Drug Possession) Regulation 2019 allows police to issue on-the-spot fines of \$400 for certain drug offences. The committee noted that it prefers provisions that set penalties to be included in primary legislation, to foster an appropriate level of parliamentary oversight. That concludes my remarks on the first and second digests of this Parliament. I encourage everyone to read the full digests, which are available on the committee's webpage. I commend the digests to the House.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:58):** I make a contribution to debate on the first and second digests of the Legislation Review Committee for the Fifty-Seventh Parliament. I begin by welcoming my fellow committee members, both new and returning, to the committee and I congratulate the member for North Shore on her election as chair. I wish all committee members the very best in their deliberations. It is probably appropriate, given this is the first take-note debate on the committee's digest, to remind the House that the functions of the

Legislation Review Committee are set out in the Legislation Review Act 1987. Under section 8A the committee is to consider all bills introduced into Parliament. Under section 9 the committee is to consider all regulations that are subject to disallowance by resolution of either or both Houses of the Parliament.

The committee will primarily scrutinise bills and regulations to determine whether they unduly trespass on personal rights and liberties—as well as other things—but that is essentially the thrust of the committee's deliberations. I remind members that the digest provides a useful summary of all bills before the House. The digest is a document that members can refer to from time to time not only in relation to the comments made by the committee under its scrutiny power, but also to get an overview of the bills before the House. I conclude by acknowledging the secretariat that is appointed to support the committee, which does a fantastic job. I look forward to working with its members. I commend the digest to the House.

### **Reports noted.**

#### **Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 3/57**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery):** The question is that the House take note of the report.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (13:01):** As Chair: I speak on the Legislation Review Committee's third digest for Parliament, which was tabled on 20 August. In this digest the committee examined five bills and commented on four of them. The committee also identified issues in nine regulations. I draw the attention of the House to some of the key issues raised. The Racing Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 seeks to permit Racing NSW and Harness Racing NSW to compel certain persons to provide information to a special inquiry if an order is made by the Supreme Court. A person is not excused from providing information on the grounds that it may incriminate that person. The committee acknowledged that the powers are intended to assist in investigating threats to the integrity of the racing industry. It also noted safeguards in the bill, including that the compelled information is not admissible in evidence against the person in criminal, civil or disciplinary proceedings. Nonetheless, the right to silence and right against self-incrimination are well-established legal principles. The committee referred the bill to Parliament to consider whether it unduly trespasses on these rights.

The bill would also empower the police commissioner to make an order excluding a person from racecourses during race meetings if the commissioner considers it in the public interest to do so. The committee noted that such an order would impact on the freedom of movement of affected persons. It further noted that while the bill provides certain appeal rights for such orders, in practice these may be difficult to exercise given that the commissioner is not always required to give reasons for making an order, and given the breadth of the commissioner's power to do so. In the circumstances, the committee drew these matters to the attention of Parliament to consider whether the provisions trespass unduly on the right to freedom of movement.

Another bill I note is the Gambling Legislation Amendment (Online and Other Betting) Bill 2019, which seeks to make directors liable for certain offences of a corporation related to direct marketing to holders of betting accounts. The committee noted that to establish executive liability, the prosecution is not required to prove the director had actual knowledge of the offence, only that he or she ought reasonably to know that the offence would be committed. However, the committee acknowledged that it is not unusual in a regulatory context for there to be a lower threshold for the mental element that must be proved to hold a defendant liable, and that this is to encourage compliance. Further, the offences in question would not attract a custodial sentence. In the circumstances, the committee made no further comment.

One of the regulations the committee reported on in its third digest is the Road Transport (Driver Licensing) Amendment (Release of Photographs to ASIO) Regulation 2019, which expands the circumstances under which Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] can release photographs, including driver licence photos, to ASIO. Currently photos may only be released for the purpose of investigating terrorism offences. The committee noted various safeguards in the bill, and the importance of national security and public safety. However, it also noted that many people may not expect RMS to release their information for purposes unrelated to its own functions, and in particular to release that information to ASIO without a warrant. In the circumstances, the committee referred the regulation to Parliament for further consideration as to whether it unduly trespasses on privacy rights.

Lastly I turn to the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Amendment Regulation 2019, which increases the maximum penalty that a court may impose on an employer's agent for failing to comply with requirements for the keeping and inspecting of training contracts. The committee acknowledged that penalties in this area had not increased for a long time and the intention that they be aligned with similar frameworks. However, due to the large increase in the maximum penalty from \$550 to \$11,000, the committee referred this to Parliament to consider whether the proposed penalty is proportionate to the offence in question.

That concludes my remarks on the third digest of this Parliament. I encourage all members to read the full digest, which is available on the committee's webpage. I also acknowledge the contributions and efforts of my fellow committee members: Deputy Chair the Hon. Trevor Khan, the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane and Mr David Shoebridge from the other place; and Mr Lee Evans, member for Heathcote; Ms Wendy Lindsay, member for East Hills; Mrs Leslie Williams, member for Port Macquarie; and Mr David Mehan, member for The Entrance. All members of the committee spend a significant amount of time ensuring that they review the regulations and disallowable regulations that come before this Parliament. I thank the committee members and committee staff, and I commend the digest to the House.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (13:06):** I will make a brief contribution on the third digest of the fifty-seventh Parliament, which was considered by the committee on 23 August. The digest reports on the committee's deliberation on five bills and nine regulations. I encourage members of both Houses to consult the digest as part of their deliberations on those bills, which are before both Houses of Parliament. At the 20 August meeting the committee noted that in the previous Parliament the committee had conducted an inquiry on its own initiative and on 22 November 2018 tabled a report of its inquiry into the operation of the Legislation Review Act 1987, but did not receive a response from the Government.

At its 20 August meeting the committee considered the report that it tabled in the last Parliament and endorsed the recommendations in that report, which was in response to a letter circulated in advance of the committee's 6 August meeting in which the Premier asked the current committee to endorse the recommendations in the report. On 20 August the committee endorsed the recommendations in the report. I will table a summary of those findings rather than read out the recommendations. The committee awaits the Government's response, which I look forward to. The committee has made a number of recommendations that it thinks will improve the scrutiny of bills before the House. The committee encourages the Government to consider those recommendations positively.

**Report noted.**

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

*Visitors*

#### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a very warm welcome to year 10 commerce students and year 11 legal studies students, and their teachers from Kingswood High School, guests of the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney, and the member for Penrith. I welcome Peter Ingram and Garry Wilbraham from the Bombaderry Bowling Club, guests of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services, and the member for Kiama.

I also welcome students and staff who are attending the Riverstone Junior Youth Leadership Assembly today from John Palmer Public School, Kellyville Ridge Public School, Mary Immaculate Primary School, Parklea Public School, Quakers Hill East Public School, St John's Primary School, St Joseph's Primary School, Vineyard Public School, Riverbank Public School, Norwest Christian College and St John XXIII Catholic Learning Community, guests of the member for Riverstone.

I acknowledge James Garlick, Emma Hale, Louise Greenaway, Mel Hall and Lou Pirona, constituents and guests of the member for Lake Macquarie. Finally, I acknowledge Tshepo Mokgothu, a legislative drafter from the Botswanan Parliamentary Counsel's Office who is visiting the New South Wales Parliament today. I welcome you all to the Chamber.

*Announcements*

#### **SCARF UP FOR SCOUTING**

**The SPEAKER:** I remind members that the Scouts NSW event Scarf Up for Scouting is to be held today in the Speaker's Garden directly after question time concludes at 3.30 p.m. To commemorate the occasion members will be presented with a special scout scarf and framed scout badges. Members can listen to a short briefing on scouting across New South Wales. I thank the Chief Commissioner of Scouts Australia NSW, Neville Tomkins, and his Executive Assistant, Leisha McCarthy, and their team for offering this opportunity to members.

*Question Time***SYDNEY METRO NORTHWEST**

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:21):** My question is directed to the Minister for Transport and Roads. Given the Sydney Metro Northwest has suffered at least 33 delays and breakdowns—that is one every couple of days on average—was he wrong to axe hundreds of Hillsbus services to the city before the metro was proven to be reliable and safe?

**The SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Kogarah that he is on one call to order and the member for Ku-ring-gai that he is on two calls to order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (14:22):** I just wondered if the Treasurer had written that question.

**Mr Michael Daley:** No, David Elliott wrote it.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** David helped and Ray was involved, and Kevin—

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I'm glad they went to Labor's strategy meeting today and helped them out.

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** But there is nothing to help out here because let me tell you—

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Let me tell members this: The Government has just delivered a \$7 billion-plus train service to this part of Sydney.

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** It has already carried the population of Sydney—18,000 additional services have been provided.

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** And without doubt, one of the reasons the Government has made changes to the buses is so that people can get to the train stations to get on the metro—there is an idea, that is a bit of transport policy. Without doubt, when you see, first of all, a decline in bus patronage of around 18 to 22 per cent in peak periods, you want to ensure that buses are better servicing the needs of the community. You can change a service and not everyone will benefit, but the majority of people will. I make this point: The continual running down of a world-class train system by those opposite—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: The question is, "Was he wrong to axe hundreds of Hillsbus services to the city?"

**The SPEAKER:** I will hear further from the Minister. I imagine he will return to the leave of the question soon.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I think I am being entirely relevant—I will start talking about related matters in a minute. The reality is that there is no doubt that with this train system the Government has also delivered an integrated transport network. It would not matter if it were on demand, the buses or ultimately point to point. What I say to those opposite is that they might want to run this system down, but I will tell them what the commuters are saying: Customer satisfaction with the metro is at 95 per cent. That is pretty high. The way in which the system recovers when there is a problem is truly remarkable. Of the 31 incidents that the Leader of the Opposition claims was a metro meltdown, in only five of them the system was out for half an hour. I can assure the House the headways return incredibly quickly because of the very nature and design of the system. We got on with it and built the metro. Do I need to remind those opposite what they did not do about the Sydney Metro Northwest? How many times did they promise it—

**Mr Ryan Park:** How's George Street going?

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** It's going great too, don't worry about that. I am sure you will be the first one on the tram when it comes, Ryan. Without doubt, as we always do in transport, we will continue to monitor the patronage and we will always review the services. I say that to all my colleagues from the north-west:

We will continue to review. Thanks, Dom, there is the answer to your letter. There is no doubt that this is a fantastic transport project delivering great outcomes for the people of the north-west.

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:25):** I ask a supplementary question. My question is obviously to the Minister for Transport and Roads. I note that, as he infers, the Treasurer has embarrassed the Minister by requesting in writing that he reverse bus cuts to the Epping electorate. Will the Minister now admit that he made a complete mess of the Hillsbus timetable across all of north-west Sydney and reverse his cuts to the services, as the Treasurer has asked him to do?

**The SPEAKER:** Members will be quiet for the start of the question. The Clerk will reset the clock. Members should not interject when the Minister has not even commenced his answer. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (14:26):** There is no doubt that the supplementary question proves that Labor has no ability to change its strategy when it gets exposed doing something silly. We saw that yesterday.

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I thank all the members in the north-west who have been advocating for and giving feedback about the buses. The Treasurer has done that as a local member and so have the member for Baulkham Hills, the member for Riverstone, the member for Castle Hill and the member for Seven Hills. We will review and we will respond. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her supplementary question—she has just blown half their questions for question time.

#### **COST-OF-LIVING SAVINGS**

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (14:27):** My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the latest cost-of-living savings for the people of New South Wales, including the capping of the Opal on the Sydney Metro Northwest?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:27):** That is a good question. I thank the member for Castle Hill for his question, which brings to light the fact that when you have a strong budget and a strong economy you are able to give back to the community through cost-of-living measures. I know that the good constituents of Castle Hill as well as many across western Sydney and the north-west in particular are benefiting from these immense savings to their cost-of-living pressures. Yesterday morning the Minister for Customer Service and I were able to convey a significant milestone. Since July last year the Government has given back \$1.5 billion to the community from 70 different programs across the State, saving people lots of dollars.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I am very pleased to say that yesterday we met with a lovely man called Joe, who had been in the navy for 25 years and is now retired. Through Energy Switch and other programs he is saving over \$2,000. Before I go into some other milestones regarding specific cost-of-living measures and their take-up, I will inform the House of some particular communities that are saving lots of money. Given the member for Castle Hill asked me the question I am pleased to say that since July last year constituents in his electorate have saved in excess of \$300,000—money given back to them in cost-of-living measures. We know that the Labor Party will not deliver for the member for Bankstown, but the Liberals and The Nationals will deliver for the member for Bankstown—her constituents have saved in excess of \$267,000. Areas like Parramatta, Liverpool, Auburn, Wetherill Park, Burwood and Mount Druitt are communities in particular that are saving immensely from the Government's cost-of-living measures. Why do those opposite not care about cost-of-living pressures?

**The SPEAKER:** Members will be quiet.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Currently about 30,000 people have gone to Service NSW centres to seek the advice of a cost-of-living specialist. We say to the people of New South Wales that it is not enough—we want more people to claim those savings because, on average, households or families are saving at least \$500 and some families are saving in excess of \$2,000. I am very pleased to say that around 11,000 customers have already saved more than \$4 million by using Energy Switch, with an average saving on electricity costs of \$440. As the House knows, from 1 July we introduced the Gas Switch. I was very pleased to make that announcement in Goulburn because we know that many rural and regional customers rely on gas more heavily than people in the city, and they are saving, on average, \$134 on their bill.

I am also pleased to say that more than 120,000 drivers have saved more than \$50 million in free registration and 14,000 drivers have saved \$3 million in registration discounts. Since July last year we have given away \$53 million in either free or discount registration, which is making a big difference for people. I was

overwhelmed when I saw this and I had to double-check the figures—there have been 600,000 downloads of the FuelCheck app, where people can check to see where the cheapest fuel is. I am pleased to say that we know that families and individuals are benefiting. But it does not stop there.

When it comes to the Active Kids vouchers, which we have now doubled so that families can get two Active Kids vouchers a year, which is great—something those opposite opposed—since July last year more than 1.6 million vouchers have been downloaded, which means that 1.6 million times parents have been able to encourage their kids to participate in sport. I am also pleased to say that we are seeing an increased city take-up rate in Creative Kids vouchers as well. More than 288,000 Creative Kids vouchers have been issued, which is fantastic, to encourage children to participate in other extracurricular activities. As the member for Castle Hill noted, we are very pleased with the Opal card fare cap. [*Extension of time*]

From now on, \$50 a week is the maximum people will pay. I support the enthusiasm of the member for Castle Hill for this issue. He is almost as enthusiastic as I am. We know that if you live in western Sydney, on the Central Coast, in Kiama or in other areas where people travel longer distances, people are saving in excess of \$506 a year just on the Opal fare cap. Wherever one looks this Government is saving for households and individuals, and reducing cost-of-living pressures. What did those opposite offer during the campaign? They wanted to get rid of payroll tax cuts for small business, they wanted to introduce a new car tax, they wanted to cancel stamp duty, they wanted to put a tax on retirement villages and they wanted to introduce a parking tax—you name it, they wanted to tax it.

In the first three months of government since the election we thought that those opposite were a hopeless Opposition because they did not have a leader. Now they have a leader and they are even worse; we have not heard a single positive thing from them. They have not told us which taxes they will abolish; they have not told us one single policy initiative. We are proud that through our strong budget we are helping families and individuals, and we will keep delivering for the people of New South Wales.

#### REGIONAL COST OF LIVING

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (14:33):** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the Government is reducing the cost of living for communities in regional New South Wales?

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:34):** I thank the member for Tweed and congratulate him on his engagement. I had to say it in the House to congratulate him. That is not a cost of living measure; that is an expense. I thank the member for his question. This is a member who is 100 per cent for the Tweed. He is fighting for his community, making sure that all corners of this State—and we are going to the extreme corner of the State when we talk about Tweed—gets its fair share of what is happening. We often talk about initiatives or programs that happen in Sydney or in metro areas but it is just as important to focus on what we are doing in regional New South Wales.

We heard some questions earlier today about transport. I often think Sydney people can take public transport for granted, being able to jump on a bus or a train just on the next corner. The access to those trains is subsidised by the Government in an efficient public transport system in the city. In the regions we do not often have the luxury of public transport. I congratulate the Minister for transport because over the last number of years we have seen increased bus services, extended services across regional New South Wales connecting major centres to smaller regional towns, and looked at innovative ways of delivering public transport. That is what we do in the regions. We do not complain about it; we just get on with it. The tyranny of distance is always one of the greatest challenges that we face in the regions. It is no different if you want to get health care or send your kids to school, be it primary, secondary or post-secondary education. That is why our side of the House has invested \$16 million in Country University Centres in regional New South Wales.

We want our kids to have the same opportunities and benefits to get a diploma or a degree, an education on par with anyone who lives in the city. We are doing it by rolling out a very innovative model called Country University Centres right across regional New South Wales. Those opposite criticise us but we are looking for innovative new solutions to make sure that our kids in the regions are not disadvantaged. That is a cost of living measure as well—not having to send your son or daughter off to a major centre, paying accommodation or having to travel every day, and accessing tertiary education in a safe and great learning environment with support. It is a model that we saw work in Western Australia and we were more than happy to adopt that model and make it work for New South Wales. We now see a number of these Country University Centres being rolled out across the State.

When it comes to energy we live in some of the areas that see the extremes of climate change and the extremes of weather. Some of the coldest parts of the State are in regional New South Wales and some of the

hottest parts of the State are in regional New South Wales. We rely on energy to run air conditioners or to put on heaters. In Monaro we rely on gas and heaters to stay warm at minus four degrees on a Saturday morning, minus seven degrees during winter. If you live in the far west those temperatures can get extreme, over 40 degrees. That is why the energy rebate that we have especially for pensioners—those opposite sit there, they laugh, they disregard, they do not care. I will continue not to acknowledge them because they are irrelevant to regional New South Wales.

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** I recall during the election campaign that we made a serious commitment, from the New South Wales Liberal Party and The Nationals, about a regional seniors transport card. We will fund up to \$250 for seniors in regional New South Wales to look at other ways when they do not have access to public transport so that they can go to a doctor's appointment or connect with family. The \$250 seniors travel card will allow seniors to use that card to pay for fuel—a lot of us in the regions rely on the family car because there are no other options—public transport, taxis or some bus services.

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** We have looked for an innovative model. I will admit it is a model that has played out in Western Australia for a long time and we will progress with it in New South Wales. It will start in January, as we said in the election campaign. Those opposite are worried about the start date when they opposed it. They said it was pork-barrelling. They said it was vote buying. That is how the Labor Party depicted that policy to support seniors in regional New South Wales. [*Extension of time*]

Once again, Labor pretends that it cares about regional New South Wales but it does so only around election time. They turn up, pretend they understand, pretend they know, bring no solutions, create anxiety, tell mistruths and lose campaigns. They have thrown their hands up in defeat. This morning there was a notice of motion by Labor to reclassify Wollongong and Newcastle and the Blue Mountains as regional. Because it cannot win a regional seat it is going to create one. Labor is going to call Wollongong, Newcastle and the Blue Mountains regional but we still represent regional New South Wales. We will continue to fight for cost of living in regional New South Wales with our Active Kids rebate, which helps families with the cost of sport, and our Creative Kids rebate, which helps families with the cost of the arts, dance et cetera.

We have put subsidies in place to support our farmers by waiving fixed water charges, which is \$560 on average per farmer, and by waiving Local Land Service fees, which is \$3,100 on average if you are a farmer on 2,500 hectares. We have removed \$6,200 in interest costs under some of our Farm Innovation Fund programs and the Drought Assistance Fund. Drought transport subsidies are saving \$8,700 on average for families in regional New South Wales in this time of drought. We are discounting preschool fees in regional and rural New South Wales to support families, farmers and our regional communities because we care about the regions and we care about our families.

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** During this question time those opposite have chosen to yell and criticise—no answers. They criticise consistently. They will not sit back and listen because Labor has no plan for regional New South Wales.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the Deputy Premier to order for the first time. I call the member for Strathfield to order for the first time. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the first time. I call the member for Keira to order for the third time. I call the member for Bega to order for the first time.

### FORESTRY CORPORATION

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (14:42):** We will see who cares about rural and regional New South Wales. My question is directed to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer rule out the privatisation of the Forestry Corporation which employs hundreds of workers in rural and regional New South Wales?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (14:42):** Progress was never made taking anything off the table. Labor's scare campaigns lost in 2011. Labor's scare campaigns lost in 2015. Labor's scare campaigns lost in 2019. The difference between this side of the House and that side of the House is we will always look at finding the best services for the people of this State at the best price for taxpayers because we represent the people of New South Wales and those opposite represent the unions of New South Wales. That is the fundamental difference. On this side of the House we support the timber industry; on that side they support the union movement. We are the best friends the workers of this State have ever had. Under a Liberal Government, a Liberal-Nationals Government—we are a coalition, we saw that yesterday.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** What we see on the side of the House has been, right across the board, thriving industries and thriving businesses. If you want to talk about the forestry industry or talk about jobs in regional New South Wales, what we have seen under the Coalition Government is more jobs created in regional New South Wales than every single region across the country combined. Why is that? It is because this side of the House, with our philosophy and our policies, provides the foundation for success. The asset base under this Government has grown. You can talk about selling off the State but the exact opposite has occurred under this Government. What we have seen and the difference between—

**Mr Paul Scully:** Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 129. I think the Treasurer misunderstood the question. It is a yes or no answer. If he is going to say "no", just say it.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** I answered the question in the first sentence. If you do not like the answer it is a matter for you. As the Deputy Premier has rightly pointed out, not only do we lead the nation in finance, infrastructure delivery and our asset recycling approach, we lead the world. The Premier recently attended the governors' conference in Washington DC, in the United States. The United States sees New South Wales as the gold standard when it comes to infrastructure finance and delivery. Last year the Republican and Democrat transport committees came to see the metro and the work that has occurred in New South Wales with the \$93 billion infrastructure delivery over the last four years.

Mr Speaker, you have not reported back on the task I left for you: Whether you could find any jurisdiction in the whole world that could boast a budget surplus over \$1½ billion, negative net debt, a triple-A credit rating, \$93 billion of infrastructure over the next four years whilst at the same time cutting over \$5 billion of tax in the last four years and funding \$2 billion in cost of living initiatives. When it comes to finance and delivery New South Wales leads the way. For the member who asked questions about regional New South Wales: Regional New South Wales has never been better off than under the Liberal-Nationals Government. Looking at the transactions: 30 per cent of Restart funding—

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** —invested in regional New South Wales. The Snowy transaction that was opposed by those opposite funded a \$4.2 billion investment in legacy projects across regional New South Wales. The last budget provided a \$1.8 billion drought package, \$500 million dollars to fix local roads and \$500 million to fix local bridges. Never before have we seen such a record investment in things that matter to people's lives in regional New South Wales and we will continue to invest in record amounts because on this side of the House we manage money well.

**The SPEAKER:** I observe that there is far too much general conversation along both Government front benches. I do not need a commentary. I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the first time.

#### ON DEMAND TRANSPORT

**Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (14:48):** I address my question to the Minister for Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is delivering better public transport across this great State of New South Wales?

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (14:48):** There is a bit of strategy change happening opposite. I thank the member for his question. There is no doubt that the member is a dedicated and passionate advocate for his electorate. Technology and transport is being embraced in both the city and the bush. It is changing lives, connecting people and empowering them to go where they want when they want. In many cases it has given them back their independence. A great example is the On Demand trial program. On Demand is literally public transport when and where you want it. It is personalising the service. Since 2017 we have had—wait for it—almost half a million people catch On Demand services.

The State is challenged with the tyranny of distance in the bush and as the Minister it is one of the great challenges I face. We have run 22 trials across the State, including in the regions. We have had four permanent service routes put in place. We have received incredibly positive feedback from the community about the way On Demand services have transformed lives for the better. Our seniors community were having issues with mobility and it is giving them a new way to travel with ease and dignity. In May The Ponds On Demand service was launched linking passengers to the metro train. It has revolutionised transport for people in our north-west.

On average every day 385 passenger trips are taken on that service. That is more than 14,000 people in the first three months of operation. The member for Drummoyne would know that the inner west has seen more than 62,000 passenger journeys. On the northern beaches, from Barrenjoey Lighthouse to North Narrabeen, there have been more than 150,000 trips. Its patronage has tripled since its launch. The success stories are not only in Sydney. This will cause a reaction: Newcastle's On Demand has recorded 43,000 trips. How good is that. Stay off that bus, Crackers. On Demand is literally a life-changing service.

We have customer feedback from Michaela, a young lady with special needs living at Pittwater on the northern beaches. She uses public transport and in the past if she missed her bus her parents would have to close their small business to pick her up. By using On Demand she has a greater sense of independence and her parents can keep their business open. Sharon also lives in Pittwater and saves over one hour each day because she no longer has to transfer from bus to bus. In country areas this service is offering the community different ways to get around and that is exactly what is needed. On Demand transport not only helps commuters get to key transport hubs but also helps our seniors community, and those with less mobility, get to shops and medical centres and to visit friends and family.

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Last year the member for Drummoyne and I met Peggy Dickinson from Concord. She is a 95-year-old war widow who was amongst one of the first to use the inner west On Demand bus services. Peggy uses the service to and from Concord Hospital where she works as a volunteer five days a week. She is one of 5,000 passengers to take up the service in the first two months of operation. You have Michaela from Pittwater, Sharon from Pittwater and Peggy from Concord. We also have Chris from Kogarah. He absolutely loves On Demand. His local service is called "donations on demand". He pioneered this service in 2013.

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order: I think within reason you would say that is completely irrelevant to the question asked.

**The SPEAKER:** I am going to hear a little more. It may be linked.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** This particular on demand service has had 5,000 services from one customer, his name is Frank Chou.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order: This is not a joke. The On Demand services are not working across New South Wales and the Minister is straying from the root of the question. I know they are not working because in my electorate they are not working.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Swansea will direct her comments through the Chair.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** I apologise, Mr Speaker. You know how the Deputy Premier gets me all riled up.

**Mr Lee Evans:** I request an extension of time because I have not heard one word of the Minister's answer because of the noise in the Chamber.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, do you want an extension of time? If I grant the extension, I expect the answer to be relevant.

*[Extension of time]*

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I was talking about On Demand transport and there is no doubt that we are getting some great outcomes from the trials. I certainly wish the On Demand service in Kogarah all the best in the next couple of weeks.

## FORESTRY CORPORATION

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (14:54):** My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Given the Treasurer's failure to rule out the privatisation of the Forestry Corporation, will the Deputy Premier, as Minister for Regional New South Wales, rule it out right now?

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Londonderry to order for the second time. Members on both sides of the Chamber will listen to the answer in silence.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:55):** I find it hard to get a question in relation to forestry, knowing that in the dying days of the former Labor Government, in a grubby deal with The Greens, those opposite turned what was a productive forest in the Murray Valley into a park. They killed a timber industry and killed jobs.

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question was very, very clear—

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The member for Port Stephens will resume her seat. The Deputy Premier will continue.

**Ms Kate Washington:** —and you want to de-gazette a national park for the first time.

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** Just because the member for Port Stephens turned up to the Murray Valley National Park last week with a picnic basket, I bet you any money she will do nothing to support the timber industry there, as was the case in 2010, under the former Labor Government, when Nathan Rees did a dirty deal to shut down an industry, destroy a community and destroy livelihoods. Yet they come into this House today and talk about forestry and the importance of forestry to regional New South Wales.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** Point of order: The Deputy Premier has clearly strayed from the question. Can he rule out privatisation of State forestry?

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The Clerk will stop the clock. I have taken two disruptive points of order regarding relevance in the first minute of the Deputy Premier's answer. I regard these points of order as being purely to interrupt the flow of the Deputy Premier. If a member takes a disruptive point of order, I will not only put them on a call to order but I will ask for the clock to be restarted.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** The question remains: Do those opposite support the timber industry and forestry in this State? Do they genuinely want to see a long-term, viable, sustainable timber industry in regional New South Wales? It is good to hear the member for Cessnock saying yes. We will test him in the next few months on that question about supporting our regional communities in relation to timber. There is a separation between softwoods and hardwoods. I was lucky enough, before my time in this House, to have an association with the timber industry. I understand exactly what happened when Bob Carr shut down the industry in this State and the impact that had on communities and businesses. We went from being number one in the timber and forestry industry in this nation to being now a net importer of timber from places like New Zealand.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order: I take my point of order under Standing Order 129. The Deputy Premier is talking about a national park.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The Deputy Premier is being relevant.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** No, he is not being relevant. The question is about the Forestry Corporation privatisation.

**The SPEAKER:** The Deputy Premier will continue.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** Forestry Corporation looks after our pine plantations and timber in this State. It is our arm in relation to timber. There is a difference in what is happening in the softwood industry. We know that previous government decisions around softwood in this State and this nation have seen us become a net importer of pine. Places like New Zealand are outperforming our State. When it comes to hardwood, we decided to surrender our place in the global economy by shutting down the hardwood timber industry and surrendering ourselves to importing timber from Malaysia, Indonesia and Solomon Islands. Their track record in relation to sustainable, viable—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: I take my point of order under Standing Order 129. The question is about the privatisation of the Forestry Corporation.

**The SPEAKER:** The Deputy Premier is being relevant.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** You are a rooster out there and a feather duster in here, mate.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Rule it out!

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** I notice that I must be cutting through with the Labor Opposition. After every question time, if you go to Twitter you will see a personal attack because they cannot beat us on policy. There will be a personal attack because they cannot beat us on delivery. There will be a personal attack like the one from the Leader of the Opposition—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order: You would have to agree that the Deputy Premier is straying away from the centre—

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** I am responding to the Leader of the Opposition's outburst.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** But that is not the question. The question is—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Swansea will resume her seat.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** —will you rule out the privatisation of the Forestry Corporation?

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

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Rule it out!

**The SPEAKER:** The Deputy Premier is being relevant and he is also responding to unwarranted interruptions. I ask the Deputy Premier to continue.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** That outburst is embarrassing, because they cannot win on policy. They cannot win on delivery. They do not understand the timber industry. They want to pledge from Macquarie Street what is best for regional New South Wales. I recall that when the Leader of the Opposition became leader she said, "I'm going to fight for regional jobs and I'm going to stand for regional jobs." Let us see their position on mining. Let us see their position on forestry. Let us see their position on growing jobs in regional New South Wales—building dams, building prosperity. I bet you they are not interested. If they want the answer then they should just listen.

It is absolutely clear that we as a government have always considered all options when it comes to any industry and any asset. I make no apologies that the Minister for Lands and Forestry in this State has the ability to look at the Forestry Corporation and decide how we can deliver better outcomes from the resource and grow an industry that will create more jobs. Meeting those targets does not mean that the forestry industry necessarily needs to be in government hands. I am happy to say that. Why do I say that? Because I have come from the industry and I have faith in the industry. It is something that we can consider, because we are a mature government that is prepared to make the tough decisions.

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

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (15:02):** My question is directed to the Minister for Local Government. Can the Minister update the House on how the Government is supporting local councils across New South Wales?

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (15:02):** I thank the member for Oatley for his fantastic question and I congratulate him on being the best member that Oatley has ever had, without a doubt. I also congratulate him on the recent birth of his beautiful second baby boy. Like me and many other members of this House, the member for Oatley understands the importance of local government. We all try to develop really good relationships with our councils. Obviously, every council is different because every council has different challenges and issues. I have to say that I am sure that we all support emergency services personnel within our own council boundaries.

Maybe the member for Cessnock does not—I do not know, but I presume he does. That is why last year we all supported legislation, which was the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Firefighters) Bill 2018, in which we looked at ways to set up a well-funded workers compensation scheme to assist firefighters, whether they be emergency services personnel, from Fire and Rescue or national parks firefighters, to assist them if they developed any one of a list of 12 cancers. In order to fund that workers compensation scheme, the decision was made that it would come through the emergency services levy [ESL]. That levy was set up in 2008 by those opposite—well done. It is a responsibility that we all share in terms of funding the ESL. In 2008—

**Mr Clayton Barr:** It wasn't 2008.

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK:** Yes, it was, member for Cessnock.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Cessnock will come to order.

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK:** The member for Cessnock made a fantastic contribution to the debate on the legislation. What happened then was that, to set up the workers compensation scheme and assist emergency services workers and, in particular, firefighters, there would be an increase in the ESL. Unfortunately, that was bad timing for the Government. Invoices were sent out after the budget had been decided and councils were obviously very concerned about that. With the assistance of the Premier, the Treasurer and, in particular, the Deputy Premier, we advocated that we find a way to fund the first year of the increase in the emergency services levy.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** You stuffed up, Shelley.

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK:** That is pretty poor language. I do not know whether you accept that, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK:** We decided then that we would pick up the increase in the emergency services levy because local councils were obviously struggling. I am sure that every member of this House who came to me with a concern, or every general manager, now knows that we have picked up that funding increase for the first year. I assure the shadow Minister, the member for Campbelltown, that next year we will look at ways to try to relieve the pressure on local councils whenever we can. As a government, we want to make sure that our local councils continue to thrive, succeed and contribute to this State, as we contribute to their wellbeing.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 130.

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

**Mr Greg Warren:** The Minister clearly wants to debate the FESL and the imposition that her Government has put on the 128 councils across this State.

**The SPEAKER:** I am satisfied that the Minister may continue.

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK:** I thank the member for Campbelltown for his erudite comments. I do not want to debate this issue; I want to inform the House what steps the Government has taken to relieve the pressure on local councils—and I thought he would be interested. He is travelling the State, meeting with various councils. I praise him for doing a great job travelling—not announcing any particular policies. I look forward to him meeting with me perhaps to talk about what solutions we might have.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. This had better be good.

**Mr Greg Warren:** I refer to Standing Order 59. I am very happy to meet with the Minister when she becomes relevant, but the reality is the imposition that she has put on councils has had a serious effect. If she wants to meet with me she can explain how her Government is having a band-aid effect—

**The SPEAKER:** The member is not speaking to the standing order he has raised.

**Mr Greg Warren:** —and making councils pay for her incompetence—

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough.

**Mr Greg Warren:** —and the Government's inability.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Campbelltown will resume his seat. I place the member for Campbelltown on three calls to order. That was a total abuse of the standing orders. If he makes another comment like that he will be removed from the Chamber.

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK:** I will refer to some of the positive comments by stakeholders throughout the State about the Government's decision. [*Extension of time*]

The chair of Namoi Unlimited and Mayor of Gunnedah, James Chaffey—whom many members will know—stated:

... this outcome truly reflects your willingness to engage, listen and act according to the needs of local councils that rely on your strong leadership, especially rural councils during this time of continuous drought. Your investment of \$13.6 million will greatly assist in easing the pressure on councils this financial year.

Local Government NSW President Councillor Linda Scott, whom many members opposite will know very well, welcomed the Government's funding announcement, and said:

Local government strongly supports fairer workers' compensation for paid and volunteer firefighters. In many areas, especially in regional NSW, mayors, councillors and council staff are the core volunteers that make up our State's rural fire brigades.

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia President stated:

We are really appreciative to you and the NSW Government for listening and responding so positively to the concerns of councils ...

They are just some of the comments that I have received not only from stakeholders but also local councils almost daily. They are managing, and attempting to manage, their budgets; we need to help them. The 65 staff of the Office of Local Government in Nowra continually reach out to our rural and regional councils offering good advice. Their jobs are intact. In contrast to some of the comments from those opposite that the Office of Local Government does not exist, it certainly exists in Nowra. I thank sincerely those members who come to me with representatives from their local councils. I have named many today. The member for Miranda came to see me today with the Sutherland Shire Council general manager and the mayor. It is a fantastic council doing wonderful

things—particularly in the companion animals space, where it is a leader. I congratulate the council officers and the member for Miranda on having a really good discussion about what the council is doing. My door is always open to members who want to talk to me about issues and challenges facing their councils.

### CROWN RESORTS

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:10):** My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service. Given revelations around Crown casino relating to organised crime, foreign influence, drug trafficking and visa schemes, is it not time to review its licence to determine whether it is fit and proper to run a casino in New South Wales?

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (15:10):** I put the following facts on the table in relation to the casino licence. Crown Sydney is licensed to commence operations as a restricted gaming facility from 15 November 2019. Based on current projections, Crown Sydney is likely to open in 2021. On 30 May 2019, Consolidated Press Holdings Pty Limited announced the sale of 19.99 per cent of its shares to Melco Resorts & Entertainment Limited, a Hong Kong-based casino operator. On 28 July 2019 Channel 9's *60 Minutes* program aired a story that made a number of allegations in relation to the operation of casino junkets.

On Thursday 8 August 2019 the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority [ILGA] announced that it will be conducting an inquiry under section 143 of the Casino Control Act 1992. That inquiry will investigate the proposed sale of shares in Crown Resorts from CPH Crown Holdings Pty Limited to Melco Resorts & Entertainment Limited. The inquiry will be conducted by former Supreme Court Justice the Hon. Patricia Bergin, SC, with Ms Naomi Sharp, SC, and Mr Scott Aspinall acting as counsel assisting the inquiry. The inquiry will take evidence in public, with the capacity to conduct private hearings to receive confidential information from law enforcement authorities or other sensitive information. Section 143A of the Casino Control Act will give Ms Bergin similar powers, authorities, protections and immunities to those conferred upon a commissioner under the Royal Commissions Act 1923.

**Mr Jamie Parker:** Point of order: It is under Standing Order 129. The Minister is speaking about the sale that is currently subject to an ILGA review. My question was about whether the licence in toto should be reviewed in view of the recent revelations.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister is being relevant. I am sure that he is conscious of the precise nature of the question.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** I appreciate the point of order, but I am putting the facts on the table. ILGA is inquiring into this transaction under section 35 of the Casino Control Act, together with various matters raised in recent media reports published by the Nine Network, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* relating to Crown Resorts. ILGA has issued notices to relevant Crown parties and other parties compulsorily seeking documents and information that will assist it in its investigations and be used in the inquiry. ILGA is to have regard to the primary objects of the Act in exercising its functions. This includes: ensuring that the management and operation of a casino remain free from criminal influence or exploitation; that gaming in a casino is conducted honestly; and controlling the potential of a casino to cause harm to the public interest and to individuals and families. Terms of reference and a timetable for the inquiry by the Hon. Patricia Bergin, SC, will be published shortly. Information will also be provided regarding the process for making submissions. I thank the member for Balmain for his question.

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (15:14):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Energy and Environment. Will the Minister update the House on the challenges in the waste industry and what the Government is doing to address those challenges?

**The SPEAKER:** There is too much noise from members on the Government front bench.

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (15:14):** The member for Goulburn is my current favourite member for Goulburn. What a great question from the member! I could not have written it better myself—in fact, I probably did. This issue of waste management is of great interest to the member for Goulburn because her community borders one of the largest landfill sites in New South Wales—the Woodlawn tip. That facility takes 20 per cent of Sydney's putrescible waste and will continue to do that for at least the next two decades.

**Mrs Melinda Pavey:** What's that word?

**Mr MATT KEAN:** Putrescible waste. I am not going to spell it out for Hansard. The great challenge we face is that Sydney's waste is continuing to grow. That poses an enormous challenge for the Government and

for communities, but it also provides many opportunities. We currently produce about 19 million tons of waste every year. In fact, New South Wales produces the second highest amount of waste per capita in the world, and that number is expected to grow. Waste presents an enormous environmental challenge but it also presents an opportunity to innovate and do things differently. That means we can look at new technologies, including waste-to-energy.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Gosford will come to order.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** The New South Wales Government is taking those challenges and opportunities seriously, which is why it will develop a 20-year waste strategy to guide the way Government addresses the challenge, now and into the future. The 20-year waste strategy will be guided by three objectives: reliability, sustainability and affordability. First, with regard to reliability, when people put out their waste they expect it to be collected. That is a given, and the Government wants to ensure it continues to be the case. Secondly, the community expects their waste to be disposed of in the most environmental way possible. As I have said many times, my focus is on ensuring that we leave our planet a better place than we found it for our kids, which means that the Government will focus on recycling, re-using and reducing the amount of waste going to landfill where possible.

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

**Mr MATT KEAN:** It also means enabling industry to extract value from the waste stream by supporting the building of infrastructure and creating markets through the circular economy. The Government understands its important role in using the power of its procurement to achieve the objective of creating a circular economy, and will include that in its 20-year waste strategy. Let me be clear: This does not mean we will enable the creation of new markets or products that will lead to unnecessary costs for consumers and adverse environmental outcomes. It is not acceptable for the industry to create new products and claim it is recycling when that leads to more adverse recycling outcomes. As part of the development of the strategy, I plan to return councils and communities to the centre of the decision-making process. Vested interests have had a disproportionate say in the development of waste strategy in this State for too long. This Government will put communities back in the centre of the decision-making process.

Waste collection takes up a sizeable chunk of citizens' council rates. We need to make decisions to turn that position around. The community has a clear expectation that when we tell them something is being recycled it actually is recycled—not exported overseas or dumped into landfill. Ensuring that will be part of our 20-year waste strategy. I am sick of seeing examples of costs going up for consumers and councils because of false environmental claims and false environmental outcomes like the export of waste or turning waste into products that is leading to adverse environmental outcomes. That only undermines the community's confidence in the waste system and lines the pockets of big business. That has got to stop. This is in stark contrast to the container deposit scheme, which, I believe, sets the benchmark as to how government, industry and the community can work together to achieve great waste outcomes. Under the CDS, 2.2 billion containers have been collected. [*Extension of time*]

I have not heard that before. The CDS is a raging success. I know members on both sides of the House share that view. Minister Elliott is one of the biggest rebate claimers under the CDS—and that is just his office alone! Our waste strategy will encourage innovation to find cheaper, cleaner and better ways to manage waste, but this does not preclude our responsibility to develop a social licence across the community before rolling out new technologies such as waste-to-energy, which I mentioned earlier. I put on the record that I believe government and industry should develop a social licence before rolling out technologies like that. However, I want our 20-year waste strategy to look at alternative and innovative ways to dispose of waste. I am not frightened by the challenge ahead, nor am I afraid to take on the vested interests of big business that are currently benefiting from the community's apathy towards this important topic. Councils are currently paying too much for waste collection, and it is not necessarily leading to good environmental outcomes. That needs to change, and that will be the focus of the 20-year waste strategy.

I am already in discussion with Local Government NSW. I commend its president, Linda Scott, for being so proactive in dealing with the issue and I look forward to working constructively with her to deliver for councils and for the people of New South Wales. Despite the interjections of those opposite, waste management should be a bipartisan issue because our communities and our environment will benefit from great outcomes if we get it right. I look forward to working with Linda Scott and Local Government NSW to deliver those objectives for the benefit of our environment and our community.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

**Taxi Licence Buyback**

Petition requesting the Government to implement a scheme to buy back the cost of taxi licences prior to the introduction of rideshare services, received from **Mr James Griffin**.

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

*Bills***JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2019****First Reading**

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

**Second Reading Speech**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (15:24):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The bill introduces a number of miscellaneous amendments to address developments in case law, support procedural improvements and close gaps in the law that have become apparent. In particular, the amendments will strengthen our community through improving criminal investigation and enforcement, improving coronial processes to reduce delay and improving the New South Wales justices of the peace [JP] system. I now turn to the detail of the bill.

Schedule 1.8 [1] and [3] to the bill will amend section 203E of the Crimes Act 1900 so that the standard non-parole period for bushfire arson is increased from five years to nine years. Last year the State Government increased the maximum penalty for New South Wales' targeted bushfire offence from 14 years to 21 years. When introducing that reform to Parliament, I also asked the NSW Sentencing Council to consider if the standard non-parole period for the bushfire offence should be increased. In its June 2019 fire offences report the Sentencing Council recommended that the standard non-parole period for the bushfire offence be set somewhere in the range of eight to 10 years.

A nine-year standard non-parole period, representing approximately 43 per cent of the maximum penalty, reflects the seriousness with which the community views the offence of bushfire arson. It takes into account the need for special deterrence, given the prevalence of deliberately lit fires and the difficulties in detection and prosecution; the potential for exceptional personal, economic and environmental harm caused by deliberately lit fires; and the potential vulnerability of victims, particularly those who live in rural and regional areas. The standard non-parole period and the maximum penalty have been described as legislative guideposts for sentencing. The reforms provide a very clear message about the seriousness of this offence.

I acknowledge and commend the tens of thousands of brave volunteers of the NSW Rural Fire Service throughout the State. I am immensely lucky to have two brigades in my electorate: the Kurnell Rural Fire Service and Grays Point Rural Fire Service. In April last year Sutherland shire communities were threatened by a bushfire, suspected to have been deliberately lit. It was a miracle that no lives were lost. It was only the dedication of our fire services from within the shire and outside that prevented the loss of life. I also thank the Sentencing Council and its chairman, the Hon. James Wood, for its hard work in preparing the fire offences report and for its ongoing attention to detail in promoting reform of sentencing principles and clarifying and endorsing sentencing principles in New South Wales.

Back to the fire service: It is the world's largest volunteer fire service. Its members provide fire and emergency services to around 95 per cent of New South Wales. It has 2,002 brigades and over 72,000 members. In the year ended 30 June 2019, rural fire brigades responded to over 30,000 incidents across New South Wales. Their efforts saved lives and thousands of properties in communities across the State. In the year ended 30 June 2019 the NSW Rural Fire Service and its partner agencies successfully treated almost 200,000 hectares of land and protected more than 102,000 properties. That is an immense an extraordinary effort by selfless volunteers.

I now move to two amendments in schedules 1.4 [1] and 1.4 [2] to the bill that improve coronial processes and reduce delay. At the outset, I acknowledge my colleague the member for Wakehurst, and Minister for Health and Medical Research, Brad Hazzard, for his considerable efforts and devotion to this issue. I also acknowledge the advocacy of many members in the House, in particular, the member for Cootamundra, Ms Steph Cooke; the member for Albury, Mr Justin Clancy; and the member Wagga Wagga, Dr Joe McGirr, each of whom has advocated on behalf of their communities for improvements to the coronial system, particularly for regional New South Wales. Section 35 of the Coroners Act 2009 provides that any person who has reasonable grounds to believe a death or suspected death of another person is a "reportable death" within the meaning of section 6 of the Coroners Act must report the death to a police officer, coroner or assistant coroner.

Section 6 (1) (d) provides that a person's death is a reportable death if the person who died had not seen a medical practitioner within six months before their death. The amendment in schedule 1.4 [1] will bring New South Wales in line with all other States and Territories, except the Australian Capital Territory, by providing that deaths will no longer be reportable to the Coroner simply because the person did not see a medical practitioner within a period of time before their death. This will remove the requirement for the Coroner to consider deaths that are obviously deaths from natural causes. The obligation under the Coroners Act to report unnatural, violent or suspicious deaths and sudden deaths from unknown causes will remain.

I anticipate that the amendment will reduce the number of natural deaths unnecessarily reported to the Coroner, allowing the coronial jurisdiction to focus on inquiries into suspicious deaths and recommendations relating to public health and safety. The bill also introduces a new provision in part 8 of the Coroners Act, which deals with post-mortem investigative procedures. The new provision—section 88A—will allow a pathologist to carry out a preliminary examination of the remains of a deceased person without the need for a direction from a coroner. A preliminary examination involves only non-invasive procedures, such as taking blood samples, X-rays or CT or MRI scans. In many cases, these will be necessary to determine whether an invasive full post-mortem examination is required.

The process should improve the quality of the Coroner's decision-making and, in circumstances where invasive full post-mortem examinations are not required, may resolve matters quickly, allowing bodies to be returned to families without unnecessary delay or invasive procedures. I note that the two amendments are only immediate measures to respond to coronial delays. The Department of Communities and Justice has joined with NSW Health in establishing a high-level task force to undertake an end-to-end review of the coronial process with the aim of improving the timeliness of the coronial process for New South Wales families. The task force consists of members of the judiciary, the Department of Communities and Justice, the NSW Police Force and representatives from NSW Health. The New South Wales Government looks forward to considering the recommendations of the task force, and to continuing to work with the members of this House—in particular, members representing the electorates of Cootamundra, Albury and Wagga Wagga—on a coronial system that puts grieving families first.

Last year the New South Wales Government conducted a Justices of the Peace Framework Review, which included a public consultation paper and targeted consultations with the four New South Wales JP associations: NSW Justices Association, Australian Justices of the Peace Association, Northern NSW Federation of Justices of the Peace, and Tweed Valley Justices' Association Inc. That review identified the three amendments proposed in this bill. First, schedule 1.13 to the bill will amend the Justices of the Peace Act 2002 to enable justices of the peace who are aged 65 years or over and have completed 10 years of continuous service to apply for the title "JP Retired". JPs gift their time and expertise to helping people at key moments of their lives, whether it be buying a home or accessing superannuation. The introduction of this new title will ensure that the valuable service that many justices of the peace provide voluntarily to their local communities over a number of years can be properly recognised.

The schedule also contains an amendment to enable the Secretary of the Department of Communities and Justice to delegate the exercise of functions under the Act and associated regulation to a senior officer of the department in order to deliver administrative efficiencies. Schedule 1.18 to the bill will amend the Oaths Act 1900 to clarify that justices of the peace may witness the execution of interstate documents where the law of another State or Territory empowers them to do so. This will resolve uncertainty as to whether justices of the peace in New South Wales have the authority to witness such documents. It will also make it much easier for members of the community to complete common interstate forms, such as land title documents.

I thank the NSW Justices Association, all the JP associations and other JPs for identifying this issue and raising it with me. I particularly thank, among others, Mr Paul Mannix, former President of NSW Justices Association; Mr Peter Enderby and Bruce Gibbs of that association who invited me to officially open the NSW Justices Association's State conference last year. I also thank the Australasian Council of Justices' Associations and Ms Janet Grumley, President of the St George and Sutherland Shire Branch of the NSW Justices

Association. Finally I extend my gratitude to the President, Mr Robert Winter, and Secretary, Ms Christine Cordingly, of the Northern NSW Federation of Justices of the Peace, whose seventieth anniversary I attended.

I now move to schedule 1.6 to the bill. In circumstances where there is uncertainty about when a sexual offence is alleged to have been committed against the child and that uncertainty means that the alleged conduct, if proven, would constitute more than one sexual offence, section 80AF of the Crimes Act 1900 currently provides that the person may be prosecuted under whichever of those sexual offences has the lesser maximum penalty, regardless of when the conduct actually occurred. Schedule 1.6 to the bill will amend section 80AF of the Crimes Act to clarify that, in circumstances where two potentially applicable offences have the same maximum penalty, the accused person may be prosecuted in respect of the conduct under either of those offences. It will continue not to be possible to prosecute the accused person for an offence that has a higher maximum penalty than any of the other applicable offences.

I now turn to a number of proposals which will make amendments to improve criminal procedure and court processes in criminal proceedings. Schedules 1.15 and 1.16 to the bill will amend the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 to enable applications for notices to produce to be made to the local court by electronic means at all times, rather than only after hours and in urgent situations. Applications for notices to produce take up significant police officer time when they need to be made in person because of the need to travel to a court registry. This amendment will create efficiencies for both police officers and the courts, and represents an appropriate shift in modernising court processes through the use of technology.

Schedule 1.8 [2] to the bill will amend legislation to clarify an ambiguity that has arisen following the passage of last year's sentencing reforms. This amendment will ensure the courts still have the power to take action in response to an offender's breach of a suspended prison sentence that expired prior to commencement of the 2018 amendments. It will insert a savings and transitional provision into the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999, which was inadvertently left out of the 2018 amending legislation. It will not create a new process. It will maintain continuity with the repealed section 100 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 in how the court can handle those matters to ensure that offenders do not get away with historical breaches of suspended sentences.

Where the court becomes aware that an offender has breached the conditions of a good behaviour bond, imposed with a suspended sentence that was imposed and expired before the sentencing reforms commenced, the amendments will ensure that the court can deal with the breach in accordance with the savings and transitional provisions for suspended sentences. They provide that if a court decides to deal with the breach by revoking the good behaviour bond, the court must determine whether the offender should serve the prison sentence in full-time custody or by way of intensive correction order.

Schedules 1.2 and 1.9 to the bill will support the proper functioning of the Early Appropriate Guilty Pleas reform in the criminal courts and resolve any unintended ambiguities that have arisen as a result of the reforms. Schedule 1.9 [3] will simplify and clarify which offences section 72 (2) of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 applies to and which matters the accused legal representatives are required to explain to their client. Schedule 1.2 will introduce a note in the Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987 to remove any ambiguity about the application of the Early Appropriate Guilty Pleas for juveniles who have been charged with serious children's indictable offences. In circumstances where the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions is prosecuting a New South Wales offence alongside Commonwealth offences, there is some ambiguity around the operation of section 15A of the Director of Public Prosecutions Act 1986 and whether a certificate prescribed by the regulations for a disclosure by law enforcement officers is required.

Schedule 1.9 [1] and [2] and schedule 1.10 to the bill will introduce amendments to clarify that section 15A of the Director of Public Prosecutions Act does not apply where the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions is prosecuting an offence, even when the director is prosecuting a State offence alongside Commonwealth offences. The Early Appropriate Guilty Pleas reforms introduced the requirement for the defence and prosecution representatives to prepare, sign and file a case conference certificate after a case conference is held. Those certificates record offers made that may be relevant to the Early Appropriate Guilty Pleas sentencing discount scheme if the matter is committed to a higher court and cannot be used for sentencing in the local court. Schedule 1.9 [4] and [5] will amend section 74 and section 76 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 so that case conference certificates are not required when matters are resolved summarily in the local court.

The Child Sexual Offence Evidence Pilot provides special measures to assist child complainants and witnesses in sexual offence proceedings in Newcastle and Sydney District Courts. Schedule 1.9, 1.10 and 1.11 will clarify that where a court has made an order for a witness to give evidence in a pre-recorded hearing, provided for by the pilot, that witness is entitled to give evidence in accordance with the order, even if they reach the age of 18 any time before the conclusion of the proceedings. This will ensure that those witnesses are not prevented from giving evidence in a pre-recorded hearing. Schedule 1.9 [6] and [8] and schedule 1.19 will amend legislation to ensure that certain offences under the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016 and Health

Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) can be tried summarily in the local court, unless the prosecutor or accused person elects otherwise.

Schedules 1.3 and 1.7 to the bill will support the management of offenders and young people in custody and following release. Specifically, schedules 1.3 [3] and 1.7 [4] will introduce amendments to extend the term of appointment for official visitors to correctional centres and juvenile justice facilities from two to four years, in order to better reflect the length of time official visitors perform their role, and to reduce the current administrative burden of recruiting and training new visitors. The Parole Legislation Amendment Act 2017 moved provisions relating to the parole of juvenile offenders from the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999 [CAS Act] to the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987 [CDC Act]. Prior to this change, the CAS Act allowed for the maintenance of a Juvenile Justice victim's register for victims of young offenders. Schedule 1.3 [2] and [5] will provide a new legislative basis in the CDC Act for youth justice to maintain a victims register and provide registered victims of young offenders with information about parole and leave decisions that may affect them.

Schedule 1.7 [2] and [3] to the bill will provide legislative guidance to Corrective Services NSW about what information, related to the administrative of Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999, may and may not be disclosed, in order to ensure that particular information related to inmates is protected from unlawful disclosure. Schedule 1.7 [1] to the bill will introduce an amendment to clarify the legal status of offenders whose release from custody is delayed at the request of, or with the consent of, the offender by defining them as inmates for the purposes of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. Various schedules to the bill will update legislation by removing references to repealed, amended or outdated sections and ensuring that provisions accurately reflect current practices.

Schedule 1.14 to the bill will amend section 18 of the Land and Environment Court Act 1979 to clarify that appeals under section 22 of the Building Products (Safety) Act 2017 relating to building rectification orders made by councils should be assigned to Class 2 of the Land and Environment Court's jurisdiction. Schedule 1.5 to the bill will update the definition of "recording device" in the Court Security Act 2005 to include portable scanners and to make it clear that their use to record sound and/or images on court premises is not permitted.

This amendment will respond to changes in modern portable technology since the Court Security Act was passed in 2005. It will also protect court processes by preventing people from inappropriately capturing images of witnesses or recording proceedings. Schedule 1.1 will amend the calculation of time provision for service by post under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 to reflect changes to Australia Post delivery times and align with recent amendments to the Interpretation Act 1987. Schedule 1.3 [1] and [4] will amend incorrect references to the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network in the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987.

Schedule 1.4 [3] will amend section 101E of the Coroners Act 2009 to facilitate Legal Aid NSW becoming a member of the Domestic Violence Death Review Team. The DVDRT plays a critical role in shaping this State's response to domestic violence. It is a multidisciplinary team that reviews deaths that have occurred in the context of domestic violence in New South Wales. The DVDRT identifies issues arising in individual or multiple cases, identifies trends and patterns in quantitative data, highlights limitations or weaknesses in service delivery and makes recommendations about actions to address those issues. Legal Aid NSW plays a key role in this State's response to domestic violence, including the provision of services to victims of domestic and family violence. In recognition of its delivery, expertise and experience, Legal Aid NSW would add considerable value to the DVDRT, which currently consists of a range of other New South Wales government agencies, non-government representatives and academics.

The Young Offenders Act 1997 sets out a scheme that diverts young people from the criminal justice system when they are alleged to have committed criminal offences covered by the Act. Section 8 (2) of the Act lists certain offences not covered by the Act. In 2018 a number of child sexual offences that are listed under section 8 (2) (d) were repealed and replaced by the Criminal Legislation Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse) Act 2018. Schedules 1.21 and 1.22 to the bill will update section 8 (2) of the Young Offenders Act to reflect those changes. This will ensure that young offenders accused of sexual offences remain ineligible for diversion under the Young Offenders Act 1997.

The Legal Aid Commission Act 1979 currently requires the Legal Aid Commission to submit board minutes to the Attorney General within 14 days of a board meeting. Schedule 1.17 will amend clause 9 (2) of schedule 3 to the Legal Aid Commission Act to remove that time frame, as it places undue pressure on Legal Aid. It will replace that clause with a more qualitative time frame. Schedule 1.12 to the bill will remove references in schedule 1 to the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985 to schedules to the Poisons List. Some of those references are redundant, and all are confusing as they unnecessarily duplicate the operation of section 8 of the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act. The amendment will clarify that section 8 of that Act, rather than references to the Poisons

List in schedule 1 to the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act, is the primary provision that ensures that prohibited drugs used for legitimate therapeutic purposes are not captured by that Act.

All Commonwealth laws which establish the Commonwealth courts provide a mechanism for the Federal Sheriff to delegate to other individuals the ability to exercise powers on his or her behalf, or to assist in his or her duties. The Federal marshal regularly exercises this delegation to request that the New South Wales sheriff carry out a range of functions in New South Wales on behalf of the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth funds the New South Wales sheriff to undertake this work on the Commonwealth's behalf. The amendment at schedule 1.20 will make it clear that the New South Wales sheriff and her officers may validly accept and perform those delegated functions, and that such work is included within the functions referred to in section 4 of the Sheriff Act 2005.

Schedule 1.11 to the bill will make amendments to ensure that particular statutory bodies are not inhibited from exercising their lawful functions because of a potential threat of defamation proceedings against them. New South Wales has a co-regulatory legal profession scheme where the Legal Services Commission, the New South Wales Bar Association and the Law Society of New South Wales all have regulatory duties. Under the Legal Profession Uniform Law (NSW), those bodies are authorised to conduct compliance audits of law practices and are permitted to provide a report of a compliance audit to each other. However, providing copies of the reports has not recently happened in practice for fear of defamation proceedings being brought against them. Schedule 1.11 [1] will amend the Defamation Act 2005 so that if the Legal Services Commissioner, the Bar Council or the Law Society Council provide copies of compliance audit reports of law practices to each other, they have an absolute privilege to do so and will be protected from defamation claims.

I now turn to schedule 1.11 [2]. The Independent Planning Commission is a statutory corporation established under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. Its functions include: first, determining State significant development applications where there is significant opposition from the community; secondly, conducting public hearings for development applications and other planning and development matters; and thirdly, providing independent expert advice on any planning and development matter as requested by the Minister or the Secretary. The Independent Planning Commission is required to publish reports, evidence, summaries of site visits and transcripts of meetings, public hearings and proceedings. The Independent Planning Commission is not able to control what the public might say at the recorded meetings nor to verify the truth of statements made by members of the public. This means that the commission cannot mitigate the risk of a defamation claim as the commission is required to publish transcripts of meetings.

The proposed amendments at schedule 1.11 [2] will ensure the Independent Planning Commission and its predecessor have absolute privilege when publishing this material. This will ensure the commission has a defence to a claim of defamation and will deter any potential litigation. The bill is an important part of the Government's regular legislative review and monitoring program. Most of the amendments in the bill are technical in nature and they are all important steps towards further strengthening our justice system. They address emerging issues, support procedural improvements, clarify uncertainty and correct errors in legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT (RMS DISSOLUTION) BILL 2019**

### **Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:52):** By leave: I thank the House for allowing me to continue my contribution to the debate. I will conclude my comments by acknowledging that the Government is doing the right thing by bringing the Roads and Maritime Services and Transport for NSW together to ensure that we can have a more coordinated, focused and responsive administration of transport in this State. Earlier I spoke about one of the great issues in my community. Of course, this is about WestConnex. I drew the attention of members to Christopher Standen's article in *The Conversation*. I encourage people to read that article because the heart of what a new Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] or a new roads and transport agency needs to do is recognise and acknowledge induced demand.

This is one of the great issues we see in the cities. In rural and regional communities where there is a significant undersupply of roads, new roads are seen as a great positive because they meet the demand. But in the CBD and other areas and in my electorate, we see what happens around the world when new capacity and supply are given—demand increases. It is a traditional economic theory that traffic is induced when there is clear supply and demand. It encourages more people to drive. It leads to a transition, a transfer and a shift from public transport and other modes of transport as driving becomes far more attractive. We need to invest in public transport first

and not more private polluting, destructive, expensive motorways. I encourage the new RMS to focus on induced demand and to address a public transport network that we need for the twenty-first century. We need to focus more on public transport as the population increases because we can never build enough roads. We need to have mass transit because individual cars cannot deliver the same volume as other modes of transport, such as metro services and rail.

I conclude by commenting on WestConnex and the road project. We know that about \$6 billion from the New South Wales and Federal governments has already been sunk into this project. We also know there was a bundling of three publicly owned motorways that were sold. We also know that about \$1.5 billion has been spent on property acquisitions and many millions more has been spent on planning, advertising, consultants, lawyers and bankers. All of this together shows a total public investment—the amount of money that taxpayers have invested and the additional costs that have been imposed—equalling a sum in excess of \$23 billion. If we add capped public assets, enabling works, incentives for WestConnex and the efforts to shield the scheme from public scrutiny, that figure may well be a lot higher.

The view of The Greens is that we need to recognise that this is not the way forward. We were told that WestConnex would provide a connection to the port and the airport—it was part of the justification for the project—but those connections have now been taken out of the project. The RMS is looking at footing a bill in excess of \$2.5 billion for an airport connection as well as the proposed roads in my electorate, the western harbour tunnel and the northern beaches link. All of this will simply encourage more people to drive. We need to ensure that we transition away from this system to public transport, which is what the rest of the world has done and is doing. In other jurisdictions roads are being ripped up as it is recognised that a reduction in supply corresponds to people shifting to a better, less populated and faster form of public transport.

Those massive tollways not only fleece the people of western Sydney and lock them into car dependency but they also facilitate urban sprawl. We need to maintain a densely populated city through the right types of development controls that respect sustainability and human scale development, such as strong and effective public transport. While I acknowledge this legislation is a good step forward, we need to look at the evidence and make decisions to invest in roads and public transport based on that evidence. We need to assess our motorways against public transport. Recently we heard about the F6. A Cabinet minute made it clear that those projects could not be compared to public transport. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported extensively on the matter. Those road projects should be compared to public transport and then we should look at the most efficient way to invest taxpayer dollars.

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (15:57):** I speak in debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. The bill will amend the Transport Administration Act 1988 to dissolve Roads and Maritime Services [RMS], transfer its assets, rights and liabilities to Transport for NSW and will make consequential amendments to other legislation that is necessary to facilitate the change. The bill is being introduced following extensive consultation with the unions. It will bring Roads and Maritime Services into the agency in an integrated and constructive way. The bill will result in a better strategic approach for the integration of transport and will benefit everybody in the State. A single transport agency we will prevent transport being delivered in one corner of the State and roads being built in another without anybody talking to each other. The proposed changes are designed to ensure a better integrated service delivery across all modes of transport to keep achieving better outcomes for the people of New South Wales. The bill will put a greater focus on creating better transport for people across New South Wales no matter where they live.

Over the years the Roads and Maritime Service—formerly the Roads and Traffic Authority—has delivered significant transport projects for this State, especially regional New South Wales. Over the past few years the Pacific Highway between Sydney and the Queensland border has received significant upgrades. Many towns and cities have been bypassed by the dual carriageway. Anyone who drove on the old Pacific Highway can testify to how dangerous it was. Towns such as Karuah, Kew and Bulahdelah were bypassed many years ago. I remember the late-night stopovers that buses would make at Karuah. At about 2.00 a.m. you would get a pie and some hot chips—

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** Custard tart.

**Mr GURMESH SINGH:** Yes, and a custard tart if you were that way inclined. Now that Karuah has been bypassed the journey to Sydney is a lot faster for many people. Towns such as Bulahdelah have been cut out. The treacherous mountains in the Myall Lakes electorate used to be the source of young children travelling in the back seat suffering from motion sickness. Now those areas have been bypassed it is a much faster journey and travellers are saving nearly half an hour on that stretch of road.

Towns such as Kempsey, Frederickton, Macksville, Urunga and Bonville to the south of Coffs Harbour are now bypassed due to the extensive work and investment by the RMS. My predecessor fought for the Pacific

Highway upgrade south of Coffs Harbour, particularly between Urunga and Coffs Harbour, which contained some of the State's deadliest blackspots. I used to make that drive many times. I would finish work in Sydney on a Friday night and drive back to Coffs Harbour. I would arrive at the most dangerous part of the road after midnight, feeling tired and lacking concentration. My family felt more at ease when I was completing my journey on an upgraded dual carriageway. By getting rid of the blackspots and making the road safer and faster for everybody, we are not only increasing productivity but also ensuring that people are getting home to their families sooner.

In more recent times the road between Sapphire and Woolgoolga has received an \$850 million upgrade. Sapphire is the first suburb north of Coffs Harbour and Woolgoolga is about 25 kilometres further north. That upgrade included duplicating the existing highway into a four-lane dual carriageway between Sapphire in the south and Arrawarra just north of Woolgoolga. The upgrade consists of approximately 30 kilometres of dual carriageway with a wide shoulder for cyclists to enjoy their recreational activity. The upgraded section of road also includes a service road. The duplication provides an alternative route for cars in the event of the highway being closed. Some people in town who have old collectable cars that cannot achieve speeds above 80 kilometres an hour can now use the service road and feel safe. The service road also has a bicycle lane, which makes it safer for parents to take children on bike rides and also for recreational cyclists such as the middle-aged men in lycra.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** MAMILs.

**Mr GURMESH SINGH:** MAMILs, that's right. The service road provides a safer option than riding on the freeway. It took four years to construct that road, which was opened in 2013. Travelling time on the freeway at 110 kilometres per hour has been reduced by about five minutes. People living in the northern beaches area of Coffs Harbour have also reduced their travelling time. Access to health services, shops and commercial facilities is now available and Service NSW is now five minutes closer than it used to be. The road between Woolgoolga and Glenugie was the next section to be upgraded, which has cut out nearly 10 minutes of travel time from Grafton to the lovely beaches of the Coffs coast, or if you find yourself in Grafton, you will get home 15 minutes sooner. That piece of road opened nearly three years ago, including a duplication. Cyclists can use the road shoulder for their recreational pursuits.

The last section awaiting an upgrade between Sydney and the Queensland border is the Woolgoolga to Ballina duplication. This \$4.9 billion of investment will deliver 129 kilometres of roadway. Most of this road is a new route which cuts many kilometres of road off the journey from Grafton and nearly 30 minutes of travelling time between Sydney and the Queensland border. It reduces the cost of freight. Families from New South Wales travelling to Queensland on holidays or Queenslanders wanting to enjoy the beaches of New South Wales to escape the horrible humidity will have reduced travelling times. As I said, it will be a reduction in travel time of more than 30 minutes for those who access the international airports over the border at Coolangatta or Brisbane. It will mean that those who access those airports will be able to leave home 30 minutes later and be home 30 minutes sooner. The road will open next year. I look forward to driving on it, both up and down the coast, visiting the electorates of Clarence, Lismore, Ballina and Tweed.

**Ms Tania Mihailuk:** And Coffs Harbour.

**Mr GURMESH SINGH:** I live in Coffs Harbour. I could not talk about RMS without talking about our upcoming bypass off Coffs Harbour. Anyone who has driven through Coffs Harbour will understand how much extra congestion there can be during the school holiday period. This long-awaited bypass has been talked about for four or five decades; work on it will commence next year. An environmental impact statement [EIS] is ready for delivery any day now. I look forward to delivering that EIS with my colleague the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads and announcing all the different ways in which the New South Wales Government and RMS are delivering for the people of Coffs Harbour.

Earlier this year we also saw a trial of an electric bus—a driverless bus that seats six people and can have six people standing. That trial took place on the north wall at the jetty. There will be a further trial this year in the Marian Grove Retirement Village and another later in the year that will take passengers from the Jetty Beach precinct all the way into the centre of town—a driverless vehicle mixing with other traffic, cyclists and cars. This is the kind of integrated approach that RMS brings. Integrating RMS into Transport for NSW will give that agency a greater ability to deliver those kinds of integrated transport results, and as technology and our needs evolve it will be able to deliver those integrated results into the future. I commend the Minister and the bill to the House.

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (16:06):** I make a contribution to debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. The object of the bill is to dissolve Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] and to transfer its assets, rights, liabilities and functions to Transport for NSW. This has been discussed for quite some time now and there has been an understanding that unions have reached an agreement with the Government with respect to protecting employment. The Opposition will not oppose the bill or an

integrated transport agency. A number of my colleagues have already quoted the Minister, but in his second reading speech the Minister said:

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 will not comment on that last sentence but I will comment on how this benefits everybody in the State. In my electorate of Bankstown I have raised many times the Government's intention to shut down the T3 train line and to replace the Bankstown train line with a Sydenham to Bankstown metro. In Bankstown we are still none the wiser as to whether there will be a turnback at Yagoona or whether it will remain at Bankstown. I can only go by discussions with council, the community and stakeholders. In some respects we are trying to second-guess what the Government will finally do with the metro.

However, it appears that what I previously thought, and what our understanding was that there would be a turnback at Yagoona, does not seem to be the case anymore—it will now be in Bankstown. If that is the case, that will mean there will be a 450-metre interchange right in the heart of the Bankstown CBD. It is very unlikely that the metro will be underground after Punchbowl train station and into the Bankstown CBD. Many of the stakeholders, including the sports club, and to some degree the council, Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce and other businesses demanded that should the metro proceed that there be an understanding that the metro would be underground at the Bankstown CBD.

This is important because currently the Bankstown CBD is split in half by the train line. I have always supported that train line; it is a very good heavy rail line that connects us to the CBD City Circle. I remember during my childhood always catching the train from Bankstown—and I still catch a train quite regularly—and seeing how easy it was to catch a train from Bankstown straight into the City Circle. To an extent there is some misguided excitement in my electorate about the metro being a new train system in Bankstown, but there is not a complete understanding that it will mean we will be off the grid and forever disconnected from the City Circle. That is a huge issue for my electorate of Bankstown.

Since October 2013 the then transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian removed the Inner West train line—I have raised this many times and I will continue to do so. That meant about nine train stations west of Bankstown became permanently disconnected from the City Circle; no longer were there direct train services to the City Circle. If you live in Chester Hill, Sefton, Villawood or Birrong you have to catch a train to Birrong; at Birrong you have to disembark and catch another train to Lidcombe; at Lidcombe your train terminates and you then catch another train into the City Circle. As a result, what would normally have been a 30- to 35-minute trip has now become a one-hour trip. So when we talk about integrated transport and how, paraphrasing the Minister, "we have got transport for everybody in the State", for my community, particularly west of Bankstown, 19,000 commuters are worse off and have been since October 2013.

It means that residents are trying to avoid Chester Hill station if they can and they drive to Birrong station. Birrong station has become chaotic in the morning as commuters park along people's driveways, on footpaths or anywhere they possibly can to avoid taking three trains to the city. Instead, they catch two trains from Birrong. Before 2013 there was a direct service. That might not mean much to most of the members on the other side of this Chamber who I doubt have been to suburbs such as Chester Hill, Sefton and Birrong, but it means something to the residents who live there—it is their connection to employment and to opportunities for study. To be completely disconnected and to have the metro preventing residents from Bankstown having a direct connection to the City Circle is an issue for my community.

Again I raise the issue of the Government's constant veil of secrecy with transport. I have asked probably over 30 questions. I have a list of questions that I have repeatedly asked of the Minister, requesting information with respect to whether the inner west train line will be reinstated during the construction phase of the metro. I have asked about the temporary transport plan, yet my residents have no information about the temporary transport plan. There has not been any proper consultation.

A couple of weeks ago an announcement in the media suggested that there would be major shutdowns of my train line during the Christmas period. People who happened to be watching the television that evening would have discovered that the train line is going to be completely shut down and they will have to catch buses during that period. That is not how to communicate with residents. We need proper consultation and transparency. What will the cost of this project be? Will the interchange go underground in the CBD or not? Where will the interchange be? Why is Yagoona no longer considered as a turnback? Will the metro be extended from Bankstown to Liverpool? I have put many questions to this Government. I have also put on notice many questions to the Premier and the transport Minister. Most of the answers I have received are not worth reading onto *Hansard*.

I have repeatedly asked about the removal of the Liverpool via Regents Park service. The answer has always been that it was done to benefit the rest of the train system in Sydney. That does not explain how it improves transport or access to transport for the Bankstown and west Bankstown region. Commuters in my area are right to be angry. There are deeply concerned that they are being disconnected from the rest of Sydney. We do not have a public bus system in Bankstown and west of Bankstown. We rely heavily on this train line. It is disappointing that while the Minister purports to claim he is setting up a transport system for everybody in the State, that is clearly not the case when one looks at what is happening in Bankstown and west of Bankstown.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I welcome to the Speaker's gallery Cobalt Walsh from the 1st Picnic Point Scout Group. He is with his mother Claire Geary. The scouts are hosting an event that is being held in the Speaker's Garden, which goes until 5.00 p.m. I hope you enjoy your time at Parliament House.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:17):** I also take the opportunity to welcome Cobalt to Parliament today. I hope he enjoys his time here. I am pleased to speak in support of the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. This bill will make changes to the Transport cluster operating model. The changes are designed to deliver better integrated service delivery across all modes, keep driving better customer outcomes and put a greater focus on creating better places for people across New South Wales. Through dissolving Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] and merging with Transport for NSW there will be greater focus on regional areas, including the Central Coast. It will ensure that decision-making is truly based on the distinct customer needs and expectations of individual communities. The Transport cluster needs to have the right structure in place to be able to deliver truly customer-centred services, no matter where those customers are in this great State.

An essential element is a workplace where people are supported in achieving the vision of Future Transport 2056 and encouraged to work more collaboratively across the cluster. It is not about making changes to employment arrangements. It is focused on changing the transport operating model to ensure the cluster can rapidly respond to issues and develop customer-focused solutions. I repeat, the bill is not about changing employment arrangements or reducing the number of jobs. The Government has given a very clear undertaking that it is going to grow regional jobs in Transport for NSW through the merging of RMS and Transport for NSW. More jobs will be based in the regions to support our transport network as the Government delivers on its big, bold vision for the future.

The Government has given an undertaking that this is not about job cuts. It is about jobs growth for Transport for NSW in all the regional areas. As a regional government member, I know firsthand that my local community is well served by RMS staff, including our regional director, the incredible Anna Zycki. Anna and I have a fantastic working relationship. We meet very regularly to discuss how the this Liberal-Nationals Government is delivering congestion-busting infrastructure on the Central Coast. For example, in my electorate of Terrigal the \$20 million upgrade to the roundabout at Empire Bay Drive, The Scenic Road and Cochrone Street is well and truly underway. It is a very complex project because it requires land acquisition, water main relocation, installation of nearby traffic lights and a number of other factors.

RMS, under Anna's leadership, is doing a fantastic job at improving this intersection for the 25,000-plus motorists who use this stretch of road every day. It is hoped that project will be completed by the end of the year. The Central Coast Highway runs through my electorate. This major road connects the M1—or F3 to those Central Coast people—and Pacific Motorway at Kariong, through Gosford and Erina towards Wamberal, Forrester's Beach and beyond. During the election campaign I announced that I had secured \$387 million from the State Government to upgrade a section of Central Coast Highway from Tumby Road in the south to Bateau Bay Road in the north. This is the single biggest road project in dollar value in the Central Coast's history.

**Ms Robyn Preston:** Hear, hear!

**Mr ADAM CROUCH:** Thank you very much. This is only possible because of the Government's strong budget. Last week I met with Anna Zycki from RMS to make sure the project is progressing well. This Government delivers on its promises. We are already getting on with the job for the 26,000 motorists that drive along Central Coast Highway every day. This year's budget included \$19.5 million for planning and initial investigations for this outstanding project. I cannot stress the importance of this upgrade. With the growth in population on the Central Coast, the Central Coast Highway will become an integral link for our community to move around and get access to the M1 or F3. I was honestly taken aback that the Government was able to provide over \$387 million for this project. It demonstrates the Government's commitment to do what it says it will do.

The people on the Central Coast can have confidence because over the past four years the Government has delivered more than half a billion dollars in road infrastructure. Every one of those road projects has been delivered on time, on budget or both. We have an outstanding record of delivering major road infrastructure from one end of the Central Coast to the other regardless of who is sitting in the seat. I am very proud to be part of a

Government that does not discriminate and delivers for the entire region. All of our major State roads—whether it be Pacific Highway, Wyong Road or Central Coast Highway—are receiving record funding. We never saw that under 16 years of a Labor Government. The Deputy Speaker is nodding in agreement. I assume she was in a similar situation. These road projects were talked about but never delivered. In stark contrast, we are getting on with the job and delivering them.

Another factor will be the local jobs delivered by the \$387 million Central Coast highway project. Local engineers, local tradies and local companies will be delivering services for this massive project on the Central Coast. It is a very exciting time. One of the other projects I will highlight is the Pacific Highway upgrades at Lisarow and Ourimbah. Over the past few years upgrade work has been underway. I am so pleased that some of the sections of that road are now complete, including stage one, the Dog Trap Road intersection at Ourimbah; stage two, the upgrade from Glen Road to Burns Road; stage 3A, the upgrade from Glen Road to Ourimbah Street; and stage 3B, which is currently under construction, between Parsons Road and Ourimbah Street.

These are major road upgrades. Since we came to government in 2011 hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested in these sections of the Pacific Highway. That is what RMS is able to achieve as a direct result of the strong economic management of this Liberal-Nationals State Government. The bill does not envisage the end of the functions of RMS, rather it explicitly provides for these functions to be transferred to Transport for NSW. On 1 July 2019 the staff of Roads and Maritime Services who perform those functions were transitioned into the new divisional structure created within Transport for NSW.

The teams were moved intact into the relevant new divisions. They will continue to perform the huge range of essential functions on which the people of New South Wales and the Central Coast depend to keep them safe and connected via our roads and waterways. The priority is to bring teams of staff into the combined organisation intact. There has been no change to the location, classifications or numbers of roles during this transition. These staff continue to be covered by their existing industrial arrangement as set out in the relevant industrial awards with no change to their conditions of employment. The only change is in their reporting lines, which now fit within the new internal divisions of Transport for NSW.

There will be no change to the employment status of any of those staff members as a result of the transition to a single entity. RMS staff and Transport for NSW staff are already members of the transport services as distinct from the public service. The transport secretary already exercises the employer functions in relation to all members of the transport service. All staff will remain members of the transport service and the transport secretary will remain their employer. [*Extension of time*]

Earlier the member for Castle Hill was in the House and he was quite excited about the bill. In his contribution he referred to it as an "exciting opportunity". One of the road projects he mentioned was the outstanding NorthConnex project. I cannot begin to overstate the importance of NorthConnex to the community on the Central Coast. Every day for 13 years I travelled the M1 Pacific Motorway or F3 Freeway, then on to Pennant Hills Road or the Pacific Highway. The time taken because of the congestion was immense. The introduction of NorthConnex will remove between 15 to 22 sets of traffic lights for commuters to and from the Central Coast. In addition, it will reduce the travelling time by at least 15 minutes in either direction. That is half an hour back in the lives of people in my electorate of Terrigal.

NorthConnex is a game-changing project. It will deliver better quality of life outcomes for people on the Central Coast. It will also open up opportunities for people and companies that travel from Sydney to do business on the Central Coast. We have been working on this major infrastructure project in conjunction with the Federal Government. I acknowledge my colleague the member for Robertson, Lucy Wicks, MP, for the Federal contribution to NorthConnex. This is an outstanding and exciting time. A number of us had a chance to see firsthand the outstanding work the team is doing inside NorthConnex to deliver this groundbreaking and exciting project. There is a buzz from business chambers and commuters on the Central Coast to access NorthConnex.

I wish I had the opportunity to use NorthConnex. Once it is finished I will use it when I come down for Parliament. It is a great opportunity for all those on the Central Coast to improve their quality of life and get time back to spend with their families. It is not just about upgrading roads; it is about improving the quality of life through the introduction of the intercity train fleet, the delivery of promised roads and Central Coast highway upgrades. The member for The Entrance is in the Chamber. I am sure he is very excited about the \$387 million upgrade to the Central Coast Highway. Transport for NSW is continuing a program of ongoing consultation with staff and unions about the merger and how it will work in practice. Consultation with staff and unions has taken place in accordance with the application of their awards.

I repeat, over the past four years road upgrades worth more than half a billion dollars have been delivered on the Central Coast, and \$387 million has been spent on the Central Coast highway alone. Through the great work of RMS and Transport for NSW this is the single biggest dollar value road investment that the Central Coast

has received for any project, including the West Gosford intersection and Manns Road upgrades. One benefit will be the removal of silos between Transport for NSW and RMS; a terrific outcome for regional areas and the Central Coast. They will now work together to deliver a unified project delivery system. That is outstanding.

This excellent bill would not have been possible without the great work of the Minister's staff and team. I pay tribute to Clair Hodge, Kate Watts, James Zeng, Kathryn Freytag, Kirsten Watson, Jessica Linsell, Lolita Kepars, Emma Raynor and Eloise Murphy. They have dedicated a huge amount of time in drafting a bill that will deliver a great outcome and change for the people of New South Wales and the Central Coast. I emphasise that there is no target for job cuts and there will be no redundancies for award staff as part of this transition or as a consequence of these amendments. I remind the House that the Premier has firmly committed that no public sector jobs will be cut in rural and regional New South Wales.

Transport for NSW will invest in ensuring that people have the skills and support to do the work they do so effectively. That is evident in the outstanding work that Anna Zycki and her team do for the RMS. I look forward to working with her and her team over the next three and a half years to deliver the exciting infrastructure upgrades that will continue on Central Coast roads from one end to the other. It is due to this bill, and the diligence of the Minister and his staff, that we can put into place important changes and improvements to the system. It gives me great pleasure to commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:32):** I make a contribution to debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. As the new member for the Dubbo electorate I am seeing firsthand the massive works that have been going on and will continue to unfold across my region. The changes we are talking about today will help with that delivery. The members for the electorates of Terrigal and Coffs Harbour spoke of the immense amount of money that has been spent to help improve people's lives. We know that transport poses a particular challenge in regional areas where our smaller and scattered populations mean one solution does not fit all scenarios.

I am delighted to know that this Government is committed to implementing solutions for regional New South Wales and that it is not solely focused on the N-S-W of New South Wales—Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong—which those opposite are preoccupied with. I acknowledge the member for Newcastle who is in the Chamber. In my electorate the Government is investing almost \$200 million to improve traffic around the city. Our building a better Dubbo projects will also deliver improved flood immunity and help to relieve congestion through the middle of town. The suite of projects includes funding to strengthen the LH Ford Bridge—the primary crossing over the Macquarie River in Dubbo. The major upgrades to the Newell Highway—the freight superhighway of western New South Wales—include the installation of major traffic lights to improve efficiency. The cornerstone of this suite of projects is a massive \$140 million for a second flood-proof crossing to secure access to Dubbo's CBD in times of flood. This particular project is one of the single biggest investments in Dubbo's history.

Throughout discussions I have been adamant that there is not just one way to fix the traffic challenges that will confront Dubbo in the coming years. That is why I was delighted to welcome a special \$100,000 grant to the Dubbo Regional Council to help fund investigations into a bridge for the southern part of the city. This project has been a long time coming. I have long been supportive of calls for a bridge south of Dubbo's central business district, and this special grant will help the council fund a study into the best corridor for such a bridge. The investment shows this Government is committed to improving transport in all major regional centres to improve productivity and enhance the experience of visiting and local traffic. I thank the Minister for Regional Roads and Transport, Paul Toole, for that grant, and for his vote of confidence in Dubbo's growth as a major centre and the capital of western New South Wales.

I have mentioned the Newell Highway. Near where I live, work has already started on a brand-new overtaking lane north of Dubbo as part of this Government's \$500 million commitment to upgrade the longest highway in the State. The new southbound lane is being built at Medway Creek, about 18 kilometres north of Dubbo, and will see the 1.5-kilometre stretch of road widened and sightlines improved with the removal of trees to enhance the safety of motorists. The project also includes improvements to the existing road surface to increase safety and efficiency for the heavy vehicle industry, residents and visitors alike. It will make a big difference. The Newell Highway is the freight backbone of New South Wales and this Government is committed to ensuring our freight operators have some of the safest, most efficient roads available to them. The ultimate goal of the overtaking lanes is to reduce road crashes on the longest highway in New South Wales and to ensure everyone who sets off on a journey returns home safely. That is a really important thing that we should note.

A bit closer to Dubbo we have recently seen the completion of major safety upgrades at yet another section of the Newell Highway. The \$6.2 million upgrade of a four-kilometre section near Godwins Lane is already benefitting all users including freight and livestock transporters, emergency services, and local families, who love the changes. There is now a stronger surface and improved drainage to reduce flooding—not that that

has been a problem recently—as well as safety upgrades through better sightlines, wider lanes and a wide centre line, which increases the distance between vehicles travelling in each direction, which is another important safety measure.

On a smaller scale, but just as important, work was recently completed on three projects totalling \$200,000 to enhance pedestrian safety in the village of Geurie on the Mitchell Highway. The existing zebra crossing was malfunctioning and was not as safe as it needed to be. The crossing has been enhanced with curb extensions installed on both sides of the road and two roadside trees taken out to improve driver vision and lighting. Vehicle-activated signage was installed in town to advise speeding motorists to slow down. These signs work very well. I go through this town regularly and I know the signs are making a difference already. New speed limits are now in effect along the Mitchell Highway, including near the entrance and exit to Geurie.

One good thing about these improvements was the way the RMS listened to community feedback on the upgrades and why they were needed. The final works have been based on what the community wanted and needed. This consultation has made a real difference. One of the most recent important road announcements will see more than \$6 million set aside to upgrade the intersection outside the Dubbo Regional Livestock markets, the busiest livestock market in the State, to alleviate stress to local motorists and drivers of heavy vehicles that transport hundreds of thousands of sheep and cattle to and from the markets every year.

Roads are not the only area where Transport for NSW and this Government are committed to enhancing the transport offering in regional areas. I note that it is our strong budget position that enables this Government to deliver for all of New South Wales, including regional areas such as the one I represent. I commend the Treasurer for his remarkable work in making sure that our budget is strong. Right now councils, transport operators, schools and community groups throughout regional and rural New South Wales are being encouraged to apply for a share of more than \$3.2 million to improve the customer experience on public transport. Through this fund, communities across the State could see new bus shelters, new seats, signage or better lighting at existing stops, or even the installation of guidance tools for customers with vision impairment or wheelchairs. This program directly benefits customers in rural, regional and remote communities travelling on services contracted by this Liberal-Nationals Government, with more than \$11 million invested across more than 1,000 infrastructure projects over the past eight years.

Everyone should have access to safe and affordable public transport and this program is all about delivering important upgrades across the State. Meantime, more locally, community consultation has just started on 13 new public transport routes in the bush, including a new bus service between Dubbo and Mudgee. This service will be a real game changer for people in terms of how they get around our great region and from town to town. It will connect Ballimore, Spicers Creek, Goolma and Gulgong with Dubbo and Mudgee each week, which will boost connectivity in the region. It will improve things like access to health services and education opportunities. It will also make it easier for tourists to visit our region and move around the area. Consultation for this service—again, a really important part of the process showing that the Government is listening—will take place tomorrow in Gulgong and Mudgee, and on Friday in Mudgee and Dubbo. I urge those who are interested to keep an eye out for New South Wales Government buses and they can have a say, which is really important.

The Government's long-term commitment to regional transport is nowhere more apparent than in its \$2.8 billion investment in a regional rail maintenance facility based in Dubbo. A new regional train fleet and the maintenance facility have the potential to unlock opportunities for the entire central and western region, opportunities we have not had before. Members may be interested to know that the last time a new regional fleet was introduced to the Central West was in 1982. Our plans to improve services when the new trains arrive are still being developed. We are developing those plans in consultation with the communities of the Central West to ensure service levels will meet demand now and in the future. The construction of the facility will provide many job opportunities for people right across the Central West and the western region to develop their skills on a major government project. Current estimates indicate the project will generate around 200 new jobs during peak construction; 60 new jobs for the final train fit-out, testing and commissioning works; and 50 new ongoing jobs during operations, including traineeships and apprenticeships.

We know that a strong regional economy is essential. As well as upgrading our trains and looking at better services for customers, we have an opportunity to develop new industries and drive jobs growth. Part of that is about tackling social issues along the way. Transport plays an important role in improving access, reducing disadvantage and increasing equality of opportunity. The New South Wales Government is committed to investing in the regions, and this is nowhere more evident than with the number of projects already underway in Dubbo. I commend the Minister for the bill and I commend it to the House.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (16:42):** I make a contribution to the second reading debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. While the Opposition will not oppose the bill, I have some local concerns about the merger between Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] and Transport for

NSW. The suburb of Tuggerah in my electorate has an RMS office with a number of employees. I thank the Minister for negotiating on its future and hopefully protecting those jobs. The main issue that my community has with the merger is the relationship between RMS and Transport for NSW. Perhaps the merger will help with the relationship, but I have some reservations. We have a very good working relationship with Hunter Region RMS, but not so much with Transport for NSW.

I have had two projects in my electorate where I have had to deal with both entities. The main project is the Wyong town project. It is great that Minister Constance is in the Chamber—I might invite him to come to Wyong to look at the project. Since 2009 about \$30 million has been spent on planning that project, which is a significant amount of money to plan a project that includes not just the Pacific Highway through Wyong, but also changing the station, putting in a new commuter car park and building two new bridges. It is a significant project. Members of the RMS who have been involved in the project have told me that they have found Transport for NSW very difficult to deal with. They claimed off the record that they have been asked to redo plans on numerous occasions because Transport for NSW cannot make up its mind about certain elements of the project. In the future there will be a freight rail bypass through Wyong. In 2010 it was to be located on the eastern side of the railway station so that it would not interfere with the road project, which meant that a multi-deck commuter car park could not be built on the eastern side at the time because the land was reserved for that rail line. Therefore, the car park was built a few hundred metres away as part of the Wyong Race Club.

It was then announced that the railway line would be built on the other side of the railway station, which caused significant problems because the existing car park, including the bus interchange, had to be moved to the eastern side. The Liberal-Nationals Government then went about redesigning the project. Lo and behold I have heard, although it has not been confirmed, that the transport interchange may be put on the western side of the railway station. We still have a stalemate. I have accepted in good faith what RMS told me, which is that it cannot start the project until construction of the M1 is completed because both roads cannot be closed at the same time, which makes absolute sense. Engineers from RMS have told me that pre-works can be started now, which will speed up the whole project.

During the election campaign I was very concerned to hear about the Central Coast Highway upgrade between Wamberal and Forrester Beach, not because it is not needed because it is, but I am concerned that the Wyong project will be put on the backburner whilst that project is completed. On the one hand is the \$30 million spend on the Wyong project with 10 years' planning and on the other hand is the Central Coast Highway upgrade plan. I have been reliably told that all that was in existence was an old plan in an engineer's drawer that the Government pulled out during the election. That is the extent of planning for the commitment of \$380-odd million. There has been no geological testing; nothing has been done to progress that project. I hope the Minister will intervene to make sure that the Wyong project—which is a constant car park seven days a week at peak in both the morning and afternoon, particularly on Saturdays when netball is on—is not put on the backburner.

The other significant issue is around what is called the North Warnervale railway station, which was planned in 2010. I saw the printed brochures in boxes in an office, but after the election they were pulped. That area has 4,500 new houses, thousands of new residents are moving into the area and the old Warnervale railway station has been taken out of the timetable. There is no indication of what is happening with the new railway station around the town centre. My confidence in Transport for NSW is very low. The RMS projects on the Central Coast have been outstanding. It has engineered some of the most amazing things to improve our road system out of sight. I hope that the mantra of RMS might rub off on Transport for NSW in the Central Coast area. At the moment they are like chalk and cheese. RMS does careful planning and has delivered fantastic projects, but Transport for NSW has delayed projects.

A favourite tactic of Transport for NSW was to send a new person to every meeting. That person would ask to be brought up to speed. Having been brought to speed, that person would say, "I haven't got the authority to make a decision." At the next meeting, with all the different agencies present, Transport for NSW would do the same thing. It was a delaying tactic. Transport for NSW did not want to participate. The Wyong railway station, the Pacific Highway and the Warnervale railway station are such big projects for that area, which has huge population growth. They are very important pieces of infrastructure. I hope the merger of RMS with Transport for NSW will improve the relationship between those two agencies that do not work very well together at the moment. I know the Minister has said that will be the case and I trust that it will be. However, I have serious doubts based on my relationship over the years with Transport for NSW.

When Labor was in government and during the Liberal-Nationals Government, Transport for NSW has been a very difficult agency to deal with. Whereas Anna Zycki from RMS in the Hunter is a brilliant person who always returns phone calls and gives updates on exactly what is going on. She is honest. She tells you what is what, and I appreciate that. If the answer is no, it is no, and that is what we expect. But not getting an answer, being fobbed off or having change after change is not good for the Government. That is probably why my margin

increased at the last election. Residents were very disappointed with the responses they were getting. The community and the business chamber will be out with me this Saturday calling on the Government to look at the pre-works for the Wyong project.

Work on the commuter car park, which is nowhere near the road, could start next week. It would speed up a whole lot of other work because once the car park has to be closed for the road it will create all sorts of problems. Engineers have told me that it could delay the project by 18 months simply because they will have to build the car park before they close the current one to build the road. I noticed a reserved allocation of \$19 million in Restart NSW, which could be used to start this project without impacting on the road. I am glad Minister Constance is in the Chamber. I thank him for his interest in that project. Hopefully it can get underway as soon as possible.

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:50):** I will make a brief contribution to debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019 in addition to the contribution made by my colleague The Greens member for Balmain, Jamie Parker. It is very important to merge the Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] with Transport for NSW. Dissolving RMS and ensuring the assets, rights and liabilities of RMS on its dissolution are transferred to Transport for NSW is key. In many ways we have seen a failure to integrate transport and road construction in our inner-city areas, which has had a huge impact, particularly on the Newtown electorate. Transport for NSW is championing a massive road agenda, particularly WestConnex, when we know full well that those are not the solutions to transport and congestion problems that we need. I am sure many constituents in Newtown and beyond would hope this merge will result in an integration that recognises the need to prioritise sustainable forms of transport that service our communities and not add to the congestion problem.

Sadly, RMS will have left a legacy of unacceptable traffic congestion in Sydney, poorly maintained and inadequate roads and road infrastructure in New South Wales country areas, but particularly the management of WestConnex. As the member for Balmain said, in April 2019 it was reported that WestConnex had breached one of its approval conditions requiring that two lanes on Parramatta Road from Burwood to Haberfield would be dedicated to public transport—a fast bus corridor as mandated in condition B34. The M4 East has been constructed and there is still no sign of this condition being met. When the environmental impact statement was issued The Greens asked questions in this Chamber and were told the public transport and bus lanes would be delivered as part of the benefit-cost ratio to justify the expenditure and the delivery of WestConnex. However, they have never been delivered.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Are you surprised?

**Ms JENNY LEONG:** I am not surprised. I knew at the time and that is why I am raising this matter. I sound surprised, but I am so over being bored by asking the same questions and not getting the right answers. I am trying to ask the Government with a bit of enthusiasm. We knew there was no integrated plan. We knew we were delivering massive motorways into the city without looking at what was happening to communities. We heard from mayors in western Sydney who said their communities were suffering health problems as a result of commuting. They need more support to be able to catch public transport and active transport. They said their communities were struggling because there was not an integrated approach.

If we are looking at the end of RMS I am very disappointed that Duncan Gay, the former roads Minister, is not here to see the abolition of the RMS because he was the one who told me and the people of Newtown that we would be driving our cars in Nirvana when WestConnex was delivered. I say to Duncan Gay, wherever he is now—he may be somewhere in the electorate of Newtown, I am not sure—we are in Nirvana at the potential end to the domination of privatised motorways and toll roads in our city. Hopefully we will have—and this is a big hope—an end to the delivery of more congestion-creating roads as a solution to existing congestion in our city and an integrated solution that moves beyond the one-eyed, arrogant approach of RMS, a body that has failed to deliver the environmentally sustainable transport solutions that we require.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (16:55):** In reply: I thank all members for their contributions to debate on the Transport Administration Amendment (RMS Dissolution) Bill 2019. Numerous contributions were made, and I acknowledge the support of members in this place for the integration of Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] with Transport for NSW. I also acknowledge the contributions made about local projects; in particular, the contribution of the member for Wyong with regard to how government agencies are working within his local community.

In relation to the amendments that Labor will move in the other place, I make it clear that this bill is not about changing employment arrangements or reducing the number of jobs. We have given a clear undertaking to grow jobs in the regions as we merge what traditionally has been Roads and Maritime Services with Transport for NSW. That is about delivering a transport network in the regions that is, in many ways, a big, bold vision for the regions. The Government has also given the undertaking that it is not about job cuts—it is about jobs growth.

Anybody who looks closely at the degree of expenditure on transport and roads will see that it is huge. It is at levels never seen before—\$56 billion over the next four years alone. To that end, we are about better integration, particularly in the regions.

This has nothing to do with privatisation. I do not know where the shadow Minister is, but I say to him that the Government is trying to reorganise the Transport cluster with one aim in mind, and that is to improve the customer experience by drawing functions together. With Mobility as a Service coming into play in the years ahead, our customers will require a better form of service between our road agency and our existing silo-based approach with our transport agency. Again, I point out that those opposite ran a bus network with 80 per cent of the services run by the private sector. As for the faux argument about not having the private sector involved in any operations, Labor really should reflect on its position in that regard.

We want to direct that all references to RMS be replaced with references to Transport for NSW. The bill does that. It does not give rise to any changes in the scope of the existing statutory functions of RMS. Transport for NSW will simply exercise those same statutory functions following the merger of the two agencies, including functions under the Transport Administration Act 1988, the Roads Act 1993, the Road Transport Act 2013, the Heavy Vehicle National Law, the Passenger Transport Act 2014, the Marine Safety Act 1998, the Ports and Maritime Administration Act 1995 and associated regulations.

The changes are about how transport works and how it can deliver better outcomes by having the right structure in play right across communities in New South Wales. Transport cluster staff are employed in the transport service established under part 7A of the Transport Administration Act, as distinct from the public service, which is established under the Government Sector Employment Act 2013. Roads and Maritime Services has never exercised employer functions for staff allocated to work for it. In other words, Roads and Maritime Services was never the employer. It makes me wonder what is going on with the shadow Minister.

The Transport secretary exercises the employer function in relation to all members of the transport service. The Transport secretary has, and will continue to have following dissolution of the Roads and Maritime Services, the power to allocate an individual employee to any agency within the Transport cluster. The Transport secretary's rights as the employer already exist in the Transport Administration Act and will not be impacted as a result of the bill. There will be no change to the employment status of any staff members as a result of the transition of Roads and Maritime Services to a single transport agency. All staff will remain members of the transport service and the Transport secretary will remain the employer. Roads and Maritime Services staff will transition to the new divisions of Transport for NSW in a lift-and-shift process.

**Debate interrupted.**

#### *Public Interest Debate*

### **MANUFACTURING JOBS**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:00):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that the Government has presided over the loss of more than 67,000 manufacturing jobs in eight years and all but killed off the State's train, bus and heavy vehicle manufacturing industry.
- (2) Condemns the Government for awarding contracts worth billions of dollars to overseas manufacturers by purchasing buses from Malaysia, trains from South Korea and China, metros from India, and light rail vehicles from France and Spain.
- (3) Demands the Berejiklian Government stop offshoring New South Wales jobs and guarantee the strongest possible local content requirements for major public works projects.

The manufacturing industry is vital to the New South Wales economy. It employs over 275,000 people in New South Wales and hundreds of thousands in associated industries. But this is an industry that has been left to fend for itself under the Liberal Government. Since 2011 the Liberal Government has presided over 67,000 manufacturing job losses—67,000 fewer skilled employees in New South Wales who are working to build trains and buses, to manufacture the products that we export, and to manufacture the equipment that we use every day. Unless the New South Wales Government steps up and provides the support and strategic policy direction that the sector needs, manufacturing in New South Wales will continue to decline until it is completely dead.

I am proud that the Prospect electorate contains the largest commercial, industrial and manufacturing base in New South Wales. The manufacturing industry is an essential part of the fabric of the Prospect electorate, providing secure, long-term employment for families throughout western Sydney. Manufacturers and associated companies have chosen to base themselves in western Sydney so they can access these highly skilled workers who live in our area. Those manufacturers and other manufacturing companies throughout the State—

in the Hunter, Wollongong, Port Kembla, Newcastle and other regional areas—are facing significant challenges due to: one, the lack of an appropriate State Government procurement policy; two, questionable agreements stopping the construction of a new container terminal at Newcastle; three, inadequate local infrastructure; four, a weakened TAFE sector; and, five, no strategic industry policy or a Minister interested in the manufacturing industry.

During her European junket tour the Premier stated that New South Wales can become the manufacturing capital of Australia. It is a shame that over the past eight years the Liberal Government has ignored providing projects to the manufacturing sector itself. While the Victorian Government invests in locally built trains, the New South Wales Government has built its trains in South Korea and India, despite locally based manufacturers having the ability to build them in our State. The fact that the State Government lacks an appropriate local procurement policy puts our manufacturers at a distinct disadvantage. We should be building the manufactured goods that New South Wales needs in New South Wales.

Ensuring that we use New South Wales manufacturers for New South Wales Government projects brings jobs to our local communities and ensures that local workers gain the skills needed to manufacture our products for domestic and export markets. Without a proper local procurement policy that prioritises the use of locally manufactured products in major New South Wales Government projects, our local manufacturers will not be able to operate to their full potential. They will not be able to keep up with the evolving manufacturing techniques and technologies needed to compete for complex projects in New South Wales and in other global markets. The skills and jobs that manufacturing brings to New South Wales as part of government projects need to be properly accounted for when government procurement is undertaken. We should not send the work overseas where international manufacturers seem unable to complete it on time or on budget; we should do it here in New South Wales.

The use of overseas manufacturers has also led to massive, billion-dollar cost blowouts for New South Wales taxpayers. When the Liberal Government imported trams and driverless trains it had to pay import duty of more than \$47 million. That cost was not taken into account when ordering the trains and trams. If those trains and trams had been manufactured in New South Wales there would be no import duties to pay; instead, that money could have been used to support local manufacturers. Not only is the Liberal Government's lack of support for our local manufacturers through sensible procurement policies harming the manufacturing industry, but also the lack of investment in critical infrastructure is constraining our manufacturers. In the Prospect electorate alone, manufacturing hubs have difficulties getting important components to site and sending finished products to market.

Adequate road and rail infrastructure is critical for our manufacturers, but year after year this Government fails to upgrade critical road and rail links in industrial estates. I can only hope that after years of inaction the Liberal Government's newfound realisation that manufacturing is a critical industry will lead to important road and rail infrastructure finally getting the upgrades needed to support manufacturers. Over the past eight years the cost of energy used in manufacturing has increased rapidly. Those increased gas and electricity prices are making it harder and harder for our local manufacturing companies to compete with overseas firms. At the heart of our manufacturing industry is our skilled workforce. However, we cannot build that workforce without a strong TAFE system. The Liberal Government's \$140 million in cuts to the New South Wales TAFE system since 2014 continue to impact on our manufacturers. There has never been a more important time than now to invest in skills for our workforce. With a rapidly growing global economy, it is critical that we give everyone in New South Wales the training needed to continue to be in the manufacturing workforce.

There is a particularly important instance where the Liberal Government seems to have not only failed our exporters, including manufacturers, but also harmed them: Currently, a container export facility cannot be built at the Port of Newcastle. I know my colleague the member for Newcastle will talk about that. Private investors stand to invest some \$1.8 billion to build a container terminal at that port but the project cannot go ahead because, in its rush to privatise State assets, the Government has made an anti-competitive agreement to make the cost prohibitive for the operator of the container terminal at Newcastle. Then there is the lack of strategic industry policy. The Premier and her Liberal Government have shown no interest in supporting manufacturers over the past eight years. If they were serious about making New South Wales the manufacturing capital of Australia those opposite would have not spent the past eight years ignoring and hindering the industry.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (17:07):** Thank you for that, comrade.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order. I cannot hear the Minister.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** At one point this year unemployment was 3.9 per cent under this Government; it is now 4.4 per cent—it is around that 3.9 per cent to 5 per cent mark. How jealous would the Opposition be to see that?

**Dr Hugh McDermott:** In construction; that is not manufacturing.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I sat quietly and listened to your rubbish; now you can be quiet.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Cessnock will come to order. The member for Prospect will come to order. I call the member for Manly to order for the second time.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I move an amendment to the motion. I move:

That the motion be amended by omitting all words after "House", with a view to inserting instead:

(1) Congratulates the New South Wales Government's record investment in new rolling stock, including the New Intercity Fleet, brand-new Metro trains, new light rail vehicles, the replacement of the entire regional rail fleet, new inner harbour ferries and 41 Waratah Series 2 trains.

(2) Notes that in 2006—

this is my favourite part of the amendment—

the Government signed a contract with Downer EDI and Hitachi to build Waratah trains in Changchun, China.

Good work, team. In its last term of government Labor built trains in China and now it lectures us. Let us look at some facts: This Government is delivering 41,783 additional weekly transport services and is having to grow its rolling stock. That is pretty important. When last in government, the Labor Party decided to build trains in China.

**Dr Hugh McDermott:** Why are you doing this when it should be the industry Minister? Where is the industry Minister?

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Can you be quiet, medalmouth? When Labor was in government it built trains in China but it is attacking the South Korean procurement. Is that not interesting? When we went to tender for the New Intercity Fleet, guess what? Not one Australian consortium came forward to build those trains. Why? I will tell members what is pricing manufacturing out of business in this State: It is the union movement and its practices—and those apologists for the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union. Why on earth did John Watkins make the following comment? Do Opposition members remember John Watkins? He is a former transport Minister, not for us but in the Labor Government. Watkins said:

We can't produce a carriage from the ground up here in NSW. We don't produce stainless steel in Australia; we don't produce traction motors. We always do our railway carriages in partnership with overseas suppliers.

Watkins was Labor. Why would he make that statement? It is because Labor's union mates have priced manufacturing out of the market.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Terrigal will come to order. He is not helping.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Members opposite are seriously like a bunch of galahs on an electricity wire, the way they are going on.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** The member for Heathcote is not helping the Minister at all.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Just to help out good old No Prospect, I make this point: If the member had done his homework, he would know that there are some good things happening in bus manufacturing in western Sydney. Does the learned fellow know about a business called Custom Bus? Guess where it is? It is in western Sydney—a success story. In the past year it opened a new manufacturing plant at St Marys and created 175 jobs. I have met with them. They are real people; it is a real manufacturing enterprise in western Sydney, building buses for this State.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** The member for Londonderry will come to order or she will be removed from the Chamber.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** They have built and delivered 89 buses for New South Wales businesses, all to standards set by Transport for NSW. That is an example of the Government delivering manufacturing jobs in western Sydney.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order. I cannot hear the Minister.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Old mate opposite is saying, "The country has got a train manufacturing business." It does not even have a car manufacturing business anymore because the Labor Party and its union mates have priced it out of the market and destroyed jobs. Then Labor Party members move some sort of silly

motion. Look at the unemployment rate. Imagine Labor delivering that! I do not think so. Good one, old trout. Back my amendment to your motion and we will have a nice afternoon.

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (17:12):** Imagine my delight when I opened up *Newcastle Herald* last week and saw the headline "Berejiklian's ambitious plan to turn NSW into 'the manufacturing capital' of Australia". I was absolutely stoked because the Hunter is the manufacturing heartland. We alone have great facilities such as UGL Rail, OneSteel and Molycop manufacturers, while not far from the city the industry is being supported by thousands of workers in Port Stephens at Tomago Aluminium, Downer Rail and the Varley Group. We have certainly proved that we are more than capable. The Waratah trains were built at Cardiff. The Carrington Slipway company built Sydney's first fleet-class ferries and Navy ships, including the HMAS *Tobruk*. The \$917 million minehunters were also largely built there. Thousands and thousands of people at BHP produced world-class steel products, as they still do in the Illawarra.

I think it is great that the Premier wants New South Wales to be the manufacturing capital of Australia but I also cannot help but be mystified by the statement. It is a very odd thing to say when we consider how many billions of dollars and how many manufacturing contracts have been sent offshore in the past eight years. It is very odd indeed. The Government has proven time and again that it specialises in making odd decisions and then stuffs them up—and not only odd, but also hypocritical. It is hypocritical to say that it supports New South Wales manufacturing when it buys 38 double-decker buses from Malaysia; hypocritical to say that it supports New South Wales manufacturing when it spends \$4 billion buying trains from China and South Korea; hypocritical to say that it supports New South Wales manufacturing when its pet infrastructure project will feature metros from India; and hypocritical to say that it supports New South Wales manufacturing when 72 light rail vehicles are being built in France and Spain.

While those contracts go offshore, manufacturing in New South Wales is decimated. Earlier this year the hardworking Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union—a good union—undertook an analysis of census data, which indicated that since the Liberals came to power there has been a whopping 54 per cent decline in the number of rail technicians and trades workers in New South Wales. In March 2010, 250 jobs were created in the Hunter at Volgren Australia's brand-new bus factory in Tomago—a Labor State Government had awarded a \$106 million contract to build 150 articulated buses. The Liberals came to power in March 2011 and by September 2012—just 2½ years later—60 jobs were lost when it changed how new buses were procured and the work dried up. It also saw the closure of Australia's largest spray-painting bay in the process. Who was the transport Minister at the time? It was Gladys Berejiklian. She called it "great value for money". Fast-forward a few years and she is still talking about value for money.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Members will come to order. I cannot hear the member for Newcastle. The member for Terrigal will come to order.

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP:** After all, "value for money" is sending the big train contract to South Korea. What could possibly go wrong—apart from the tracks being too wide for the tunnels and the trains being too wide for the tracks, too long for the platforms and too late to arrive for the State to begin service on time? And now more money is required to fix the problems: Manufacturing them cheaper in South Korea will actually cost more. Last week I stood outside UGL's rail facility with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and asked the Premier to walk her talk, to bring those contracts back to New South Wales where they belong. Almost two years ago to the day I stood there lamenting the contract going to South Korea. Shamefully, in eight years the Government has been responsible for the loss of more than 67,000 manufacturing jobs. That is a disgrace.

Members opposite come to this place and talk about the drought. They know the value of jobs in towns to the pubs, the bakeries and the newsagents where one pay cheque makes a difference. Meanwhile, in Victoria 65 new train sets are being manufactured, creating 1,100 jobs—of which 15 per cent are dedicated to apprentices. Does the Premier stand by her decisions? Is she proud of her record? I call on the Premier to make this right, to walk her talk and support local manufacturing. Let us pass some legislation that requires local jobs and content to be written into all government procedure documents—right now.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! I remind members that a number of them are on three calls to order. Members who continue to interject will be removed from the Chamber.

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney) (17:18):** This motion is about members opposite trying to protect their Labor mates, rather than making sure that the people of New South Wales have jobs and skills for a future economy. Let's put some facts on the table and talk about the value of manufacturing in New South Wales. This State has a \$33 billion economy. It makes a 30 per cent contribution to the national output and we employ over 276,000 people. In fact, we are hearing about the decline in manufacturing when, in the last financial year, the growth in manufacturing was over 11 per cent. We are generating more output and more jobs. In metro New South Wales there are 17,800 jobs in manufacturing.

Employment across the regions is at 93,000 and employment in metro areas is at 183,000. Some 26,533 businesses in New South Wales are churning out manufactured goods. That is generating almost \$12 billion in export product, which represents 25.8 per cent of Australia's manufacturing exports.

Make no mistake, the success of Australian businesses and New South Wales manufacturing businesses is there for everyone to see. The Government is making sure that the New South Wales manufacturing industry is set up for the future. One of the things that really irks Opposition members is that powerhouse manufacturing in this State is growing because of small businesses—businesses with no union membership, just people working in family-based businesses across communities in New South Wales. The advanced manufacturing development strategy clearly shows that the 24,319 businesses involved in advanced manufacturing in New South Wales have fewer than 19 employees. They are not unionised workshops; they are good businesses working in their communities and innovating to bring new products to the market and plugging into global supply chains. That is where the growth is. That is what is happening overseas, in Europe and in Japan. These are small, innovative businesses and this is where the growth continues to come from.

There are emerging industries across construction technology, defence, aerospace, medical technology, food and beverage, transport and mobility, energy technology and creative industries. The simple fact is that members opposite gave up on advanced manufacturing years ago. They want to run protected workshops for their union mates—as union membership keeps going through the floor—while everyone else in New South Wales and across the world has moved on to modern technologies, into advanced manufacturing and worker retraining. All over the world—in Germany, for example—thousands of people working in modernised factories—

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Auburn and the member for Drummoyne will resume their seats.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** —have retrained in new technologies. If New South Wales does not do the same we will be letting our citizens down. It is about creating vertical integration that starts with education through vocational training systems and builds the technologies and skills across our workforce so that people in New South Wales will still have manufacturing jobs in five, 10, 20 years. Workers must have the mobility they need to move with the technology. It is not just about issuing government-based contracts; it is about making sure that across New South Wales we have the skills to grow the economy. The Western Sydney Aerotropolis has already been identified as one of the strongest manufacturing centres in Australia. It will be able to work alongside what happens in the Hunter and on the South Coast.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** I call the member for Shellharbour to order for the first time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** This is not a zero-sum game for us. We want everyone in New South Wales to benefit from the strength of our manufacturing industry. The Government will do that by partnering with universities and vocational training partners and will build a much stronger ecosystem around the advanced manufacturing industry. We will bring international businesses into play and make sure that Australian know-how and Australian innovation can plug into those supply chains. If we do not do that our products will not be exported to the world stage and the standard of living will go down. That is exactly what members of the Opposition are advocating.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** I warn members that under Standing Order 249A I will remove those who continue to interject.

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (17:23):** I do not know whether that speech by the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney was a case of no brains—he is happy without them—or he has not read the motion. I am really not sure which one it is. I would not be doing victory laps around the Chamber after that contribution. The Premier has outlined her ambitious plan to make our State the manufacturing capital of Australia. I applaud the notion—it is a good notion. But the Premier says one thing and then does the exact opposite. I do not know how that fits. I seriously do not know how the Premier can sleep at night in the bed of her own hypocrisy. It is astounding. The New South Wales Liberal Government is responsible for the loss of more than 67,000 manufacturing jobs in just under a decade. If that lot can sit opposite and think it is okay, then they have no business being in this House.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Ku-ring-gai that he is on three calls to order.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** Some 67,000 New South Wales workers have lost the chance of employment, income and a fair go because of the Premier's obsession with sending local jobs offshore. That is an absolute disgrace. We have seen contracts worth billions of dollars sent overseas when people across New South Wales are absolutely crying out for work. Unemployment in the Illawarra is on the rise, yet the Premier has continued to put profits before local workers. She puts industries dead last—therefore, putting workers dead last. How can

New South Wales ever become the manufacturing capital of Australia when it is controlled by an inept and weak government like those opposite?

We have seen a \$2.3 billion rail contract gifted to South Korea—"There you go, South Korea. There is a gift of \$2.3 billion." This is at the expense of desperately needed local jobs in New South Wales, particularly in the Illawarra. Thanks to the Premier's love affair with offshore manufacturing, manufacturing jobs in the Illawarra will continue to decline. In the past eight years the Illawarra has surpassed the national average, with manufacturing jobs declining by a staggering 36 per cent. That is in the Illawarra alone. Do members opposite think that is okay? If the member for Kiama thinks it is okay, I have news for him. He took it off us and we will take the seat of Kiama off him in 2023.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Shellharbour will not pick on the member for Kiama.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** While manufacturing is considered a growth industry in the other States, all we see in New South Wales are mass redundancies and mass industry destruction. It is like what is happening in the energy sector right now. The \$2.3 billion RailConnect contract could have provided 600 new local manufacturing jobs for the Illawarra. I note that the member for Wollongong is in the Chamber. I am sure he will agree with that; he knows it just as well as we do. That figure does not even include the indirect apprenticeships and jobs that could have eventuated from this venture. In my region that is just the tip of the iceberg.

The Liberal Government's addiction to offshore contracts has created a manufacturing epidemic across our State. It was only at the start of this year that New South Wales mourned the death of its bus manufacturing industry. Due to the Premier's greedy international ventures, 109 local workers were told just before Australia Day, "Don't bother coming back to work because you don't have a job." That is 109 workers and 109 families dependent on those workers. I ask every member opposite: Is this the Australia they want? If so, they should keep doing what they are doing. Members on this side of the Chamber are not buying into Government members' rubbish.

Custom Buses, which the member for Bega referred to, was the very last bus manufacturer in New South Wales. Its employees devoted several decades of their working lives to delivering the best buses in this State. Upstanding vehicle body builders, boilermakers and welders were all kicked to the curb for this Premier's obsession with offshore manufacturing. The final nail in the coffin of our bus manufacturing industry came with the Premier's appalling decision to order 38 double-decker buses to be built in Malaysia. This Government is a champion of privatisation and job destruction—and the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney knows it. This is nothing short of treachery in the eyes of the people of New South Wales and they will pay the Government back for it, believe me. As far as the union movement is concerned, workers know who protects them, and it is not the lot opposite. Union members are workers and they get a vote.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (17:28):** I am quite keen to have a chat about this. We have seen a bit of a circus from those opposite. Do they want to hear what I have to say?

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Dubbo will resume his seat. I remind members that a number of them are on calls to order. I warn both Government and Opposition members that if they continue to interject they will be removed from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS:** We have heard some interesting things from those opposite today. The point we are talking about here is that living in the past is not an option. We need to move forward by delivering jobs and training where it is needed most. Manufacturing does not mean a spanner and a welder anymore.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Swansea to order for the third time.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS:** Manufacturing has changed. We have heard the figures—267,000 people in this State, 11 per cent growth in manufacturing. Let me give some examples. The new regional rail fleet is a pretty good example of what manufacturing can be.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Bankstown will resume her seat.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS:** It will see hundreds of jobs created in Dubbo, supporting workers and families right across the region. We have the ageing regional and intercity Express Passenger Train, the Endeavour and the XPLOER diesel fleets. I am proud to say that there will be plenty of local jobs in Dubbo because we are investing \$2.8 billion in this new rail maintenance facility. It will create long-term jobs. It is called manufacturing, and it is what is happening. In February this year the contract to design, build, finance and maintain the new regional fleet along with a new purpose-built facility was awarded to Momentum Trains. That is fantastic news. There will be 200 new jobs during peak construction, 60 new jobs for the final train fit-out, testing and

commissioning works, and 50 new, ongoing jobs during operations and maintenance. That includes maintenance services for the first 15 years. The trains will be produced progressively from 2023. We know that Dubbo is an end-point for regional rail services. It has excellent transport links and a strong industrial base. It is also home to the training and educational facilities we need.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! I cannot hear the member for Dubbo.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS:** I can barely hear myself.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order. The member for Fairfield will cease interjecting.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS:** Over 8,600 businesses have been benefiting from this. We did hear some fake news earlier about TAFE and skills, so let me point out that the project around the rail maintenance facility has very much a regional jobs, skills and industry participation strategy, ensuring that there are opportunities for people in businesses in regional New South Wales and that they are maximised.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! I direct the member for Newcastle to remove himself from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A until the question is put on the motion.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Newcastle left the Chamber at 17:31.]*

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! Members will cease interrupting the member for Dubbo.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS:** This is a really exciting manufacturing project.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS:** This is a really exciting project based around manufacturing. Hundreds of people have attended the industry briefings in recent months. There were specific briefings for Aboriginal businesses, with 59 attendees, including HiHat Aboriginal Corporation, Building Kinnections, REDI.E, Coregas and Benson Fencing. There were plenty more at the general briefing, including Supply Nation, MAAS, Skillset, Anderson Recruitment—a specialist in recruitment and labour hire services for major Australian projects.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** The member for Rockdale will resume his seat.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS:** TAFE was also there, along with the Department of Education and the Dubbo College Senior Campus—which has our future in its hands. All those businesses attended the briefings because they care and want to know more about the project and how to be involved. They know how important it is for the Dubbo region to be part of this for the future. As part of manufacturing in the future, we need connectivity. That is why the \$400 million in funding over the next four years to improve data services and the internet of things is important. It includes working and manufacturing in regions like ours and improving the backhaul. This unparalleled investment is crucial. Industry has been at 3.0 in manufacturing and digital; this takes it to 4.0. It means the fourth industrial revolution. I know members opposite do not understand it, but let me explain: The fourth industrial revolution is full-scale digitisation in manufacturing using the industrial internet of things. Are you with me? It is all available because of the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund. This Government is delivering for the long-term future of manufacturing jobs.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order or they will join the member for Newcastle outside the Chamber.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS:** It is crucial to our rural and regional areas. The Government is committed to making that investment, and it is happening right now.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:34):** In reply: The member for Shellharbour used a word which sums up this Government—hypocrisy. That is the transport Minister, who talks about jobs when he has sent billions of dollars of taxpayers' money overseas to foreign companies. The member for Penrith was quoting—was that quote from O'Farrell's original document or some motherhood statement that was never acted on? Is that what you were talking about because you showed that you had no idea. The member for Dubbo had some idea what he was talking about. The reality is that manufacturing is dying in New South Wales. Just talk to the manufacturers, they will tell you. If Government members really think that the manufacturing industry in this State is supportive of its Government, they have another thing coming. The construction industry supports this Government because all of our publicly funded money is going to the construction industry. Not a cent is going to manufacturing.

Former Labor and State governments have acted to seed and nurture new industry sectors to compete in a global economy. This Government has not. It is spending all its money on construction. That money will run out. Once the Government has sold off all our assets—because that is where it is going—and it has recommitted

all that money to more construction, there will be no more jobs. The bubble will burst. The long-term well-paid jobs in manufacturing will have gone overseas because this Government is not supporting this industry. Since the Liberal Government came to office in 2011 there has been no strategic industry policy—nothing.

O'Farrell's policy document that Government members were talking about has not been acted on. It is a motherhood statement; they have gone nowhere with it. What really proves that this Government does not give a darn about manufacturing—where is the industry Minister? Where is he? Where is John Barilaro? He is not here. I will tell members where the Government's focus is. John Barilaro is a National Party MP and he cares about primary industry, just as the previous three Ministers did. Primary industry is less than 4 per cent of our economy. He does not care about manufacturing, he does not care about logistics and he does not care about industrial sectors. The focus of the National Party is warding off the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party which is taking all of its electorates. Manufacturing matters in western Sydney and the Hunter, where everyone votes Labor, and in Newcastle and other places. They vote for Labor because they know the Labor Party has the best wishes of the manufacturing industry at heart.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Drummoyne will resume his seat. I call the member for Drummoyne to order for the first time.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** This Government needs to step up and meet with manufacturers, work with them and provide strategic industry policy to support long-term jobs. Within a decade, after this Government has spent all our public money, there will be no jobs in New South Wales; it will have destroyed manufacturing.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members will come to order. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

#### The House divided.

Ayes .....49  
Noes .....40  
Majority.....9

#### AYES

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  
McGirr, Dr J  
Perrottet, Mr D  
Preston, Ms R  
Sidgreaves, Mr P  
Smith, Mr N  
Taylor, Mr M  
Upton, Ms G  
Wilson, Ms F

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  
O'Dea, Mr J  
Petinos, Ms E  
Roberts, Mr A  
Sidoti, Mr J  
Speakman, Mr M  
Toole, Mr P  
Ward, Mr G

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  
Pavey, Mrs M  
Piper, Mr G  
Saunders, Mr D  
Singh, Mr G  
Stokes, Mr R  
Tuckerman, Mrs W  
Williams, Mr R

#### NOES

Aitchison, Ms J  
Car, Ms P  
Cotsis, Ms S  
Dalton, Mrs H  
Doyle, Ms T  
Harrison, Ms J  
Hornery, Ms S  
Leong, Ms J  
McKay, Ms J  
Minns, Mr C  
Parker, Mr J

Atalla, Mr E  
Catley, Ms Y  
Crakanthorp, Mr T  
Dib, Mr J  
Finn, Ms J  
Haylen, Ms J  
Kamper, Mr S  
Lynch, Mr P  
Mehan, Mr D (teller)  
O'Neill, Dr M  
Saffin, Ms J

Barr, Mr C  
Chanthivong, Mr A  
Daley, Mr M  
Donato, Mr P  
Harris, Mr D  
Hoenig, Mr R  
Lalich, Mr N  
McDermott, Dr H  
Mihailuk, Ms T  
Park, Mr R  
Scully, Mr P

## NOES

Smith, Ms T.F.  
Warren, Mr G  
Zangari, Mr G

Tesch, Ms L  
Washington, Ms K

Voltz, Ms L  
Watson, Ms A (teller)

## PAIRS

Bali, Mr S

Provest, Mr G

**Amendment agreed to.**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question is that the motion as amended be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....49  
Noes .....40  
Majority.....9

## AYES

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  
McGirr, Dr J  
Perrottet, Mr D  
Preston, Ms R  
Sidgreaves, Mr P  
Smith, Mr N  
Taylor, Mr M  
Upton, Ms G  
Wilson, Ms F

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  
O'Dea, Mr J  
Petinos, Ms E  
Roberts, Mr A  
Sidoti, Mr J  
Speakman, Mr M  
Toole, Mr P  
Ward, Mr G

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  
Pavey, Mrs M  
Piper, Mr G  
Saunders, Mr D  
Singh, Mr G  
Stokes, Mr R  
Tuckerman, Mrs W  
Williams, Mr R

## NOES

Aitchison, Ms J  
Car, Ms P  
Cotsis, Ms S  
Dalton, Mrs H  
Doyle, Ms T  
Harrison, Ms J  
Hornery, Ms S  
Leong, Ms J  
McKay, Ms J  
Minns, Mr C  
Parker, Mr J  
Smith, Ms T.F.  
Warren, Mr G  
Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E  
Catley, Ms Y  
Crakanthorp, Mr T  
Dib, Mr J  
Finn, Ms J  
Haylen, Ms J  
Kamper, Mr S  
Lynch, Mr P  
Mehan, Mr D (teller)  
O'Neill, Dr M  
Saffin, Ms J  
Tesch, Ms L  
Washington, Ms K

Barr, Mr C  
Chanthivong, Mr A  
Daley, Mr M  
Donato, Mr P  
Harris, Mr D  
Hoenig, Mr R  
Lalich, Mr N  
McDermott, Dr H  
Mihailuk, Ms T  
Park, Mr R  
Scully, Mr P  
Voltz, Ms L  
Watson, Ms A (teller)

## PAIRS

Provest, Mr G

Bali, Mr S

**Motion as amended agreed to.**

*Bills*

**TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT (RMS DISSOLUTION) BILL 2019**

**Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (17:48):** As I said, Roads and Maritime Services staff have been transitioned into the new divisions of Transport for NSW in a lift and shift process. On 1 July 2019 they and their teams were removed intact into relevant new divisions. All that has changed in this transition is the senior reporting lines. Roads and Maritime Services staff remain on their current industrial instruments as do staff at Transport for NSW and all other transport agencies. The bill does not change that. I say to members of the Labor Party and to whoever is pressing their buttons that this is the point of the bill, that it does not change that. Therefore, there has been no break in their employment as a result of this reorganisation, with their previous service continuing to be recognised. Leave entitlements as well as other terms and conditions of employment remain intact and the same.

One of the secretary's existing powers under the Transport Administration Act is to create groups of staff within the transport service. The Transport for NSW group and the RMS group were created in 2014. The Transport for NSW award applies to the Transport for NSW group of employees and four RMS awards apply to the RMS group of employees. The creation and ongoing existence of those groups is not dependent on the ongoing existence of any particular statutory entity such as Roads and Maritime Services or Transport for NSW. The staff who have transitioned to the new structure as part of the lift and shift process remain in their current group of the transport service—the Transport for NSW group and the RMS group. The award that applies to their classification of work will continue to apply, including all of the terms and conditions of that award. I make that crystal clear, particularly as the bill finds its way to the upper House.

We announced this reorganisation in April following the election. Transport is a key agency for the delivery of infrastructure and services. Our priority is to build a strong economy and to deliver better-connected communities with quality local environments, making the customer the centre of everything we do. Those changes support not only what we want to achieve across government but also in transport particularly. It is a new operating model and I believe everybody agrees with it, given the nature of the debate when members made the point that we cannot continue to operate in silos.

As we have already outlined, we are bringing the legislation forward to implement this reform so there is absolute clarity and no confusion or misunderstandings across the agencies and in the wider community. We want to be able to transfer the assets—for example, we want to transfer freeways from Roads and Maritime Services to Transport for NSW. We want to ensure that the community and the staff have absolute clarity about the land acquisition process when we acquire land for the purposes of building infrastructure, particularly infrastructure that sits under the Roads Act. We want to ensure also that industry has a very clear procurement process when it comes to the more than \$53 billion investment in infrastructure that we are making across the State in the next four years.

It is critical that the benefits of immunity currently enjoyed by Roads and Maritime Services under the Roads Act are in place with the transfer of assets to Transport for NSW. That is why we need the legislation and why it must be passed by those in the upper House. As a government we want to ensure that we work together to get a fully integrated and active transport network for the people of this State and we will continue to zero in on not only active transport projects but also on the big build in our mega projects. We want to talk to the Labor Party about any amendments it makes in the upper House with the clear intent of ensuring that the amendments do not destroy the integrity of the bill. Integration does need to be clarified and that is why we have brought this legislation forward. We want employment conditions consistent with the awards and ultimately we want to get a good outcome.

The shadow Minister for Transport made some interesting remarks about clearways. We want to talk to members of the Labor Party and we want to get this bill through. I acknowledge Mr David Shoebridge in the upper House and the approach he has taken to the bill over the past month and the representations he has been making particularly in relation to engineers. We have been working around the clock to ensure that, through the memorandum of understanding with the engineers, there is absolute clarity about the process and the engagement moving forward. We have clarified the existing entitlements for the award employees and this is a very important step forward to deliver a great outcome for the people of this State. I commend the bill to the House.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Third Reading**

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Private Members' Statements*

**PAMELA ALVAREZ**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections) (17:54):** Friends in this House and the people of New South Wales, it is a pleasure to draw your attention to one of our most excellent and wonderful citizens, Pamela Alvarez. It is said that age appears best in four things: old wood is best to burn, old wine is best to drink, old authors are best to read and old friends are best to trust. That is what Pamela is to many people of Lane Cove. With much wisdom and a warm heart, Pamela can always be trusted upon, from new mothers to those traversing the legal system and everyone in between. Pamela has the kind word we need when we are down, as well as the hand up we have required when it is time to move forward.

Pamela has had an extraordinary life with her fair share of joy and tragedy. Shortly after getting married in Brisbane, Pamela and her new husband, Gavin, settled into Hunters Hill where her husband was born. Their children, Christina and John, were also born in Hunters Hill. They then decided to move to Gloucester where they bought a property to raise beef cattle. As per usual for Pamela, she dove headfirst into the community. She became the secretary of the Country Women's Association [CWA], managed to encourage a ballet teacher to teach in the town, instigated craft days for children and assisted with the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Pamela organised a wool promotion day for which Gloucester was awarded the CWA State first prize award. She promoted the commencement of children's swimming lessons in the town after saving a child from a well, for which she was presented a bravery award.

Upon the tragic and premature death of her husband, Gavin, in 1976, Pamela returned to Hunters Hill with her two young children. With the steely determination she has so often shown, Pamela reorganised her children's lives, did a refresher course for nursing and returned to full-time work. To further provide for her family, she began and completed a law degree at Macquarie University around her full-time job. Having completed her law degree, Pamela quickly rose through the ranks, being admitted as a solicitor in 1989. She then spent a decade as a prosecution lawyer in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Pamela became a member of the International Commission of Jurists and was a rapporteur on an Aboriginal justice mission to Bourke and Brewarrina. The President, the Hon. Justice Michael Kirby, said of Pamela during this time, "I have found Ms Alvarez to be a lawyer with a conscience, a concern about her community and the wider world."

Pamela retired from the DPP in 1999. However, this did not signal a slowdown in her activity. Taking the opportunity to care for her grandson as her daughter went back to work, Pamela saw it as an opportunity to get more involved in her great passion—Hunters Hill. She commenced a grannies group under the auspice of the Anglican Parish of Hunters Hill. The grannies group involved a group of grandparents who would take their grandkids on trips to the Opera House, visits to parks, zoos, pools and unique entertainment events such as The Wiggles.

From the grannies group came the start of a playgroup at St Mark's Church over eight years ago. Over 370 local families have fond memories playing and sharing moments under the compassionate coordination of Pamela and a great team of wonderful volunteers. Pamela also served on the Hunters Hill playground committee, the community services advisory committee and remains the sole surviving trustee of the Hunters Hill Theatre. With limitless amounts of energy and enthusiasm, Pamela continues to be the bedrock of our local community. We thank Pamela for her years of service and look forward to the joy of many more.

**MASCOT HOTEL PLANNING PROPOSAL**

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (17:54):** I bring to the attention of the House a planning proposal relating to land at 146 to 154 O'Riordan Street, Mascot. The planning proposal seeks to amend the Botany Bay Local Environmental Plan [LEP] 2013 to double the permissible building height from 22 metres to 44 metres on one small site at the corner of Coward Street and O'Riordan Street. That proposal was put to Bayside Council at its meeting on 14 August and it was approved to proceed to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for a Gateway determination. The land currently contains a number of commercial food preparation businesses, freight forwarders and transport services, all of which are effectively single storeys. This application is a spot rezoning to double the height of the current LEP from 22 metres to 44 metres. This site adjoins an oval of heritage significance and the single storey residential areas of Macintosh and Forster streets. If this proposal is approved

it will allow the developer to submit a new development application to increase a building on the site from seven storeys to 13 storeys.

The proposal breaches a section 9 (1) direction by the Minister. It is inconsistent with the objects of the Botany Bay LEP 2013 and fails the requirements of clause 4.3 due to its visual impact. The proponent cites the height limit on the western side of O'Riordan Street as a reason for increasing the height limit on the eastern side. This is spurious. The 44 metre buildings are permitted on the western side of O'Riordan Street only because they are within the Mascot station precinct, which is a planned high-rise precinct based around a train station.

Aside from another development application adjacent to the South Sydney Graphic Arts Club, which was improperly granted, there are no 44 metre tall buildings on the eastern side of O'Riordan Street. What makes this spot rezoning proposal so remarkable is that Bayside Council is in the late stages of preparing its own LEP after the amalgamation of Botany Bay Council and Rockdale Council. What is the point of going through a LEP process in full consultation with elected officials and the community, for which a decision is only months away, unless there are overwhelming reasons? What confidence should the residents of the Bayside local government area have in the planning process if they can be changed at a whim?

It is not remarkable to say that the west has a crisis of confidence in the political process. People have lost faith in politics and politicians. New South Wales citizens have lost faith because of dodgy planning decisions and the sense that there is one set of rules for ordinary people and another for developers and their political mates. I am extraordinarily suspicious of this planning proposal. This sort of spot rezoning is an extraordinary and improper abuse of planning powers. I am even more suspicious of this development because of the nature of the applicant. The local paper, *Southern Courier*, reported this week that the developer Toplace "is currently defending a court action brought by a company alleging building defects and a failure to comply with statutory warranties in three apartment blocks in Canterbury". This is the same developer that amongst other examples illegally excavated three levels of car parking at its development in Macquarie Street, Parramatta.

I have my own suspicions about the reasons for this planning proposal and I will get to the bottom of them. This is another example of the failure of council mergers. When Botany Bay was amalgamated with Rockdale Council, it allowed the Rockdale disease to infect and fester in the old Botany Bay planning area. No wonder the member for Oatley was so firm about not allowing Rockdale to end up in a St George council area—it has now infected my area. I have written to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces about this proposal and I propose to meet with Dr Dearing of the Greater Sydney Commission about it. The Mayor of the City of Bayside has indicated there is not much point stopping a planning proposal because Carl Scully, who is on the panel, always overturns council. That is not a justifiable reason.

I have been made aware of this application not just by a couple of councillors on Bayside Council but also by some planning staff who are courageous enough to point me to various items regarding the progress of this proposal that should have my attention. It will be argued that one of those Independent Hearing and Assessment Panels considered it before the council did. The planning paper for this proposal alone is about three or four inches thick. There are ways to steer suspect applications through consent authorities and this is always one of them. The reality of the situation is that the planning Minister, whose view I agree with, has said that we need to end spot rezonings and I am calling on Mr Stokes to do it straightaway, otherwise we will get more of these.

### ESSENTIAL ENERGY JOB CUTS

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (18:03):** I praise the efforts of the Deputy Premier and my colleagues. By staying firm Essential Energy has recognised that terminating 180 jobs across regional New South Wales is not the savings answer it needs to remain a viable organisation. I also praise the Premier for announcing just after the election that there would be no job losses in the public service across regional New South Wales. It is important that parliamentarians recognise the importance of preserving jobs in regional and rural New South Wales, particularly when we are facing the worst drought on public record.

The efforts of the Deputy Premier were magnificent, determined and dogged; as were the efforts of my colleagues who contacted Essential Energy management to express their concerns about the job losses in regional New South Wales. We know the importance of preserving jobs in regional New South Wales. If you lose one job, you lose one family. If you lose one family, you lose kids. If you lose kids, you lose a teacher at the school or a nurse or doctor at the hospital. You will then lose small businesses because regional communities depend on an economy of scale. To preserve our regional communities we have to save jobs.

I express my thanks to the Essential Energy staff for meeting with me last Friday. I saw firsthand the impact these cuts would have on them. I listened to their stories. They told me how difficult this period has been for them, faced with the prospect of no job in a regional community where it is tough to get a job. I ask Essential

Energy to look at its business plan to make savings. Do not take the easy way out and pick the low-hanging fruit. By all accounts it is a bloated organisation. I am sure that it can make savings across the board without cutting staff. We are talking about 180 jobs across regional New South Wales—11 of them in Grafton. I am sure other ways can be used to preserve the jobs.

I understand Essential Energy has a marquee at the Melbourne Cup. That expense could go to saving jobs. I am advised the savings to Essential Energy in sacking those 180 staff would amount to only \$5 per quarter per customer—that is \$20 per person a year that would result in taking away the livelihood of 180 people and destroying 180 families and regional communities. That is incomprehensible to those who live in a regional community. Those people are not just workers at Essential Energy. They belong to our social and sporting organisations, their kids go to our schools and they form part of the fabric of our community.

We cannot afford to lose those people and their expertise in regional New South Wales. We need to ensure that they have a meaningful job, which is important for the security of supply but it should also be undertaken in a safe manner. Again I express my thanks to the Deputy Premier and my colleagues for staying firm on this matter and ensuring that we do not lose those jobs in regional New South Wales. We are the party that cares about workers in regional New South Wales. We care about our communities and we will always stand up and fight for them.

### PAMBULA HOSPITAL

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (18:08):** Friday 16 August was a special day for the small town of Pambula and its residents. On that day the Pambula Hospital doors were officially reopened to the community after its upgrade. I am pleased to advise the House that after many long years, heated battles, petitions, lobbying and hard work by the community the Pambula Hospital is not only open and functioning but it is now a refurbished, revitalised, safe, fresh and welcoming health facility and work place. For many years hardworking community members have been knocking on my door to ensure Pambula Hospital continued to serve the community.

In 2010 the Federal Labor Government were in favour of closing Pambula Hospital, as the plans for a new South East Regional Hospital were progressed. I acknowledge and thank former Health Minister Jillian Skinner. In 2011 Minister Skinner and I made a commitment to the community that while I was the local member Pambula Hospital would not close. I am proud to say that with the support of the current health Minister, Brad Hazzard, it continues to serve the community. The services at Pambula were designed to complement the South East Regional Hospital and it proudly does so.

The hospital is now a nurse-practitioner-led health facility with telemedicine capability. Importantly, it is now a facility where staff can enjoy turning up to work. It is bright, fresh and welcoming for patients and a good place to rehabilitate and recover. I thank Minister Brad Hazzard for his support over recent years and the \$2.6 million in funds that were made available to complete those works. I acknowledge the work of local volunteers and community advocates over the years: Shirley Rixon, Sharon Tapscott, Frankie J. Holden, the Pambula Hospital Auxiliary, all members of the Save Our Hospital Inc [SOHI] group, members of the Pambula Hospital Community Consultative Committee and chair Les Stahl, and the past and present chair and board of the Southern NSW Local Health District.

Our health district has never been in a better managed or better respected position than under the leadership of Mr Andrew Newton, the chief executive of our health district for the past two years. Andrew arrived into the Southern NSW Local Health District during a trying time for the region and he has been instrumental in making positive change at every level. His involvement within the community and having his finger on the pulse at every step has been a welcome relief to staff, to the community and to those he led. I offer my thanks to him for the change he has delivered, the positivity injected into the health district, his unwavering support of my office during times of need and for assisting those in our community who have needed help and guidance.

Andrew assisted with mental health support during the Tathra fires. He has assisted with the ongoing engagement and cultural change required at the new South East Regional Hospital and he has worked with smaller facilities such as Pambula Hospital. I recognise Russell Fitzpatrick, a board member from this part of the region, who has had a close eye on the ball when it comes to Pambula Hospital. I acknowledge the work led by Councillor Sharon Tapscott. There is no doubt this great facility will continue to serve the community for many years to come. I apologise for not being able to attend the opening of the facility. I am sure it was a special occasion for a wonderful and special community.

### HOMELESSNESS

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (18:12):** Today I will shine a light on the hidden truths about homelessness in 2019. More than 116,427 people across Australia were counted on the night of the 2016 census

as being homeless—an increase of nearly 14 per cent from 2011. Of those 116,427 people, 42 per cent were female, a shocking 20 per cent were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and a staggering 42 per cent were under 24 years of age. The data clearly shows that the extent of homelessness in this State is worsening. As at 2016, 37,715 people were homeless in New South Wales, which is a staggering increase of 37 per cent from 2011. I repeat, that is an increase of 37 per cent in New South Wales over that five-year period compared with a 14 per cent increase across Australia.

New South Wales is recorded as having the largest increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in Australia. The latest census data shows that from 2011 to 2016 the number of people living in "severely crowded dwellings" in Australia increased from 41,370 to 51,088. In that period New South Wales also recorded the largest increase in the number of people living in "other marginal housing", and the rate per 10,000 persons of people in "other marginal housing" is also increasing. It is not good enough; it is actually getting worse. Street count figures released by Homelessness NSW show that in February 2019 there were 373 people sleeping rough in inner city Sydney. That is an increase of 13 per cent from the February 2018 street count—a staggering 13 per cent increase in just one year.

In New South Wales 60,000 families are on the social housing waiting list and, according to Anglicare, fewer than 1 per cent of private rentals are affordable for people on low incomes in greater Sydney. My electorate of Coogee, which is an apparently affluent area, recorded an above State average increase of homelessness of 16 per cent. Coogee has in fact the sixteenth highest level of homelessness in the State. This is the tip of an iceberg. So many more people are in crises, facing huge difficulties paying their rent, moving from their apartment to single rooms and then to share. Growing numbers are unable to complain to the landlord when the taps stop working or the stove breaks down because they fear that, if they do, they will be evicted.

Domestic and family violence is a leading cause of homelessness among women and children, with one-third of people accessing social housing reporting such violence. Although Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women represent only 3.3 per cent of the national population, one-quarter of people in Australia report accessing social housing services due to domestic and family violence. It is also important to recognise the growing trend for people, but particularly women, to become homeless in later life for the first time. Between 2013-14 and 2016-17, New South Wales saw an 88 per cent growth in the number of women over the age of 55 years accessing homelessness services.

Homelessness can be the result of a number of factors, including physical and/or mental health issues, unemployment or job loss, drug and alcohol abuse and addiction, family and relationship breakdown, domestic violence and lack of affordable housing. The Government must provide services to support people in all of these areas and the data would indicate that we are not doing enough. Some amazing services are provided in my area to support the homeless and victims of domestic and family violence. Organisations such as Jewish House provides crises accommodation for those seeking refuge. I must also commend the work of Bayside Women's Refuge, which does an amazing job providing a safe and secure space for domestic and family violence survivors in south-east Sydney. The shelter provides a supportive environment for all women of any age, sexuality, cultural and linguistic diversity, disability or mental illness. It is a practical service, providing accommodation, food and safe refuge, as well as emotional support to help women rebuild their lives.

I also commend Lou's Place which, as far as I am aware, is the only daytime refuge for women in the area. It is a unique, community-based refuge for women in crisis, homeless women, women feeling isolated or needing support. Lou's Place opened in Kings Cross in April 1999 to provide support for women in need and to help them rebuild their lives. These and many other charities are doing their best in the Coogee electorate and throughout New South Wales to assist homeless people and victims of domestic violence, but they cannot do it alone and nor should we expect them to. The Government has a role to play here and the people of New South Wales expect us to do better than we are doing. Enough is enough. We must stop building roads and bridges to nowhere. Let us build the infrastructure needed to address our social challenges. It is apparent in two areas that this Government is failing the people of New South Wales and, in particular, the most in need of government and community support.

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (18:17):** I thank the member for Coogee for her comments on homelessness, which falls within my portfolio. For the benefit of the member, I advise her and members of the House that in 2017-18 around 72,000 people presented to our specialist homelessness services. The Government is investing a record \$1 billion in providing supports for people who are homeless. I say to all members of the House that homelessness should not be politicised. I have visited Lou's Place, which the member referenced. I have met with Rabbi Mendel Kastel and I commend him for the recent launch of the *Mend* app.

Much work is going on to halve street-sleeping. In fact, the Premier signed up our State with the act to end Street Sleeping. It is designed to halve street-sleeping by 2025, not just in our cities but in our entire State.

That speaks volumes about this Premier's commitment as opposed to the shadow Minister who tried to attend the street count methodology. She was not there volunteering with people doing the street count, like I was. My staff and I were there until 3 o'clock in the morning. This speaks volumes about the commitment of the Labor Party when it comes to these issues. Those opposite like to talk about it, but rarely do they help.

### HOPE MISSION CENTRE

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (18:18):** I recognise and congratulate Hope Mission Centre on its excellent contribution to our community. Hope Mission Centre is based in North Parramatta, where it has been serving the community for the past 20 years. It was a delight to attend its twentieth anniversary celebration. From humble beginnings in a band hall on Jubilee Lane with just 11 people, today Hope Mission Centre can be found on Church Street, North Parramatta, housing a vibrant, thriving community of over 100 people from all walks of life. Even as the organisation has expanded over the years, each of its programs and services has been developed with the same vision in mind—to enrich lives with purpose and hope and to equip and empower people to lead purposeful lives.

Hope Mission Centre was founded in 1999 by Reverend Samuel Gunawan and Reverend Dr Aileen Gunawan, who continue to lead the organisation with clear direction and bold vision. I praise Reverend Samuel Gunawan and Reverend Dr Aileen Gunawan for their ongoing commitment to Hope Mission and for their tireless community leadership. Since its establishment, Hope Mission Centre continues to grow and expand. I acknowledge Dr David Gunawan, Senior Pastor, and Pastor Jonathan Gunawan, Pastor and Evangelist, for their dynamic leadership, passion and innovation. Hope Mission Centre is particularly passionate about empowering young people and runs a weekly service on Friday nights that is devoted to the youth. Full of games and activities, Youthopea provides a fun and friendly environment for young people to build good friendships, develop their skills and talents and find direction in their lives.

These weekly services provide the foundation for many to grow and find encouragement in a strong, supportive community. On top of that, Hope Mission Centre is continually seeking ways to reach out to the community, locally and across Sydney. The International Food Fair attracts hundreds of people every year to share in a delicious meal. Many people come back year after year for their favourite dishes, and it is a wonderful opportunity to meet those in the local community. Hope Mission Centre has also participated in the annual Christmas in Parramatta event, performing upbeat medleys of Christmas songs and sharing the joy of the holiday season with the people of Parramatta. Hope Mission Centre also hosts monthly picnics at parks in Penrith and Blacktown in efforts to reach those communities. Free workshops covering practical topics, like creating a budget, aim to enrich the lives of the people who attend.

Beyond Australia's shores, Hope Mission Centre has also established extension services in Singapore, Malaysia and China, where these communities bring hope and transform lives in their respective countries. With the leadership of the pastoral team, these programs are run entirely by dedicated volunteers, who give of their time, resources, and talents to serve the community and I thank them for their service. Volunteer activities range from vacuuming the floors and brewing hot coffee to playing music in the band or translating weekly services into Mandarin Chinese. The incredible growth of Hope Mission Centre over the past 20 years is testament to the dedication of its members and the whole congregation, and they all should be proud of what they have accomplished from all their hard work. Again, I congratulate Hope Mission Centre on its twentieth anniversary and thank all in the pastoral team and volunteers for their effort and hard work and their exceptional contribution to the community. I wish them all the best for another 20 years of success.

### MENA BISCOTTI

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (18:22):** Tonight I bring to the attention of the House a fantastic young footballer from my hometown and a club I was associated with for a long time, the Monaro Panthers. Mena Biscotti started her football journey in 2010 at five years old. She was inspired by her brother, Mateo, who had already been playing at the Panthers, which put her on course and sparked her love and passion for football. Over the course of the following five years, Mena enjoyed playing MiniRoos football together with her sister and teammates every winter Saturday morning.

Playing football with MiniRoos was a fun time for Mena, however, she was never content just having a kick around. Scoring goals, running faster than her opponents and, in fact, faster than her teammates to do their job was common practice over the years. As Mena moved out of the MiniRoos and into her division I girls team for the Panthers in the Capital Football Competition, nothing much changed. She still wanted to score all the goals and thought she needed to play all the positions on the field. However, one thing did change—her love for the game. Over the next two seasons her love for the game started to turn into a passion. In 2017 Capital Football

introduced the Junior Women's National Premier League competition where, at the age of 12, Mena was offered a position in the Monaro Panthers women's premier program for the under-13s squad.

It was a tough year for Mena. She struggled, as most young teenagers experience, with growing pains in her legs. Being smaller in stature, the boys excluded her and her peers questioned her friendship. Mena was torn between maintaining friendships she thought were important to her or leaving the game she so desperately loved and strived to be the best at. With advice from her coach and dad that they would support whatever decision she made, it became clear to Mena that her true friends would always support and encourage her to be the best.

In 2018 Mena spent her second year in the under-13s Women's Premier league squad for the Panthers where she played a pivotal part in the squad reaching the finals. This translated into hundreds of hours of isolation training with early morning runs, two hours of ball mastery, speed, agility and strengthening exercises. Mena spent her family Christmas holidays training on the beach most mornings to make her faster and stronger. In 2019 Mena was appointed captain of the under-15s Women's Premier League squad at the Panthers and fill-in reserve grade player, where not only her technical ability was rewarded but her leadership qualities and respect for her teammates and coaches were acknowledged.

In May 2019 Mena and three others players were put forward by the Panthers as nominees to trial for the under-14s Australian Capital Territory squad. From the four players nominated by the Panthers, Mena and Isabella Hindmarsh from Braidwood were selected in the Australian Capital Territory squad. In recognition of this achievement, Mena and Isabella made their first grade debut for the Panthers when they travelled to Wagga Wagga, New South Wales. Mena could hardly contain her excitement. At the seventy-eighth minute, at the age of 14 years and four months, Mena exploded onto the field to make her debut.

With 12 minutes to prove that the head coach made the right decision to play her once again, she was involved in everything. However, once settled, she displayed incredible composure and tenacity proving to be a menace to her opponents. In the eighty-sixth minute, Mena executed a tremendous overhead bicycle kick on an attempt at goal. Mena was so excited at the attempt, she did not care that the ball was never going to hit the mark. There was just excitement. The following weekend, Mena had ticked another box to play striker in first grade and in the thirty-ninth minute, after countless attacks on goal, scored her first-grade goal.

Mena is the only female footballer at the Monaro Panthers to have scored in the under-15s reserve grade and now first grade. In mid-July 2019 the Capital Football Australian Capital Territory under-14s squad travelled to Coffs Harbor to compete in the National Youth Championships. Mena opened her account with one goal and one assist within the first forty-eight hours. Mena was named captain for the match against Northern New South Wales. By the fourth day of competition, Mena scored a hat-trick against the Northern Territory, winning the game 4:0. She was appointed overall vice-captain for the under-14s Australian Capital Territory squad, which was undefeated in their group.

Mena has returned to the Panthers and her under-15s squad to see out the remainder of the Women's Premier League season and has earned a starting position as the Panthers striker for the remainder of the season. Mena's idol, like most aspiring female footballers, is Samantha Kerr. She plays her position, mimics her movements, her style and explosiveness. When Mena is asked if she wants to play with the Matildas and Sam Kerr, she will tell you she definitely wants to play for her country, but she wants Sam Kerr's position. Mena is now working harder than ever to earn a spot in the junior Matildas for 2020 and hopefully fulfil the dream of her other idol and former Monaro Panther Karly Roestbakken of pulling on the green and gold. She said, "To play for my country in 2023 Women's World Cup in Australia is my dream."

#### **GIRRAWEE PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (18:27):** On 10 August 2019 I had the pleasure to attend the centenary celebrations of Girraween Public School. Its rich history started in 1918 when land was acquired for a new school near Toongabbie station. The founding principal, Mr Watson, was appointed and the school opened on 1 April 1919 with 11 students. At that time the school building was not complete. Instead, Girraween Public School had to use the nearby School of Arts building until its first building was complete and occupied on 2 June 1919. By the end of 1919 Girraween Public School had already grown to 74 students—more than the 42 students for which the original building had been designed. It appears that Girraween Public School was dealing with overcrowding even a century ago.

On 23rd August 1921 more land on Bando Road was purchased, with further lots acquired in the following years to allow for the school's expansion. The original school building was moved and on 23 October 1922 the construction of a second room was completed. This increased the capacity to 90 students. A third room was erected on 28 April 1925 as the school continued to grow. Girraween Public School has been strengthened by the commitment and dedication of the many staff and parents who have nurtured and encouraged thousands of

students over the past 100 years. There have been changes in the cultural background of the Girraween school community as the population of the local area has grown.

During the 1950s and 1960s there were many small farms worked by a community of largely European migrants living on large blocks of land. In the 1970s and 1980s affordable housing attracted families commuting to Parramatta and Sydney for work. Since the 1990s families migrating from India and Sri Lanka have added to the diversity of the Girraween school community and the local area. Enrolment growth in recent years has had a significant impact on Girraween Public School. Enrolment over past years has risen from 418 students in 2003, to 580 students in 2010 and this year it is 1,270 students.

High academic achievement and popularity in the community continues to attract student enrolments. Girraween Public School has a support unit to cater for students with disabilities, ensuring that they receive a good education in our community. There is an established ethos of high standards of behaviour and cooperation among all students, strongly supported by parents and school staff. The school motto "Truth, Beauty and Goodness" underlines the school focus on a well-rounded education built on high standards of academic, sporting, social and cultural programs.

Girraween Public School maintains strong links with the local community. The wider community uses the school facilities during the week and on weekends, strengthening the schools connections with families and community groups. Tamil School, Gujarati school and other community groups have access to the school every week of the year. The Girraween Public School P&C works hard to link parents with school governance and to support the school. Its current executive—Jane Kelly, Viral Mehta and Ramesh Velu—maintain strong links between the school and parents. Girraween Public School has had many people dedicating their working life in classrooms, staffrooms, the office and the grounds. Many students have gone on to significant achievements and careers based on the foundation provided at Girraween Public School.

Every student, teacher and staff member has contributed to the history and great success of Girraween Public School. It was outstanding to meet so many of them during the centennial celebrations and to hear how Girraween Public School had helped them to succeed and reach their potential. On 10 August 2019 the school locked a time capsule commemorating its centenary. It will be opened in ceremonies to mark the 150-year school anniversary in 2069 and the bicentennial anniversary in 2119. This is an important link between the current school and its future as it continues to adopt to cater for changes in our community. This year a much-needed upgrade to Girraween Public School has been prioritised for planning. The proposed upgrade will include additional permanent teaching spaces and expanded core facilities such as a hall and new library. A business case is currently being worked on to be submitted to New South Wales Treasury for funding approval for the delivery of the upgrade.

The next 100 years of public education provided at Girraween Public School will be built on the extraordinary success and achievements in the first hundred years 1919-2019. The success of Girraween Public School is from the students and the community that supports each and every one of those who walk through the school gates from kindergarten to year 6. I wish the school community all the best in the future as it continues to grow with our community. I congratulate Principal Glenn Walker, all the teachers, parents and members of the P&C on the 100 years of Girraween Public School.

#### **SUTHERLAND SHIRE LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS**

**Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (18:32):** Tonight I acknowledge some of the 2019 winners of the Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards from the Miranda electorate. The Sutherland Shire is home to so many great businesses that provide the services we need at our doorstep. We do not have to travel far to find the best services. From beauty to fashion, health to fitness, community services to trades, food to childcare and everything in between, we have it in the Sutherland Shire. Peter Honey of Miranda was named Business Person of the Year. Peter is the Director of Priority Plus Plumbing, a business based in the Miranda electorate that has been servicing the area for over 20 years. Priority Plus Plumbing provides permanent plumbing solutions to domestic, commercial and industrial clients located in the Sutherland Shire and surrounding Sydney suburbs.

Priority Plus Plumbing continues to evolve by providing an afterhours service, regularly training all plumbers on new techniques and investing in new machinery and state-of-the-art technology that enables them to do their jobs efficiently and effectively. Peter and his team have continued to grow Priority Plus Plumbing from strength to strength, which is evident in the business having won local business awards in the Service and Trade category several times in recent years. I congratulate Peter and the team at Priority Plus Plumbing on this outstanding achievement. Willis & Bowring Solicitors was awarded the Professional Services local business award. The team at Willis & Bowring pride themselves on providing exceptional customer service and the best possible legal services to their clients since 1960. I congratulate them on their outstanding achievement, especially partners Pamela Wood, Lou Polito and Don Wright.

Nina's Chocolates of GyMEA won the Delicatessen/Gourmet Food local business award. As the name suggests, Nina's Chocolates is a boutique chocolate shop that has created handmade fine chocolate by hand in the Sutherland Shire since the early 1990s. George Magganas founded Nina's Chocolates and still trains new chocolatiers in GyMEA. I congratulate George and the wonderful team at Nina's Chocolates on their fantastic achievement. Flowers on Port Hacking, a great local business in Sylvania, won the Florist local business award. Owner Lisa Swaine has been involved in the floristry industry for over 30 years. She has a proven record of amazing floristry work and customer service. She is up at 4.00 a.m. three days a week to provide the freshest flowers for our community. I congratulate Lisa and the staff at Flowers on Port Hacking on winning this award.

Leap Therapy Group has leapt ahead of all other businesses to win the Health Improvement Services local business award. Leap Therapy Group is a multidisciplinary practice in Kirrawee whose staff are passionate about providing the best quality care and service to their clients. It offers speech pathology and occupational therapy to individuals, from toddlers through to adolescents, to ensure they can learn new developmental skills quickly. I congratulate the team at Leap Therapy Group on its outstanding achievement. The Autism Community Network in Illawong is a great local not-for-profit that won Best Business in the Community Services category. The Autism Community Network is a not-for-profit focused around building a stronger community of support for people with autism. It now has more than 1,500 families across Sydney and Wollongong that come together to create a society where people with autism and their families can lead rich, full and rewarding lives. I congratulate the board, staff and volunteers at the Autism Community Network on their dedication to our local area.

I highlight other businesses that won awards at the Local Business Awards night: Diggers Miranda RSL Club won the Most Inclusive Employer award, Preloved Clothing Co. in Miranda won the New Business award, Greater Glass in Kirrawee won the Best Business in the Service & Trade category, Tribe Social Fitness won the Best Fitness Services award, Putt Planet in Miranda won the Access & Inclusion award, Stapleton's Quality Meats in Kareela won the Outstanding Poultry/Meat/Fish award, Inspiration Dance Academy won the Best Business in the Performing Arts category and DJ Jazzy in Sylvania won the Best Sole Trader award. Anyone who is involved in small business understands the tireless work and dedication involved in producing and providing the best products and services. I congratulate every finalist and thank them for their contribution to our community by running their business in our shire, employing our locals and helping to make it what we all know is the best place to live, work and raise a family.

### MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (18:37):** I raise the state of manufacturing in the Hunter region and New South Wales. The Premier recently declared her ambition to turn New South Wales into the manufacturing capital of Australia—an admirable ambition that is divorced from the reality of her record as the Premier, former Treasurer and former transport Minister. Recently I met with delegates from the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union in the Hunter and heard about the state of manufacturing in New South Wales and the impact of the Berejiklian Government on job stability for manufacturing workers. Those workers are saying it is not all sunshine and roses. As I have clearly stated before, the Premier has done nothing but display rank hypocrisy on the issue. Under her leadership, thousands of New South Wales manufacturing jobs have gone offshore. Not only has that devastated the manufacturing industry in this State but also many Hunter region workers have lost their livelihoods. One message I have heard constantly from manufacturing workers, including workers in my electorate of Swansea, is that they do not trust the Premier to deliver on manufacturing jobs.

The workers of Newcastle and the Hunter are all too familiar with the Premiers' lack of support for manufacturing jobs in the region. In fact, when it came time to commission the construction of the New Intercity Fleet and light rail, did the Premier look to take advantage of the skills and knowledge of our local manufacturing industry? No, she did not. The Premier approached South Korea to build the New Intercity Fleet and Spain for the light rail. She handed a \$2.43 billion contract for the New Intercity Fleet to overseas consortium RailConnect NSW. The project has been a complete and total disaster; the fleet will not arrive until 2020. That would not have occurred if the fleet had been built here—that is for sure. It is just one of countless examples of Premier Berejiklian's abysmal record in failing to support our local manufacturing industry.

For years Labor has urged Premier Berejiklian to "build them here" in New South Wales. Time and again the Premier has ignored that call. I will believe it when I see it because so far the Premier has been all talk and no action on manufacturing. It is rank hypocrisy. The people of Swansea and the Hunter know that only too well. Even the Premier described herself as "the type of Premier who pounces on the opportunities that are there". The Premier's record demonstrates that the only opportunities she is pouncing on are supporting international companies and offshoring local jobs.

It is not just manufacturing workers experiencing dismay at the Premier's newfound passion for the New South Wales manufacturing industry. Even the Chief Executive Officer of Manufacturing Australia, Ben Eade, is questioning how serious the Government is about manufacturing. Manufacturing Australia is

concerned about tackling one of the industry's greatest challenges—rising energy costs. Energy costs have placed significant strain on many manufacturing businesses; for example, the cost of gas for industry in our State has risen 133 per cent under this Government's watch.

The Premier must detail her plan urgently to restore confidence in the manufacturing sector in the Hunter and the State if she is serious about making New South Wales the manufacturing State. The Premier may have discovered a newfound passion for the manufacturing industry, but the manufacturing workers and the people of New South Wales have not forgotten the Government's apathy. The hypocrisy of it all speaks for itself and the message I am hearing on the ground is that the Premier cannot be trusted when it comes to manufacturing. The Premier must be true to her word and bring Government manufacturing contracts back to New South Wales.

### RECYCLING

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (18:41):** The availability and convenience of products in modern life is often taken for granted. A side effect of availability is packaging that results in large amounts of litter and presents an enormous challenge in protecting our environment for future generations. The State Government has taken strides to reduce litter and increase our recycling capabilities through some forward-facing initiatives. In Ryde we have embraced the Return and Earn scheme wholeheartedly. Recently the program reached over two billion bottles being recycled—a testament to its success. However, there is far more work to be done. A case in point is Charopy, an extension of the Return and Earn scheme to schools through safe, school-based drop-offs and easy-to-use, integrated software for children. The system, which was developed entirely in Sydney by Martin Collings, aims to build positive, sustainable habits early and has been shown to increase kids' tendency to recycle.

The system is very similar to Return and Earn. However, the addition of durable, easy-to-use wristbands removes any complications that may bar kids from contributing. The cashless rewards program connects kids' wristbands to a system that generates credit for returned bottles that is redeemable at the school canteen or any other method the school deems fit, depending on what model is adopted. Charopy also aims to gamify recycling for children. Leaderboards for classes add a competitive aspect to the program. Charopy allows kids to generate money while being an interactive method for teaching our children the value and necessity of managing our environment.

I had the pleasure of visiting Eastwood Public School in my electorate of Ryde. As the first school to take on Charopy, it has had a great deal of success. I was privileged to meet Nathan Neoh, Raissa Espiritu, Joshua Ma, Rachel Fong, Ella Chen, Shreeya Parmar, Thomas Cheung, Leo Kee Mew, Arianna Mercado, Robin Lee, Aiden Oh and Amanda Lo. Those students are the top recyclers in their classes and are set to change our future. I thank P&C President Sally Fong and her supporting members for their forward thinking and engagement in school life. Principal Helen Davis also deserves commendation for the program's rollout, and for consistently showing diligence and passion in providing her students and community with quality service and care.

Eastwood Public School piloted the system in grades 3 to 6. It managed to double the number of kids engaged in the deposit scheme and increase the frequency of recycling among children, ultimately building healthy, more sustainable habits in our kids. The system is expanding to younger grades and continues to operate successfully, with Principal Davis even taking the time to award the school's most prolific recyclers. The above successes are extremely promising. Increasing the engagement of children in the Return and Earn scheme is a huge positive. Furthermore, increases in frequency mean times per week the system was used also increased, indicating kids are building sustainable habits of a few bottles a day rather than bulk returns. This great program has a lot of potential in education and in helping the local environment, contributing to the goals we set as a Government for a greener, healthier State and community.

### BELMORE EAGLES FOOTBALL CLUB

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (18:44):** Happy ninety-fifth anniversary to Belmore Eagles Football Club. On Saturday 17 August it was a great honour to be in attendance at the ninety-fifth anniversary dinner for Belmore Eagles Football Club at Canterbury League Club. I thank everyone involved in making the evening a wonderful success, in particular president Susie Boughton, former club members and present members, life members and the Canterbury District Soccer Football Association. I thank Mr Ian Holmes for his wonderful work. He is a great advocate for football in our local community. I thank City of Canterbury Bankstown and Councillors Nadia Saleh and Campsie RSL Director Gordon Brian, who was born and bred in the local community. Gordon gave a good speech covering the history of the club with a lot of entertaining anecdotes and a walk through memory lane. I thank him for that fantastic presentation.

Hundreds of people were in attendance—the Belmore Eagles Football Club has over 350 members. It was established in 1924 by Mr Lou Arrighi, which makes Belmore one of the original soccer football clubs within the Canterbury District Soccer Football Association. A special mention goes to the players who represented Australia: Colin Curran, Dennis Yaager, Jim Fraser, Ron Corry, Danielle Brogan and Peter Katholos. I am very proud that they came from the Belmore Eagles and the local area. I also acknowledge coach Col Rae, who was a well-respected coach not only for Belmore but also for the district.

Belmore Soccer Club SFC, as it was known then, was established in 1924 by Mr Lou Arrighi, as I mentioned. Its first home field was at McMahons Reserve, which is now housing flats. Its colours were black and white, which remain the same today. The club then moved to the now Belmore Sports Ground. Belmore Black and Whites, as they were known, moved to Rudd Park around the late 1930s, which has been the club's home ground ever since. The early competitions were all-age graded teams, which gave younger players the opportunity to play until age groups were introduced in 1938. Over the years Belmore Eagles has been one of the major football clubs in the Canterbury area. The club had its share of club championships and premierships in all age groups during the 1950s through to the 1970s.

Belmore Eagles Football Club was also the first district club to initiate an internal juvenile soccer competition, a cricket club, a ladies soccer team and a girls netball team. In 1962 Belmore was the first club in the Canterbury District Association to successfully apply to the NSW Federation of Soccer Clubs for entry into the prestigious Sydney amateur inter-suburban league. Belmore was first grade champion in 1964 and in the following years until 1971. The record is that the club was first grade champion three times, finalist three times, second grade champion three times and finalist twice. Belmore Eagles Football Club is a proud club and has been doing a lot of work in our local community to engage with young people.

During my speech on Saturday night I said that Belmore Eagles and many clubs in the local community and across New South Wales have a big engagement program to get young people to play football. There are programs for people with disabilities as well. I am a big advocate of getting our kids off devices and onto playing fields. I give a huge thank you to all the outstanding volunteers. We had a great night. It was quite rowdy by the time I left. We were chanting with a number of over-35s who had just won. I thank everybody in our local community for what they do for football. I also put on record my thanks to sport Minister John Sidoti. A couple of club members and the City of Canterbury Bankstown mayor said that Minister Sidoti listened to their advocacy about investing in our local fields. We are looking forward to the money. Thank you, Belmore Eagles.

### NURSE RETRAINING

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:49):** Few people work as hard and with as much heart as our nurses. As at March 2019 there were more than 100,900 nurses across New South Wales. I am proud of the State Government's record commitment on nurse recruitment. Under the Coalition Government my electorate of Cootamundra will get an estimated 468 additional nurses and midwives across our two local health districts, Murrumbidgee and Western. Our communities deserve the best care possible and we need those extra nurses to provide that care. It would be good to see them coming.

However, recently I have been made aware of a problem of nurses re-entering the workplace following maternity and/or other forms of extended leave. For 15 years Karen Tuckwell from Coolamon in the Cootamundra electorate was a nurse, having studied nine years at university. She holds a diploma of applied science nursing, a bachelor's degree of health science in nursing, a postgraduate diploma in advanced clinical nursing and a master's degree in education. Her registration lapsed in 2012 while she was out of the workforce for five years raising children, a situation that I am told is common. Ms Tuckwell now wants to come back to work. Nursing is her chosen career and Coolamon her home, but she is no longer qualified to nurse or teach.

An experienced, talented and passionate nurse from regional New South Wales, she is finding the process prohibitive. I am told that the options available to Ms Tuckwell to begin practising again as a nurse are a \$14,000 course plus accommodation over four months with the College of Nursing based in Sydney, a six-month course at the University of Queensland or South Australia, or retaking her bachelor degree from scratch. For regional women in New South Wales, there seems to be a lack of options that do not require an extended period away from family or significant financial burden. I stress and wager that all nurses in Ms Tuckwell's position completely understand the importance of retraining to ensure that knowledge and practice are up to date.

Health practice, technology and medicines are constantly evolving and there is no suggestion that retraining is not absolutely necessary. The registration of nurses and midwives is governed by the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law and the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia [NMBA] is responsible for overseeing it. Maintaining currency in nursing practice and meeting professional standards are integral to patient safety. The NMBA requires the completion of one of the following approved pathways for re-entry to

practice: Pathway one constitutes a period of supervised practice and pathway two involves the completion of an NMBA approved re-entry to nursing program offered in Parramatta, South Australia and Queensland.

NSW Health offers scholarships to support re-entry to practice that are linked to subsequent employment. When pathway one is undertaken, scholarships are available to local health districts to support individuals to undertake a period of supervised practice. If provisional registration with conditions has been awarded by the NMBA, the applicant may be employed during this period. In pathway two, up to \$10,000 may be awarded to individuals to complete an NMBA approved re-entry to nursing program. While I acknowledge the efforts, I believe we must do more to ensure that re-entering the workforce for which recruitment to the regions is notoriously difficult is not turning some of our most experienced and valuable nurses to other careers.

I am concerned that we have experienced, highly skilled and willing people in the workforce, many already living in regional New South Wales, who are unable to work due to their lapsed registrations and the conditions governing their re-entry into nursing. I believe there may be an opportunity to work with regional universities and/or TAFE to develop local solutions for this problem and ensure that we are not losing some of our best in red tape. Recently I was able to raise this issue with health Minister, Brad Hazzard, who recognises the problem and I was encouraged by his response. I thank the Minister for his time. I look forward to working with him and his ministry to explore potential improvements. The current processes disadvantage nurses from regional New South Wales and also disproportionately disadvantage women. The Government should be aware of this and work to improve it. I will continue to fight hard for the best outcomes for the people of the Cootamundra electorate.

#### **ST CLAIR UNITED SOCCER CLUB AND ST CLAIR NETBALL CLUB**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (18:54):** For many years the St Clair community in the Mulgoa electorate has been home to the St Clair United Soccer Club and the St Clair Netball Club, which both provide like-minded adults and children with the opportunity to get active, meet new people and learn many valuable skills. It is with great pleasure that I congratulate these two longstanding clubs on their fortieth anniversary—forty years of hard work and dedication to a community coming together over sport and friendship. Established in 1979, the St Clair United Soccer Club is a community-based sporting club that promotes and facilitates grassroots soccer. The St Clair Strikers houses over 60 teams, ranging from under-5s to over-35s, and is one of the larger clubs competing in the Nepean district as a member of the Nepean Football Association. At its heart, the club values unity, youth and friendship, and strives to provide all members with a safe, supportive and enjoyable environment in which to play soccer.

In the early days the St Clair Strikers started with little to no facilities, using car headlights to train at night and a tent to house its canteen on game days. Many years later it is an incredibly successful club with a peak registration of almost 1,100 children—at that time it was considered the largest soccer club in the Southern Hemisphere. The incredible growth of the club is due to the many people who have shown consistent loyalty, devoted copious amounts of time to the club and truly demonstrate what it means to have a passion for community groups such as the Strikers.

I therefore take a moment to acknowledge a few key people who have played a significant role in the club's history to date: former President Frank Molnar, who served the club for an outstanding 10 years; Joe Garzaniti, who has played every year for 40 years; and the Cullens, particularly Ross and Grant, who have played a significant role in the club since its inception and still do to this day. Many other members who have served the club for over 20 years continue to make an incredible impact on the community through their service. It brings me great joy to know that people in my electorate are, and always have been, participating in community groups and giving their time to see that continue for future generations. Happy fortieth anniversary St Clair United Soccer Club.

The St Clair Netball Club, also established in 1979, was founded by Dianne Stilgoe as an affiliated club of the Penrith District Netball Association. It came from humble beginnings, with only three people running the club—each holding numerous positions on the committee. The teams trained by the lights of the St Clair Shopping Centre carpark at night and played on grass courts at Penrith for Saturday games. In the late 1980s and early 1990s the club began to grow and was able to enter as many as 50 teams into the Penrith competitions. Around 30 of those groups still play and train today. Over the years the players, umpires and coaches of St Clair Netball Club have had significant achievements.

Dianne Stilgoe was the first representative coach for Penrith to achieve a first place finish with the 14 years State age team in 1992. Pate Cooper followed, coaching the 15 years team. Eight members of the club have been recipients of the Penrith Service Award and it has also produced many high-level umpires. Chris Stilgoe achieved the highest level—a national A badge. St Clair Netball Club is the only Penrith club to date that has produced junior players who have represented nationally. One of those players, Courtney Tairi, was a gold medallist in the 2009 World Youth Cup and represented the New South Wales Swifts. In 2012 she signed with a

New Zealand team, Southern Steel, and later graduated to play for the New Zealand national team, the Silver Ferns. The second player is Paige Hadley, who was a national champion and vice-captain of the New South Wales under-21s team, later receiving the 2013 Netball Australia under-21s Player of the Year award. She went on to play for the Australian Diamond World Cup Team in 2015 and won gold.

Amongst all the incredible achievements of current and past St Clair Netball Club players, the club's 13 life members have contributed enormously to the continued development of the club. Without them, the club's achievements would not have been possible. Those people are: Dianne Stilgoe, Chris Stilgoe, Sandra Hadley, Pam Williams, Jenny Martin, Rodney Watson, Vanessa Jackson, Sue Sekendek, Francine Todd, Judith—or Judy, as we know her—Gavin, Helen Hackenberg, Paige Hadley and Kellie Saggus. The daughters and granddaughters of previous St Clair Netball Club players are now involved in the club through playing, umpiring and coaching. From small beginnings it has had many incredible achievements, the greatest being the creation of a club that people are proud to be a part of—a community working together for a great sport. What a fantastic legacy. I wish both clubs all the best for the future and I look forward to seeing them flourish. Happy fortieth anniversary.

### UNIVERSAL MEDICINE

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (18:59):** I have five minutes to state the case for a judicial inquiry led by a judge or retired judge into the Universal Medicine cult—with witnesses given parliamentary privilege—which a New South Wales Supreme Court jury found, in the defamation case of *Benhayon v Rockett* (No 8) 2019 NSWSC 169, to be, inter alia, socially harmful. I call for an inquiry not because it is a cult, but because it has infiltrated my community, some government departments, agencies and related programs, and non-government organisations, some educational institutions, some media outlets and some business organisations. It is peddling its pernicious influence over the lives of people at their most vulnerable: children, the sick and the wounded.

The defendant in the defamation case, Esther Rockett, proved 36 serious imputations substantially true about the Universal Medicine cult and its proprietor, Serge Benhayon. Some of the proven imputations include: Serge Benyahon is dishonest; had intentionally and indecently touched a number of his clients in his treatment room; instructed students at Universal Medicine training workshops to touch the genitals of victims of sexual abuse; has an indecent interest in girls as young as 10, whom he causes to stay at his house unaccompanied; is the leader of Universal Medicine, a group that, to his knowledge, engages in misleading conduct in promoting the healing services it offers; as a leader of Universal Medicine exploits the followers of that group through his false and harmful teachings, a group that, to his knowledge, preys on cancer patients; is a charlatan who makes fraudulent medical claims; and is engaged in a healing fraud that harms people.

There is more. It is a cult, whose leader, Serge Benhayon, promotes the belief that people who committed transgressions in past lives will be reincarnated as autistic or disabled, he knows the causes of cancer, and he is the reincarnation of Leonardo Da Vinci and Pythagoras. It is a cult that has caused the separation of families, is a wealthy commercial enterprise that has a range of subsidiary and related companies operating from Lismore and beyond, and has targeted those who speak out and bullies them in a range of ways, including directly on the streets in my hometown of Lismore and with defamation threats. Those who have escaped its clutches, or had their loved ones snared in its web of commerce and bizarre beliefs, have told me of its practices and harm. It is a cult that has been the subject of national media attention on the ABC and through other outlets, including a five-page spread in the April edition of *Australian Women's Weekly*.

It is a cult that has recruited practitioners across a range of professions, including medical, allied health, human services and even the police that gets them to go forth and seek recruits in well-placed professional positions. It is a cult that has a senior employee in one of our government departments who has decision-making power about children and actively recruits other workers. A child under that person's care was, by that person's plan, supported to continue an association with the Universal Medicine cult. These are our most vulnerable and under the care of this government agency. The same people are still there, except those who have been forced out or who are unable to continue because of the situation. If there is legal advice that such staff cannot be touched, I say that the prevailing concern is the welfare of the people they are charged to care for, which is what they are legally obliged to do. They have no duty to promote their socially harmful cult in their workplace.

Professionals who are Universal Medicine socially harmful cult promoters in the workplace are not fit and proper professionals to be in charge of children, the sick, students and the vulnerable. I have also been informed that some government departments use the Universal Medicine cult associated practitioners in their Employee Assistance Program [EAP]. Its harmful impacts must be brought to light, including its bogus and harmful pseudo health and healing practices. I speak out on behalf of my community seeking Government action. We need an inquiry and we need it as soon as possible. I make the request and say, "Over to you, Attorney General and Ministers." Thank you.

## NEWTOWN LIBRARIES

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (19:04):** This week is Book Week and throughout the electorate of Newtown, and indeed across the whole country, people—particularly our young people—are celebrating their love of books and reading. Book Week is a good time to reflect on the huge role that libraries play in our community. This is especially so in the context of Book Week, which is every working parents' favourite time of year when confronted with the need to produce an astronaut costume or something similar on 24 hours' notice. The other option is to go to the library and find a book that matches the motley array of costumes one happens to have in the dress-up box.

We are very lucky to have a number of public libraries run by our local councils in the electorate of Newtown: the light-filled Surry Hills Library on Crown Street, which includes a toy library as well as some wonderful nooks for private study; the Newtown Library, our local library that hosts activities and events in addition to being a great place for people to access computers; and Stanmore Library that appears to grow out of the little pocket park near the station and is a hidden gem for a quiet read or a session of rhyme time. While Waterloo Library is just outside the electorate boundary, it is a much-loved place used by locals.

On the other edge of the electorate in Marrickville it is very exciting that we are about to see an addition to our wonderful local libraries with the opening of the new Marrickville Library next week. The history of this new library is many storied and intricately linked with what was our local community's former Marrickville Council before the amalgamation. The locals, The Greens and people who care about community spaces have been there from the beginning and I think it is important to reflect and acknowledge those who have been part of getting us to where we are today.

After the New South Wales local government elections in 1991 when the first two Greens were elected to local government in New South Wales, including Bruce Welch to Marrickville Council, the New South Wales Coalition Government soon after announced the closure of Marrickville Hospital. The main building of the Marrickville Hospital site is now incorporated in the new library and was completed in 1913. The closure of Marrickville Hospital caused much community anger and Bruce Welch joined with other councillors to campaign for its retention. Despite a packed community meeting at Marrickville Town Hall and a rowdy protest in front of State Parliament, the State Government had its way and 90-odd years of service to the community of Marrickville came to an end with the closure of the hospital.

Marrickville Council then negotiated the purchase of the hospital site for a nominal sum for community use. I note in passing how important it is to recycle public buildings and public space for community use and not to sell them. It is important also to purchase privately owned buildings that are of significance and return them for community use. For too many years the site remained barely used. In the mid-2000s or the mid-naughties The Greens on council successfully opposed the clearing of the site of all buildings for an 11-storey-plus tower fronting Marrickville and Livingstone roads. By the end of that decade Greens councillors Fiona Byrne, Peter Olive, Cathy Peters, Marika Kontellis and Max Phillips, with Independent Dimitri Thanos, were successful in reserving the corner of the site facing the corner of Marrickville and Livingstone roads as a park. In doing so council respected the heritage values of the St Brigid Catholic Church on the opposite corner, the largest Spanish mission-style church in the Southern Hemisphere, by not overcrowding the streetscape.

Marrickville Council fully committed to replacing its two swimming pools at Enmore Park and Petersham Park and faced the difficult question of finance for the new library. However, before the forced amalgamation the last Marrickville Council made the big decision to commit, with the lead taken by Greens Councillor and dear friend Sylvie Ellsmore. I acknowledge also the role that Labor's Jo Haylen, now the member for Summer Hill, played in taking on some of the more conservative parts of her own party and the pro-developer interests on the council to take this forward. A majority agreed to retain the original hospital building for incorporation into the new library, ensuring the park on the corner of Marrickville and Livingstone roads, and working with private developers to build integrated housing on the downhill part of the site.

What has been created is a precinct that refocuses the main strip on Marrickville Road and uses the old and new buildings to create a library that will be a place of both learning and inspiration for young and old for generations to come. The opening of the library is a big achievement and in Book Week it seemed fitting to pay tribute to those who took action over several generations to deliver this important community site. It stands as the biggest public investment project that Marrickville Council ever made in its history. Let us hope that we can celebrate many more openings of public buildings, community spaces and green spaces throughout our local community in the inner west in the years to come.

### BONDI SURF BATHERS LIFE SAVING CLUB

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (19:09):** Bondi Beach is the best beach in the world. It attracts over two million visitors a year. It is a beautiful haven and a natural wonder for tourists and of course the thousands of locals who call it home. I am very proud to have Bondi Beach in my electorate, along with so many amazing swimming spots on the eastern peninsula and the harbour. We share a great local culture with a focus on water, sun and swim safety. One fantastic local organisation I am very proud of based at Bondi Beach is the Bondi Surf Bathers Life Saving Club in the Bondi Pavilion. Not only is the club an Australian icon, it is the oldest surf lifesaving club in the world, having been established in 1907 by a group of locals, with the first duty roster drawn up in August 1908.

The club has a rich history and is famously known for the legendary work of its lifesavers on Black Sunday in 1938 when over 500 Bondi beachgoers were swept out to sea by three very large successive waves. They were all saved within 30 minutes by the dozens of wonderful club lifesavers at that time. That amazing work was commemorated last year at Bondi Beach, coinciding with the eightieth anniversary of the event. I joined with members of the club and the North Bondi Surf Life Saving Club and the Nippers on the beach where the historic event was re-enacted. Our modern lifesavers at Bondi Beach are the descendants of those who lost their lives on that day 81 years ago, so that event was also a tribute to them.

I have a very strong and long relationship with the club and on 22 June this year I attended its annual club presentation night. It is an evening of celebration where awards are presented and club champions are acknowledged. I congratulate in this House this year's winners: President's Trophy winner was Alex Nothling, Club Captain's Award winner was Felicity MacArthur, Lifesaver of the Year was James Stewart, Open Patrol Person of the Year was Vera Argyle, Junior Patrol Person of the Year was Avani Jagavkar, Cadet Patrol Person of the Year was Charlie Watts and the Most Outstanding Athletes were Mal Allen and Dori Miller. In the 2018-19 surf lifesaving season the club could proudly boast that there were no lives lost and a record number of people on patrol. There were also 134 new bronze medallion holders and 30 surf rescue certificates awarded.

It is not just the new members we are proud of. In fact the 30+ Masters Team had a successful campaign, winning the Sydney Branch, the New South Wales State and the Australian Championships for a third consecutive season. On 21 July the club held its 112th annual general meeting where long-term club member and past president Jacob Waks stepped down after five years serving as the leader and 16 years on the club's board of management. Jacob is passionate and hardworking and a strong leader. He is well known at community events and has left a lasting impact on the club. I am going to miss him a lot but I know he is going on to much bigger things. I welcome the club's new President, Brent Jackson. I will read a short passage he included in his recent letter to club members. He said:

We want a lot from our Club. We want it to be great. We want it to live up to its status as the birthplace of lifesaving. This sometimes leads to pressure to do more, be more and help more than a pure volunteer organisation can deliver. The reality is that it is our volunteer nature that represents the highest ideals of Australian life: quiet confidence, commitment, having a go, mateship, even sacrifice.

I congratulate Deputy President Josep Font Sadurni on his re-election. I congratulate also the new Director of Education Amber Jones, Director of Finance Thomas Wetula, Director of Junior Activities Narelle Moore, Director of Lifesaving Damon Somerfield, Captain of Lifesaving Michael Hallam, Director of Administration Marissa Saunders and Captain of Surf Sports Dori Miller. The club expanded its list of life members, with four new members having notched up to 38 years of service between them, including Jacob Waks, Nicholas Nezval, Adam Nezval and Will Hardman. They join the current life members. The club is a wonderful local sporting organisation. I am very proud to continue to support it and I commend my private member's statement to the House.

### HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN DEVELOPMENT

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (19:14):** Once again I wish to discuss a serious set of concerns I have about the political scene in my electorate of Blue Mountains. Last sitting week I discussed the secret sting operation conducted by Timothy Donelan against Daniel Myles and the broader implication of a push to remove good decent people like Mr Myles from the Liberal council team and replace them with council candidates who will toe the line on a property development agenda that will result in the Blue Mountains landscape being razed and plundered. Members in this place will have heard me speak about the Government's ill-considered plan to raise the Warragamba Dam wall. As I have outlined, alongside a great many other Labor MPs in this place, the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall will have no impact on flood risk but it will allow the development of floodplains in the Hawkesbury-Nepean region that currently are locked up because the flood risk is too high.

Last week I spoke about how Matthew Bennett uses a number of fake names on social media to attack Labor figures. I also have proof that he participated in the fake SMS scandal that engulfed the Laffin Liberal State

campaign. Matthew Bennett claimed to have received the fake SMS which purported to be from me and he attempted to pique the interest in it of a journalist at a right-wing radio station. Matthew Bennett is a property developer and the domestic partner of Sarah Richards, the Liberal candidate for Macquarie and a serving Liberal councillor at the Hawkesbury City Council. The website that Ms Richards established for her preselection tilt, "Sarah is Hawkesbury" at [sarahishawkesbury.com.au](http://sarahishawkesbury.com.au), was registered using the ABN of a property development company, Sage Property Holdings Pty Limited, of which Matthew Bennett is the director and secretary.

Sage Property Holdings is in partnership with another property developer, Casula Developments, which is run by Christopher John Burton. Casula Developments is co-located with Burton Constructions, which enjoys prequalification for road and civil works projects by Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] for up to \$100 million. I am aware that private members' statements should relate to a member's electorate and this is where it gets interesting. Mr Bennett has met with community representatives seeking wider support for an alternative route that he purports to have designed himself for the Bells Line of Road-Castlereagh Road corridor proposal, which is to run through my electorate. He has boasted of having Chinese property investors ready to buy land along the alternative route he is proposing.

I also understand that Mr Bennett now resides with Sarah Richards in what is known as the Redbank estate. This development was the subject of ICAC Operation Spicer. In so far as it was the approval of the Redbank estate development and a developer donation to former member for Londonderry, Bart Bassett, that caused such controversy in recent times, it is worth noting that Sarah Richards was formerly employed in the office of Mr Bassett during the parliamentary term in which he was proven to have received illegal donations. So we have the Liberal candidate for Macquarie, Sarah Richards, who is a serving Hawkesbury councillor and a former staffer to the disgraced Bart Bassett and whose campaign manager and domestic partner, Matthew Bennett, is a property developer with ties to an RMS roads contractor. They are spruiking a new road corridor into the Blue Mountains which falls within the Macquarie electorate and they are boasting of having Chinese property investors lined up to purchase land along that new route.

In 2016 Councillor Richards seconded a motion before the council that related to property deals between the council and another company, Bennett Western Sydney, which is also owned by Matthew Bennett. It is little wonder then that Sarah Richards also wants the State Government to raise the Warragamba Dam wall, an issue she has actively campaigned on. I have not yet established whether her partner, Mr Bennett, has an interest in dam building. However, I am sure all property developers in the area are keen to see flood-prone lands opened up for fresh development and would all stand to profit. There is something rotten in the State electorate of Hawkesbury and I intend to get to the bottom of it. I was prompted to pursue this because of Matthew Bennett's involvement in the Liberals' fake SMS fiasco that sought to smear me but I now realise it is a much bigger scandal. At this time I note for the benefit of the House that I will be making a referral to the ICAC about these matters and asking it to tug even more firmly on the threads I have discovered. When you take a shot at me, Matty Ben Boy, you best not miss!

### MEDICAL PRACTITIONER SHORTAGES

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (19:19):** Today I declare a crisis. A shortage of doctors working in district hospitals across the State is threatening the health and safety of rural and regional residents. There has been a reported loss of more than 50 doctors in six months across the Riverina alone, according to Dr Paul Mara, a general practitioner from the Cootamundra electorate. Not only is this a great loss of experience, knowledge and skill, there is also a flow-on effect. In my electorate the fragmented availability of on-call doctors at the Tumut District Hospital is resulting in repeated instances of paramedics transporting non-critical patients to Wagga Wagga. This can leave the community with limited ambulance support.

Patients with chronic health conditions are even questioning whether they can remain in their homes or whether they should uproot and move from their communities. If we also consider vacation use and bushfire risk during summer, increased traffic flow in the alpine months and the future impacts of the Snowy 2.0 build, it is clear that better access to emergency medical services needs to be a top priority in Tumut. I commend the Tumut Community Association which, for this reason, is calling on the local health district to employ two full-time doctors at the hospital to alleviate the current rostering pressures. But doctor shortages are not new for rural areas. They are affecting other district hospitals across the State and the situation is becoming worse. Left unaddressed, it could cost lives.

Several factors have led us to this point. Firstly, while research shows we are training enough medical students the graduates are working in larger metropolitan areas instead of smaller regional and rural centres, like Tumut. Secondly, I believe that recent changes to general practice training have reduced the number of trainees seeking rural placements. It seems there is a preference to giving placements in metropolitan regions. This is a concern. Finally, I believe the changes to immigration processes have limited the ability of overseas-trained doctors to work in some rural areas. These factors apply to the current situation at Tumut, which is not classified

as a health workforce distribution priority area [DPA]. Without this DPA status, there is difficulty in finding doctors to work in Tumut. We need a solution.

As I said earlier, I commend the Tumut Community Association's call for two full-time hospital-employed doctors. We should look at a range of models to ensure the community gets the best service possible. I acknowledge the local doctors, who are doing a great job to try to maintain the hospital's emergency on-call roster and I commend their efforts. But the first priority has to be to find the additional doctors we need. Immediate action is required across all tiers of government to address this issue now and into the future. In the short term we need the Federal Government to address barriers preventing the immediate employment of overseas doctors in areas of deficiency and we need to address placement issues in general practice training. I call on the New South Wales Government to lobby its Commonwealth counterparts and push for those changes.

I also ask the Government to explore the possible expansion of the current NSW Health hospital workforce to cover these gaps in services in district hospitals. However, in the long term we need an appropriately skilled medical workforce to support our district communities into the future. In the light of that, I acknowledge the efforts of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District and the University of New South Wales for designing a locally run program to train doctors as rural generalists. Rural generalists are general practitioner doctors with specialist skills who are trained to work in our district and smaller rural hospitals. I believe this initiative would be a New South Wales first. It would provide graduate doctors with a pathway to further training that is required to work in our district and rural hospitals. Under this proposal the local health district can train the workforce that is needed where it is needed and without reliance on the metro-centric training systems we currently have.

The program would be run by the region for the region and would build on the tremendous work that has already been done in establishing medical student training hubs in rural areas. But there are barriers to this training program. While action by the Commonwealth Government is required, it is my hope, through representation and lobbying, that our State Government may assist in pressing for urgent action. I note the support the Minister for Health and Medical Research already has provided. I thank the Minister for taking an interest in what has become a critical concern for my electorate and others. I look forward to working with the Minister further on this issue. I hope to discuss the matter in greater depth in coming weeks.

#### CANCER RELATED CHARITIES

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (19:23):** Cancer is a disease that has touched most people in some way, including in my electorate of Davidson. It often acts silently, surprising families and friends without notice and allowing little time to prepare for its often brutal consequences. This Parliament continues to support cancer research and prevention. In my role as Speaker, I recently hosted a successful morning tea in New South Wales Parliament House to raise money and highlight the important work of the Cancer Council towards its aim of a cancer-free future. The cake making and decorating competition was a highlight.

The Cancer Council is the only charity that works across every area of cancer, including research, prevention and support. It offers a range of services to people affected by cancer, including answering over 40,000 phone calls through its information and support line. The Cancer Council also funds more cancer research than any other non-government organisation in Australia. Last month the Speaker's office donated a prize for the Can Too Foundation's gala dinner. The Can Too Foundation is a cancer charity that focuses on improving community health and wellbeing as well as funding cancer research. The event raised \$100,000. Well done to all concerned.

This evening I opened the new Sydney premises of another cancer charity, Can Assist. Can Assist helps facilitate proper access to cancer treatment and care across New South Wales. The charity provides accommodation support and financial assistance to people living in rural and regional areas so that they can receive the same cancer treatment as people living in city centres, like in my electorate. Can Assist was established in 1955 to help country families affected by cancer. It now has a network of over 55 branches, which actively raise funds to help support these families living in their local communities.

The CEO and executive director of Can Assist is the very capable Emma Phillips, while its president and respected chair is Vicki Meyer. Its patron is John Colvin, who was a longstanding board member and former chair. His mother, Jean Colvin, was instrumental in raising funds for the charity's accommodation facility in Darling Point, the Jean Colvin Hospital. John's sisters have also made substantial contributions. It was an honour to help open Can Assist's new office space at 5 Hunter Street, Sydney, this evening. The boardroom has fittingly been named the Colvin Room. This new office space highlights the charity's ongoing commitment to establishing a permanent home base. I particularly applaud all the volunteers who enable Can Assist to provide this vital service for country people affected by cancer and wish them further success in strengthening and widening their support base throughout New South Wales.

The fight against cancer across New South Wales continues to be a priority for the New South Wales Government. Last year saw over 46,000 new cancer cases and 15,459 cancer deaths in New South Wales. My electorate of Davidson is within the Northern Sydney Local Health District and in 2015 there were 5,027 new cancer cases and 1,333 cancer deaths recorded. Cancer charities perform invaluable work in supporting everyone affected by cancer. I admire their ongoing commitment to the cancer battle, including for the benefit of my own local constituents as well as people across New South Wales.

### TENANCY ADVISORY SERVICES

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (19:28):** Housing is a basic human right. In Charlestown the 2016 Census tells us that about 31 per cent of households are rented. Disturbingly, according to the Community Housing Industry Association, about 40 per cent of renters in the electorate of Charlestown are experiencing housing stress. Many of these people will need assistance in sorting out problems with their tenancy but, as it stands, tenancy advisory services that help people in these situations are stretched beyond capacity. The latest Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot has revealed that only 856 properties listed in Newcastle, within the Hunter region, are appropriate for families earning the minimum wage and a miniscule 83 properties are appropriate for households on income support.

Behind this data is real people: older people, children, families, single men and single women. I have personally spent afternoons and after-office hours trying to find temporary accommodation for people who are sleeping rough in my electorate. Every single day my office provides advice and referrals for tenants. The Anglicare report also shows that a single person working full-time on the minimum wage will find that only 2 per cent of rentals are affordable. Clearly, many in Charlestown have difficulties with rental affordability. Compass Housing has also reported that rent is on the rise in my electorate. Since the year 2000 median rents in the greater Newcastle area have increased by around 150 per cent, which is roughly twice as fast as wages have risen.

It is clear that tenants in Charlestown face many challenges. One service that provides significant assistance to these people is the Hunter Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service. But with high numbers of tenants in Charlestown, this vital local service is struggling to meet demand. Over the last 15 years tenancy numbers have increased by about 50 per cent across the State but the Hunter Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service has had no increase in funding. This means that tenants are missing out on the support they need. The Hunter Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service is part of a network of 19 tenants' and advisory services across New South Wales that are asking for a funding increase in the current funding round, which concludes next month.

By funding these services significant savings can be made in other parts of government. They reduce the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal costs by keeping cases out of the tribunal or reducing time spent on each case. They also reduce social housing costs by preventing evictions, homelessness and subsequent health and out-of-home care costs. My office often refers constituents, such as Rachel, to this service. Rachel's landlord told her that her companion dog was not allowed under her tenancy agreement, despite her having supporting documentation that her dog was, in fact, a health support for her. My office was also able to refer Julie to the Hunter Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service. Julie had a disruptive neighbour and police were unable to resolve the issue. The owner of Julie's property was not willing to allow her to break the lease until, finally, she was able to get some sound assistance from the Hunter Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service.

Homes with leaks, mould and peeling paint are reported to my office daily. Again the Hunter Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service provides the advocacy needed for these tenants to get the necessary repairs carried out on their homes to provide them with what we consider to be minimum living standards. Every tenant deserves the fundamental right to housing, which ensures access to a safe, secure, habitable and affordable home with freedom from forced eviction. The Hunter Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service gives tenants the opportunity to negotiate and fight for a safe, habitable and affordable home. Demand for this service is rapidly growing in Charlestown. I call on the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, the Hon. Kevin Anderson, to work with the Hunter Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service to ensure that it can provide the services to tenants that are so desperately needed.

### SCHOFIELDS RURAL FIRE SERVICE

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (19:33):** I received an invitation to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Schofields Rural Fire Service brigade. That has brought to mind the valuable contribution that such brigades make to the welfare of our communities right across the State. I begin by looking at what the Rural Fire Service is. In fact, it is the world's largest volunteer firefighting organisation, with something in the order of 72,000 volunteers in 2,002 brigades over 108 local government areas across New South Wales. It has 911 full-time equivalent staff this year. They are enormous statistics but they hide the reality of an enormous voluntary contribution by a huge part of our community, a chunk, if you like, of the fabric of New South Wales—72,000

people across rural and regional areas and indeed in the fringe areas of metropolitan Sydney where the Schofields Rural Fire Brigade is located.

These people are the salt of the earth. They bind communities together. Often people who join Rural Fire Service brigades stay for decades. They are the kind of people who celebrate 40 and 50 years of service because this is not just something they do on top of their community life, it is their community life. It is part of who they are. As a local councillor I have had occasion to attend award celebrations for people in the Rural Fire Service and hand out acknowledgements for decades-long service and the tremendous contributions that people have made. I acknowledge that generosity of spirit, that commitment and that community spirit which is so valuable to the people of New South Wales.

It is a sad reality that over the years 74 Rural Fire Service volunteers have lost their lives in the service of their communities fighting fires. That is an enormous number and it underlines the risks that those people are prepared to take doing what they know needs to be done to protect the homes, livelihoods and physical safety of others in the community. They put themselves in that position willingly and take on that task for the benefit of others. So it is entirely appropriate that we have a memorial in New South Wales for those who have lost their lives in that service and that we annually commemorate their contribution.

In 2017-18 the Rural Fire Service responded to 26,903 incidents. Some 10,000 of those were bushfires but there were also structure fires, motor vehicle fires, motor vehicle accidents and many more incidents to which the Rural Fire Service volunteers responded to meet the needs of people in their communities. It is a varied contribution and Rural Fire Service volunteers, just like State Emergency Service volunteers, end up doing all sorts of odd jobs in times of need because they are the people who can be called upon. There is a structured service in place and a known phone number. So when there is a need somebody will call them and they will respond. That is just so important and beneficial to our community.

The Rural Fire Service dates back to 1900. The first brigade was in Berrigan in southern New South Wales. It had informally commenced a few years before but was formally recorded as having been established in 1900. Since then so many other brigades in so many other places have come to pass. In the Riverstone electorate there are two brigades, Schofields and Marsden Park. In the past there would have been others but being on the fringe of metropolitan Sydney much of the area now belongs to Fire and Rescue NSW. It is a trend across the fringe of Sydney that areas are adjusted from time to time as urban development continues.

In the broader region around the electorate of Riverstone there are also brigades in Shanes Park, Berkshire Park, Box Hill Nelson, Kellyville and Rouse Hill and the Hawkesbury Headquarters Brigade. Again these are fringe areas where although urban development is happening there are nevertheless large rural tracts and lots of land and the Rural Fire Service is the right group to respond to incidents in those areas. In the Cumberland zone in the Hills District or in the Hawkesbury there are many brigades that have served local communities for decades. I commend each and every one of them for the enormous work they do. I look forward to attending the seventy-fifth anniversary celebrations of the Schofields brigade this coming weekend.

### WOLLONGONG ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (19:38):** Several weeks ago I wrote to the Treasurer following continuing reports and data releases on the economic front that indicated that global economic headwinds were not favourable. I was not alone in outlining my concern; the Reserve Bank Governor and many market economists had expressed similar concerns. In the real economy that I had observed and from speaking with retailers in Wollongong I knew that there had been a downturn in retail activity that was starting to impact on their businesses and general business confidence in the region. The Government claims that great benefits are coming from its infrastructure investment program but when you live in an area that has largely been left out of that program the benefits and the resulting activity are much harder to see through the numbers in the cash register each day.

In my letter to the Treasurer I asked that immediate consideration be given to getting a number of projects in Wollongong ready so that we would not miss out if the Federal or State governments needed to expand their investment through a fiscal stimulus. The investments I suggested include immediate projects such as accelerating the social housing maintenance program to keep local tradies in work and investing the \$1 million needed to open up Wollongong Hospital's ghost ward and provide 25 extra beds for a hospital that has had no capital commitments from this Government for years. I also suggested medium-term investments such as accelerating the planned access upgrade for Unanderra Station, upgrading the WIN Entertainment Centre to provide construction and ongoing jobs and improve our visitor economy, which would support other local businesses, and upgrading Picton Road so that we do not miss out on the benefits of Sydney's second airport and a strong connection with the growing economies of south-west and western Sydney. I have not heard back from the Treasurer—and perhaps I will not—but there is no doubt that my community knows I am fighting for our fair share.

The letter was sent shortly after the Treasurer had declared in his Budget Speech that he was working to keep New South Wales number one but before recent reports indicated he had already failed in that task and we had slipped backwards in many measures. In the weeks since my request, reports from around the world of global economic concern have only gained pace. Just last week we had the inversion of the yield curve in the United States. This follows on from the fact that many investors in government bonds in other countries are willing to accept negative returns. In other words, they are willing to lose money on their investment for the safety of a government bond. This follows on from our own 10-year bonds yields slipping below our short-term bonds off the back of global falls in financial markets—last Thursday \$56 billion was wiped off the Australian market—and during a continuing global trade war that has now resulted in a slowing of China's industrial production and a reduction in global growth rates. Germany's economy has slowed and its government is considering what actions to take next.

The inversion of the yield curve in the United States does not automatically mean that its economy will fall into recession but it is real-time recognition of global economic concern. Markets are reflecting a lack of confidence in the global economy. The investors involved in this are largely dispassionate, rational actors who seek to benefit from their involvement in financial markets. While an inverted yield curve does not definitely mean recession, it has predicted four recessions since the 1980s. Combined with other measures such as a rising gold price, a falling copper price, a falling oil price, sluggish domestic wages growth, a higher tax take from the household sector in Australia and the general view that retailers are currently in a retail recession and falling business confidence, the picture is certainly not as rosy as in the past.

It is true that the local and international economies continue to grow. There are sectors of our domestic economy that are doing much better than others. The public sector is driving domestic wages growth and domestic employment outcomes. My point today—before some members suggest that I am now trying to talk down the economy—is that we should be working on plan B. What if the global trade war continues and growth slows in our largest trading partners? What will we do if the United Kingdom and Europe end up parting ways in the form of a hard Brexit and it impacts on global trade? What will we do if the drought continues much longer or when cities outside Sydney that have been left out of the Government's infrastructure plans start suffering even more? It is time that we started to get a plan B for the New South Wales economy. During the global financial crisis stimulus measures and activities were designed to boost confidence.

A divided government like the one we have now and one that is willing to abandon communities because its priorities do not extend to those communities is not the sort of leadership that the people of New South Wales deserve when it comes to maintaining and growing confidence. That is why I repeat my calls to the Treasurer to do the work necessary to have a package ready for Wollongong and for other parts of the State should it be needed. It is no longer good enough to pretend that everything is okay when even his own budget predicts slower economic growth, slower employment growth and slower wages growth than it did six months ago. New South Wales Government members cannot simply sit by and act as a group of political commentators, assessing and guessing at each other's actions and motivations while the real economy suffers. The signs are there. We must work with the Commonwealth, local members and local government on the steps that we can take to quickly implement a stimulus package should one be needed.

#### NORTHERN BEACHES MENTAL HEALTH SUMMIT

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (19:43):** I speak on the important matter of mental health on the northern beaches. As the member for Manly I attend the inter-agency safety committee meetings that are convened by the Northern Beaches Council, which does an outstanding job. At those meetings we exchange ideas, insights and information on the issues facing our community. For some time now—in fact, over several years—the health services and more often than not the police of the northern beaches have been managing the complex challenges posed by mental health. The overarching feedback from the various agencies is that we are well serviced by a variety of organisations across the spectrum of mental health and we have a tremendous amount of community goodwill through volunteer groups and events. But improvements need to be made in the collaboration and ability of groups to support and enhance each other. I noted with interest the outcomes of the recent meeting of the Council of Australian Governments, or COAG, held in Cairns. One section of the communique from that meeting was the statement on "Improving Mental Health Outcomes And Preventing Suicide", which noted:

All jurisdictions are investing in improving mental health outcomes and preventing suicides. Leaders noted that the Commonwealth has been working on a *Towards Zero Suicide* plan. They agreed to make mental health and suicide prevention a national priority and to work together on this priority drawing on the best experience and learning across all Australian jurisdictions.

The New South Wales Government has been undertaking a 10-year, whole-of-government review of mental health, known as the NSW Mental Health Reform, to reshape services in this State to work more collaboratively across government and non-government agencies. The reform calls for care that is person centred and tailored, family and community focused, trauma informed, provided in the least restrictive way and delivered in partnership

with people with lived experience and their family, carers and other organisations. To meet the challenges facing my community I have convened the Northern Beaches Mental Health Summit, which will take place at Parliament House on Tuesday 27 August. The summit will bring together frontline service providers, not-for-profit organisations, charities and government agencies to facilitate collaboration and develop improved impact measurements concerning their contribution to the mental health of our community.

In particular, it is hoped that smaller and newer organisations in this space that work on the northern beaches will learn from and network with some of the best regarded organisations, including Lifeline, Mission Australia and the Northern Sydney Local Health District. The Council of Australian Governments is committed to working together to develop practical options to ensure that the right support is available to individuals, families and communities at the right time and in the right place. The Northern Beaches Mental Health Summit will support this outcome, as we seek to improve the collaboration between government and non-government organisations.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Northern Beaches Police Area Command and, in particular, Superintendent Dave Darcy and look forward to welcoming him to the summit. Superintendent Darcy understands firsthand the impact that mental health issues and suicide are having on the northern beaches. In recent weeks our local police have faced 33 incidents of people suffering life-threatening situations due to mental health issues. Superintendent Darcy is a leader on the northern beaches and often goes beyond the call of duty. His commitment to this cause inspires many others in our community. I look forward to working with Superintendent Darcy and many other organisations that attend the summit to improve collaboration and ultimate outcomes for those affected by mental health issues in our community. More than 50 organisations, big and small, are registered to attend the Northern Beaches Mental Health Summit. Together we will make a difference.

#### **FRANK BAXTER JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTRE**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:47):** Since the Government closed the Kariong Correctional Centre maximum security facility there has been no strong deterrent for the boys in detention in my electorate and across New South Wales. The Frank Baxter Juvenile Justice Centre is now the last stop. On Sunday 21 July a riot occurred at the Frank Baxter centre that, according to staff, had been coming for some time. This facility was never classed as A1 (o). The high-level offenders, the high security risk inmates, became part of the population of this local juvenile justice centre, our youth prison, without the same security support that staff received in the Kariong maximum security environment.

Segregation and security support were promised to staff as part of the changeover from the Kariong maximum security to the Frank Baxter facility. Yet, like many Liberal Government promises to the Gosford electorate, such as the Woy Woy underpass, and across New South Wales, that support was not delivered, the promises were not kept. The previous justice Minister promised segregation of high-risk offenders and high-level security five years ago when the changeover occurred. It is just another broken promise—a promise regarding the wellbeing of both staff and inmates. Now we can see and feel the consequences.

At Kariong Corrective Services NSW ran the service, with its appropriate safety equipment and appropriate staff skills. The service was regarded as a "consequence" for the boys in the Frank Baxter centre. While there is still detainee classification at Frank Baxter, now A1 (o) high-level offenders, some of whom are over the age of 18, are mixing with young men who are not terrorists or murderers and many of whom are non-violent offenders. They are kids as young as 15 years old who have been sentenced for trespass and minor break and enter offences. They are all in together and the consequences are evident in the data, such as increased staff assaults, fighting, contraband and general antisocial behaviour that is being reported increasingly to management by staff. Staff have felt the risk in their workplace growing and have asked for help and for changes. But Government promises have been broken and the staff requests have fallen on deaf ears.

Of course the young boys are influenced by the high-risk offenders, the A1 (o) offenders. They are learning to behave aggressively towards youth workers and assaulting those workers and other inmates, especially as the high-level offenders have a set of keys that allows "access to all". They are brandishing knives and tools, breaking into rooms and threatening young boys and hurting them. They encouraged these young men to become involved in the riot. The boys are normally protected by the very workers who had to escape the complex for their own safety and watch from outside. The impact is not just on the boys who were harmed but also on their protectors, teachers, nurses, youth workers and the rest of the staff. When the police arrived at Frank Baxter to respond to the riot they were surprised by the lack of security protection provided for workers in this high-risk workplace. I only hope that the Government is now supplying the best possible support for those traumatised individuals.

This system is supposed to support these kids, provide training and education and help them on their transition beyond detention. But where is it? Youth workers have been informing management that the new cost-saving strategies and the cost-saving structure are not working and they have not worked for some time. The

independent inquiry forced upon the Government by the shadow juvenile justice Minister must be independent and all parties must be involved. For a long time the experts predicted that something bad would happen and now it has. What guarantee do we have that any recommendations will be acted upon when the Government has not delivered in relation to the over-age and A1 (o) prisoners in the first place?

Frank Baxter is the biggest youth facility in New South Wales, with more programs and support staff and fewer boys in detention. Yet what have we seen? This Government and the Minister must listen to all the frontline staff and pick up the pieces caused by the previous Minister's errors. Why was Kariong shut? Was it to save money when there is a need to accommodate the burgeoning prison population in New South Wales? For whatever reason, we now have prisoners in a juvenile facility with no protection for staff and other inmates. I ask: How many staff were injured? How many staff have been traumatised by what they have seen? What is the real cost of cost cutting on human lives? Does it mean longer terms of detention for young men who have not committed high-risk crimes? They have been exposed to high-risk offenders and were coerced, by the use of weapons, to participate in a riot involving people in my electorate who go to work every day in a place they know is not safe. I ask the Government to please make a change.

### **SALVATION ARMY FAIRFIELD CITY CORPS**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (19:52):** On behalf of the Fairfield electorate, it is a great privilege to extend our sincere appreciation and admiration for the invaluable efforts of the Salvation Army throughout our local community. The Salvation Army has welcomed and will continue to welcome those in need with open arms and provide support to those who require a helping hand. Not only do the Salvos give generously to those who are without, they also take time to listen and provide support wherever and whenever they can. For example, our local parish in Wakeley offers many support services, ranging from crisis financial support and counselling to food, clothing hampers, free language class and, of course, spiritual guidance and support for individuals from the ministry and its weekly worship services.

The Salvation Army in Fairfield has a long and rich history. The original chapter began as an outpost of the Liverpool Salvation Army branch in April 1936. The Salvation Army Fairfield City Corps had its inception on 13 January 1940 and the first officer appointed to the Fairfield Salvation Army was Lieutenant Charles Bennett. I am proud to say that since establishing itself in the local community the Salvation Army Fairfield City Corps has grown from strength to strength and has continued to expand its support and outreach services to local residents. Today the Salvation Army Fairfield City Corps remains a vibrant presence in our culturally diverse city, offering its services to those who need it most in our community. This can be seen through the Wakeley Pantry, which offers food and discounted homewares to the community. I commend the volunteers and staff for their ongoing support of this great service, which ensures that nobody goes without.

It always brings a smile to my face when I see one of our local champions of the Salvation Army, Dorothy, set up at the local shopping centre, spreading goodwill and God's word to those who want to listen and to those who need that special helping hand. At the core of it, dedicated volunteers like Dorothy who serve in the Salvation Army continually remind us of a verse from the *Bible* in Mark 12:31, "Love your neighbour as yourself." These volunteers selflessly continue to support and serve one another and their community simply because it is the right thing to do. Each and every year the Salvation Army embarks on its Red Shield Appeal. Volunteers and supporters doorknock their communities seeking support to raise funds to assist the Salvos and enable them to continue to do their ministry work.

We are incredibly lucky as Australians to reap the tremendous benefits provided by the Salvation Army in communities across our nation. I for one am incredibly thankful for the ongoing contributions made by the Salvation Army in our community and I am proud to have been given the opportunity to work alongside its members as the State member for Fairfield. Last Sunday 11 August 2019 I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations of the Salvation Army in its Hamilton Road complex in Fairfield. The celebrations were well attended by local residents and community leaders who wished to show their support and admiration for the outstanding work done by our Salvos chapter.

The day began with a spiritually uplifting service full of prayer, praise and song. The second part of the celebrations was the official cutting of the twenty-fifth anniversary cake followed by a community luncheon. I congratulate the twenty-fifth anniversary organising committee on successfully hosting a most memorable event commemorating such a wonderful achievement in our local community. Particular thanks go to the guest speaker, Major Alan Harley, for his inspiring sermon. On behalf of the Fairfield electorate I also commend the outstanding efforts of Auxiliary-Lieutenant David Delaney, the volunteers and everyone at the Salvation Army Fairfield. I thank them all for their ongoing dedication and tireless commitment to those in need throughout the greater Fairfield region. Their continued service is invaluable to our community.

*Community Recognition Statements***PETER HEWETT**

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (19:56):** I pay tribute to an inspiring constituent in my electorate of Manly, Peter Hewett from Freshwater, on his marathon bicycle ride through Japan to fundraise for research into lung cancer. Peter's sister, Carolyn Riordan, although never having smoked, developed a rare form of genetic lung cancer. Peter and his team of Angelo, Brett and Wes cycled more than 3,200 kilometres, including 29,000 metres of vertical climbing. The team partnered with the Cancer Council, with every cent raised going to lung cancer research and, importantly, into Carolyn's particular form of lung cancer, which has limited treatment options through the Lung Foundation Australia. Carolyn has a loving husband and four daughters, one of whom is still in school. I send the best wishes of all members to Carolyn and her family and to Peter, Angelo, Brett and Wes who completed this incredible journey in 23 days, raising almost \$30,000.

**POLICE ASSOCIATION OF NSW COMMISSIONED OFFICERS DINNER**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (19:57):** I had the pleasure to be a guest at the Police Association of NSW commissioned officers branch seventy-second annual dinner on 16 August 2019. New South Wales police do an important, stressful and often dangerous job. Commissioned officers provide the leadership required as the commanders of police area commands and police districts. They are the principal coordinators of law enforcement operations and specialist units. The outstanding outcomes achieved by the NSW Police Force is a testament to the hard work, diligence, dedication and leadership of the commissioned officers and the teams they lead.

The dinner was a great opportunity to discuss the force's achievements over the past 12 months as well as the work of the Police Association of NSW in supporting our New South Wales police commissioned officers and all serving and retired members. I congratulate the Police Association of NSW President, Tony King, and his staff on a successful evening. I thank the guest speaker, Allan Sparkes, and his wife, Deb, for sharing their moving and inspirational story of great personal bravery. The leadership provided by New South Wales police commissioned officers has placed the NSW Police Force in a strong position to respond to emerging criminal trends. I thank them for their service and the protection they provide to our families.

**DANIEL FALLINS**

**Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (19:58):** I congratulate Daniel Fallins of Bonnet Bay on recently being selected for the 14-man Cricket Australia squad to tour India. The national performance squad will tour the country for 2½ weeks where they will spend time at the MRF Academy in Chennai. At the academy the squad will work alongside Test legend Glenn McGrath in his role as director of the MRF Pace Foundation. Daniel made his first-class cricket debut for the Cricket Australia XI in a tour match against England in 2017 and has since gone on to make his Sheffield Shield debut for New South Wales. He has also played in the Big Bash League with both the Sydney Sixers and the Melbourne Stars. I congratulate Daniel on his outstanding achievement and extend my best wishes for his future endeavours.

**TOWRADGI PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (19:59):** Recently I had the opportunity to meet with students of Towradgi Public School to talk with them about homelessness. Over the past few months the students have been engaged in researching, discussing and coming up with ideas on how they can support people in the Wollongong community who do not have a roof over their heads. I was impressed with the level of insight of the students and with the way they were taking some very practical approaches to not only making other students in their school aware of the issue and making their parents and the community surrounding the school aware of how they can help but also working with local homelessness service providers to understand the very practical steps that can be taken to assist people.

Over the coming weeks a sleep-out and other fundraising activities will be held as well as the ongoing collection of food and other household items that are being provided directly to local service providers. The students have not limited themselves to a brief exploration of homelessness. It has flowed through all parts of their curriculum this year. They have thought deeply about some of the reasons behind homelessness and they gave me some ideas on what policymakers and governments can do to help. Well done, Towradgi Public School.

**BAD ATTITUDE BRAIDED CREATIONS**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (20:00):** I share with members that I am now the proud owner of a stockwhip, handcrafted by Nakarla and Ruby Hardy of Bad Attitude Braided Creations in Grenfell. At just 10 and 12 years of age, Nakarla and Ruby have started a fabulous small business, making whips, key rings, belts, headbands, hair clips, dog collars, dog leads, bracelets, zipper pulls and lanyards. The girls are also raising money for breast cancer awareness by selling key rings in the shape of the breast cancer logo and donating \$2 from every

sale to breast cancer. They learned their craft from their father, Todd Hardy, who had learned from well-known Murringo leather craftsman Richard Taubman of Taubman and Webb Trading Post. I have had the whip framed and it is now proudly hanging in my office here in Parliament House.

#### **SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH WOY WOY**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:01):** The friendly and welcoming Seventh Day Adventist Church in Woy Woy coordinates a fortnightly foodbank providing struggling individuals and families access to discounted pantry goods and free fresh fruit and vegetables. The service is facilitated by volunteers who travel over two hours to Sydney to obtain food donated by industry and then transport the goods back to the peninsula to be distributed to locals doing it tough. The service caters to around 50 families each fortnight but the church reports that more and more residents are accessing this service.

The Seventh Day Adventist Church provides pantry goods, fruits and vegetables that are in line with the church's key health messages around incorporating whole foods into people's diets and balancing that with an active and outdoor lifestyle. In addition to the foodbank the church provides individuals and families with the option of home delivery in circumstances where they are immobile or unable to visit the church to collect groceries themselves. I acknowledge and thank the Seventh Day Adventist Church and its volunteers Carol Sickie, Tim Reynolds, Shelley Barlow, Annette Griffiths, Donna Corda and Craig Corda for their commitment to those less fortunate in our community.

#### **KU-RING-GAI NETBALL ASSOCIATION**

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (20:02):** I congratulate the Ku-ring-gai Netball Association, whose teams performed very strongly at the HART Senior State Netball Titles held over the June long weekend at Harrington Park. Some 180 teams from 89 netball associations competed in the titles, with Ku-ring-gai fielding teams in the under-17s and under-15s competitions. The under-17s division 1 team was undefeated. It had 16 wins and one draw during three days of intense competition. It was a very impressive performance but, unfortunately, it was just pipped at the post by the Penrith team, which beat the Ku-ring-gai team by one point in the 20-team round robin. Well done to the under-17s. The under-15 team also performed very well. It was very consistent in its 19 games, with nine wins and 10 losses. The team finished in eleventh place and improved very steadily over the weekend.

#### **KEITH PAYNE VC HOSTEL**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (20:03):** Keith Payne VC Hostel has been delivering the highest level of personalised, 24-hour aged care to its residents since 1991. This not-for-profit facility, which provides the highest standard of retirement care in a friendly and relaxed environment, is located near Noraville on the beautiful New South Wales Central Coast. Nestled in lush bushland just five minutes from Soldiers Beach, the Vietnam veterans Keith Payne VC Hostel provides its residents with first-class residential care facilities including interactive areas such as communal lounge rooms, a library, a gazebo and a fully equipped function hall. The Keith Payne VC Hostel has diversified and now also provides a meal delivery service and maintenance services to the nearby community. The hostel also has an in-house cafe which offers a range of mouth-watering sweet and savoury snacks for all members of the public. As part of a dementia care program, as people walk past the residents' rooms they now see photographs of the residents when they were much younger.

#### **CENTRAL COAST CRUSADERS**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:04):** Last weekend the semifinals and finals of the Waratah League basketball were held at Breakers Stadium in my electorate of Terrigal. I am thrilled to inform the House that our Central Coast Crusaders team came away victorious, defeating Maitland in the semis and then Manly in the finals. The final game was very intense. It was only in the final seconds that we scored 74-72 to win. I send a huge congratulations to each team member: players Jacob Cracknell, James Trustum, Richmond Whitmore, William Bates, Ollie Robilliard, Will Cranston-Lown, Thomas Akamarmoi, Mitchell Rueter, Callum Jenkins, Kieran Osborn, Tye McGann, Aaron Lawton, Luke Cassidy and Daniel Titus. They are coached by the fantastic Chris Ohlback, Julian Khazzouh and Ian Robilliard. Chris Tyson is their manager and physiotherapist Matthew Cranney keeps the team together. I could not be prouder to be patron of the Central Coast Crusaders when our teams perform so well and respect other basketball teams in a spirit of sportsmanship. I congratulate the Crusaders on a fantastic win.

#### **PRIVATE BERESFORD PAUL EDWARDS**

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (20:05):** I pay a special tribute to Private Beresford Paul Edwards. Private Edwards lived in Colyton in my electorate and served during the Vietnam War. He was killed in action during Operation Mathew on 12 July 1969 fighting for Australia. We will remember the fiftieth anniversary of

his death this year. He had recently returned to the war effort in South Vietnam after being with his young wife while on rest and recreation leave. Tragically he would not return to his family. The body of Private Edwards was repatriated to Australia and laid to rest at the beautiful St Marys cemetery. He was a member of D Company which fought in the Battle of Long Tan on 18 August 1966. It is on this day each year that we pause to remember Vietnam Veterans Day and I was privileged to attend the beautiful ceremony at St Mary's on the weekend. We should never forget the sacrifice our veterans made and the impact of that war on all of them.

#### **COFFS HARBOUR COMETS**

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (20:06):** On Saturday at the Ocean Harvest Festival I had a very silly idea. The Coffs Harbour Comets were playing the Grafton Ghosts on Sunday in the group two rugby league grand final. I thought this is a fantastic opportunity for me and my Federal counterpart Patrick Conaghan, the member for Cowper, to make a bet with Chris Gulaptis, the member for Clarence, and Kevin Hogan, the member for Page, because our two rugby league teams were playing each other. Now I am fulfilling that bet because Coffs Harbour was beaten, with Grafton leading 36-nil at half-time. Leading into the game I was quite confident because Coffs Harbour had beaten the Grafton Ghosts in the previous round games. Clarence has the wonderful Jacaranda Festival and a new bridge. A stronger Clarence means a stronger Coffs Harbour and a stronger North Coast.

#### **ALBIN AND IRENE GOETZ**

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (20:08):** I recently had the pleasure of visiting Albin and Irene Goetz and presenting them with a certificate of congratulations for their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary. Mr and Mrs Goetz were married in 1954 and together they built their home in Cabramatta where they are still living today. Over the years this loving couple has been blessed with four children and six grandchildren. When I asked them what is the secret for a long and happy marriage I was told, "Always kiss and make up before you go to bed." While they may be of elder age, Mr and Mrs Goetz still hold hands. On behalf of my community I congratulate this special couple on reaching a great milestone. I wish them many more years of good health and memories.

#### **TRESILLIAN IN WESTERN FAMILY CARE CENTRE**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (20:08):** When you have a child the feeling of helplessness can sometimes be quite overwhelming. That is why I was delighted to attend the official opening of the Tresillian in Western Family Care Centre earlier this year to see the invaluable support it is providing to families in the Dubbo electorate and beyond. Already 200 families have been able to access Tresillian's services. That is 200 families who might otherwise have been forced to travel to Sydney. As a father of two daughters I know firsthand the importance of feeling supported during the first 2,000 days of life and it is something I am really passionate about. Knowing that somebody else cares about you and your family can make all the difference when embarking on the wonderful but sometimes quite overwhelming journey of being a new parent. I thank the nurse unit manager, Marsha McBroom, Kate Plasto and the entire team at Tresillian in Western for everything they do for families in the Dubbo electorate. Keep up the amazing work.

#### **SYDNEY SOUTH WEST DANCE FOR CANCER**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (20:09):** On 10 August 2019 the Stars of Sydney South West Dance for Cancer event was held at the Holiday Inn in Warwick Farm. The night was a great success with dancers and their partners raising \$132,645 for the Cancer Council. Those funds are essential and enables the Cancer Council to continue its work for a future without cancer. The evening would not have been possible without the help of sponsors, volunteers, judges, supporters and Cancer Council NSW staff. I extend a special thanks to the local dance teachers for donating their valuable time to teach the guest stars, who came from the local community and business arena. On display were fantastic routines, outstanding costumes and well-crafted steps. I congratulate Sinilia Radivojevic and Denise Danyes for organising such a successful event. I extend many thanks to them for all the hard work they do for the Cancer Council.

#### **LAUREN MCDONALD**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (20:10):** I congratulate Macintyre High School student Lauren McDonald on being a recipient of the prestigious Harding Miller Education Foundation academic scholarship for the next four years. Lauren was selected as one of 85 winners for 2019 at the annual Public Education Foundation awards at the Sydney Town Hall. I note the deservedness of Lauren for this scholarship due to her wish to become a paediatric physiotherapist on the basis of wanting to help children accomplish what they want to achieve. I commend Lauren for her commitment to education and her desire to help those younger than herself. She is a great example of the

importance of those scholarships in fostering young female education in the bush. I wish Lauren all the very best in the future.

### **ABORIGINAL WRITERS FESTIVAL**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (20:11):** I congratulate all sixty Aboriginal students from local Illawarra schools who participated in the Lake Illawarra South Network Aboriginal Writers Festival in Shellharbour in July. Those students were lucky enough to work on their creative writing skills with local Aboriginal children's author, poet and emerging playwright Kirli Saunders. Ms Saunders founded the Poetry in First Languages project and was awarded the Illawarra Shoalhaven region Worker of the Year at the 2017 NAIDOC awards. The festival, which took place at Shellharbour's Library and Civic Centre, also gave the students a closer look at the display of paintings and sculptures by Indigenous artists. Every student who participated in the program should be very proud of themselves and the calibre of creative writing that they produced. I thank the organisers of this great initiative and offer my congratulations to all of the excellent participants. I congratulate everyone.

### **ARABELLA LOGAN**

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (20:12):** I recognise the musical talents and achievements of a young Hawkesbury local from Kurrajong by the name of Arabella Logan. On 25 July 2019 I had the pleasure of attending St Paul's Grammar School, Cranebrook, to present Arabella with a certificate for musical excellence. Arabella is a talented violinist. She has performed with the Sydney Youth Orchestra summer school and earlier this year was accepted into the prestigious Western Sydney Youth Orchestra based in Parramatta. Arabella also entertains the residents at Richmond nursing home with solo performances. This says as much about her character as it does about her musical talents. I pay tribute to her family, fellow students and teachers who have supported Arabella's movements and achievements. I also recognise Arabella's excellence in rowing and swimming. I wish Arabella continued success with her future endeavours.

### **JO PALMER**

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (20:13):** I am proud to say the 2019 winner of the NSW-ACT AgriFutures Rural Woman of the Year, Jo Palmer, hails from my electorate of Wagga Wagga. I had the pleasure of congratulating Ms Palmer at the official presentation in Parliament in June and I do so again today. Ms Palmer, a farming mother from The Rock, has been connecting rural women to jobs through her online platform, Pointer Remote Roles. The service is addressing rural skills shortages for medium and small business enterprises, providing regional businesses access to a pool of regional talent from across the country. Ms Palmer described this as a win-win, and I agree. She is also reducing pressures on drought-affected farming families, providing off-farm income opportunities and thus eliminating job location and remote access barriers. It is important that we continue to foster, support and celebrate the great work being achieved by rural women like Ms Palmer and the other finalists. I wish Ms Palmer all the best in the national AgriFutures Rural Women's Award in September.

### **WAYNE BINGHAM**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (20:14):** I acknowledge the amazing work of Wayne Bingham from the Northern Districts Little Athletics Club. Over the last 30 years Wayne has been a mentor for many young athletes in Hornsby and has dedicated his life to the world of athletics. As a coach he has helped kids achieve amazing results from club level through to Australian titles, the Commonwealth Games and international competitions. Wayne is an inspiration to children's sport. He has spotted talent and produced State champions. He has been recognised by his club with a life membership and I thank him for all he has given to our community through his work with Little Athletics. I wish Wayne all the best as he enters retirement and thank him for everything he has done to ensure the success of future generations of track stars.

### **PORT STEPHENS KOALAS**

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (20:15):** The birth of a child is a special event and it is just as exciting when it is a newborn koala. I am delighted to report that Port Stephens Koalas recently welcomed the arrival of a baby koala to mum Eila. Eila was rescued by Port Stephens Koalas following a bushfire in the Mambo Wetlands last year. Volunteers later discovered a joey in her pouch but feared that the stress and trauma of the bushfire would put the young joey at risk. Thankfully dedicated volunteer carers and a tough mama koala saw the little joey thrive. As a sponsor of Port Stephens Koalas, Hunter Water was invited to name the baby koala and chose Patu, one of the words for water in the Wonarua language. It is stories like this one that reinforces the importance of the koala hospital in Port Stephens. With Port Stephens koalas endangered, saving every joey has become an essential task. Once again I thank the wonderful caring Port Stephens Koalas volunteers and everyone involved in this heartwarming, beautiful, fluffy tale.

### **COWRA RED CROSS BRANCH**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (20:16):** I congratulate the Cowra Red Cross Branch on celebrating its 105th birthday last week. The Cowra Red Cross Branch is one of the few Red Cross branches that has been in operation since the establishment of the Red Cross in Australia in 1914. It is to be commended on its multitude of effort over the past 105 years. From sending care packages in times of war to making trauma teddies, the Cowra Red Cross Branch has always been busy supporting the community locally, nationally and internationally. I take this opportunity to thank the Cowra Red Cross Branch for its efforts and for its consistent important service to the community since 1914.

### **TRIBUTE TO JUDY MITCHELL**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (20:17):** I celebrate the life of late Maitland physiotherapist Judy Mitchell and offer my sincere condolences to her family. Judy passed away recently at the age of 78, leaving a legacy of involvement and achievement in business, family and equestrian circles. She was a valued member of Maitland's Sunrise Rotary, which is how I met her many years ago. Judy was born in the rectory of St Peter's Anglican Church, East Maitland, and was farewelled just metres away during her memorial service last month. Judy studied physiotherapy at the University of Sydney as a young woman and started her own business at the age of 26. She was a true trailblazer. Judy and her husband, Robert, established the NSW Equestrian Centre in 1982 and both their horses and riders went on to win gold medals at Olympic and world championships. She will be remembered as a highly regarded businesswoman, a talented equestrienne, a dedicated servicewoman for Rotary and a devoted mother and grandmother. Vale Judy.

### **KU WEST PYMBLE PRESCHOOL**

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (20:18):** The KU West Pymble Preschool celebrated its fiftieth year of providing high-quality early education by holding an afternoon tea. The preschool was funded and built by the local community in 1969. A healthy number of children, families and staff were in attendance for the welcome to country by Uncle Laurie, followed by speeches about the history of the preschool. Those speeches were particularly enjoyed by the over 20 former staff members who were there, some of whom taught as far back as 1974. I was delighted to cut the half-century anniversary cake with Director Katrina Hendry and KU Children's Services CEO Christine Legg. It was not a small cake but the tasty slices quickly disappeared into hungry young mouths as well as the mouth of a not so young MP. The preschool, which is set in idyllic Ku-ring-gai bushland, has a special interest in wildlife protection and interaction. I congratulate KU West Pymble Preschool for an outstanding 50 years.

### **ASSYRIAN MARTYR'S DAY**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (20:19):** On 7 August 2019 the Assyrian Universal Alliance held a commemoration service and lecture at Parliament House to remember the Assyrian martyrs. In attendance were Federal, State and local government representatives as well as leaders of the Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities. Originally 7 August was set aside to remember those who lost their lives in the Assyrian genocide in Iraq in 1914 and 1933. After realising that similar persecutions have occurred many times in history, the community was compelled to commemorate all members of the Assyrian community who in the past gave up their lives to preserve their cultural, national and religious identity. It is a time to reflect and pray for the souls of those martyrs who gave their lives so that their culture, national pride and religious devotion could be passed on to future generations. May they never be forgotten.

### **DAFFODIL DAY**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:20):** The daffodil is a symbol of hope and that is what we will be promoting this Friday on the annual Daffodil Day. Across the Terrigal electorate many volunteers will be collecting donations at Woolworths Erina Fair, Kincumber Shopping Centre, Terrigal Esplanade and Fountain Plaza Erina, which is nearby my office. Cancer Council NSW is making some fantastic advancements in cancer prevention, screening and treatment as a result of the investment it is making into research due to donations and government funding. Around one in four people experience cancer in their lifetime, which means almost every family is affected by it, including my own. I encourage everyone to support Daffodil Day and to give generously. I acknowledge Ros English, a constituent of mine, for her commitment to our community and this cause. Ros is the chair of the Central Coast Cancer Advocacy Network.

### **TRIBUTE TO BRENNAN NEAN**

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (20:21):** The community of Raymond Terrace had its heart broken recently when a year 10 student from Irawang High School was hit by a school bus on his way to school and tragically lost his life. The death of 17-year-old Brennan Nean has shaken my community. I express

the Parliament's deepest condolences to Brennan's family, friends, loved ones and the entire school community. This tragedy unfolded on an otherwise ordinary morning but by the time the bell had rung students were comforting one another in their grief. I commend all the staff of Irrawang High School who responded with compassion and understanding, delivering the support students needed in the most devastating circumstances. I pay special tribute to Principal Paul Baxter, deputy principals Liana Gill and Trent Colley, and our new Director of Schools, Trish Bowen. I also thank all of the other local schools who assisted with support and the first responders, particularly our local police and fire from Raymond Terrace Fire and Rescue. This heartbreaking tragedy is every parent's worst nightmare. It is an important prompt to us all to give our kids a hug every day. Rest in peace Brennan.

#### **OCEAN HARVEST FESTIVAL**

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (20:22):** The inaugural Ocean Harvest Festival was a seaside spectacular celebrating the finest in Coffs Coast seafood and it is set to become an annual event. I joined the big crowds on 17 August at Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-op, which is a superb spot to enjoy our sparkling harbour and the perfect weather. The festival is family friendly, showcasing our fresh local food. There were information stalls and cooking demonstrations as well as a prawn peeling competition. Another highlight was the guest appearance of rugby league and TV personality Andrew Ettingshausen. So too was spending time with my Nationals colleague the member for Cowper, Pat Conaghan. I thank Carl Mower and Sherry Price at Another Tasty Event; Bob St John, Joshua Cook, Cookie and Rebecca Wilson at the Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-op; Tricia Beatty at the Professional Fishermen's Association; Lowri Pryce at Oceanwatch Australia; Elise Currey at Coffs Harbour Marina; and Fiona Barden and Nicole McLennan at Coffs Harbour City Council. I congratulate all who were involved and I will see you again next year.

#### **PEARL BEACH PROGRESS ASSOCIATION**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:23):** The Pearl Beach Progress Association is celebrating its ninetieth anniversary of representing the Pearl Beach community. The association was created in 1929 to improve services and access to Pearl Beach by the new residents of the area. In 1950 the Pearl Beach Progress Association was able to construct a memorial hall through fundraising efforts and a government subsidy. It still stands today, offering the residents of Pearl Beach an important focal point to meet and discuss matters affecting the community. The Pearl Beach Progress Association has been instrumental in advocating on behalf of Pearl Beach residents and their interests, hosting community fundraisers and community groups, cultural events and the fabulous Australia Day and Anzac Day ceremonies. I congratulate the association on its success and longevity over the past 90 years and commend it for its effective work throughout Pearl Beach and the broader community. I look forward to continuing to assist the association and work alongside it to help build on the tremendous work it has already achieved.

#### **GEORGE CHAPMAN**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (20:24):** I take this opportunity to recognise the life-saving work of George Chapman, who is an Australian Red Cross first aid trainer from Dubbo. George has been in first aid for more than 25 years but was astounded when on a recent trip to Singapore he saw automated external defibrillators [AED] on every corner. George was determined to make Dubbo a heart-safe city. In July, after more than a year of fundraising, he achieved the extraordinary feat of installing Dubbo's 100th AED at the Dubbo Neighbourhood Centre. Each defibrillator is worth \$3,300, so that gives a fair idea of how much support the community has thrown behind this initiative. Survival rates for cardiac arrest rise dramatically if there is an AED nearby. I have no doubt those defibrillators will save many lives in and around Dubbo. I congratulate George and thank him for his efforts.

#### **AUSTRALIAN MINNAN ASSOCIATION**

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (20:25):** On 28 July 2019 I had the pleasure of attending the twentieth anniversary celebration of the Australian Minnan Association. The Australian Minnan Association acts as a collective family that all Minnans and their relatives can belong to. Organisations like the Minnan Association are important in keeping traditions alive for generations to come as well as preserving their cultural history. Since its establishment it has been actively involved in charity drives to support large events, such as the Moon Festival. I can say without a doubt that our communities would not be as vibrant as they are without the work of organisations like the Minnan Association. I congratulate Mr Andy Hong, the incoming President of the Australian Minnan Association, and wish him the very best of luck in continuing the good work the association does for our communities.

#### **AUSTRALIAN MOUNTAIN BIKING TEAM**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (20:26):** I congratulate Armidale mountain biking superstars Emily Wooster, Holly Harris and

Katherine Hosking on being named in the Australian mountain biking team, which will compete at the Mountain Bike World Championships in Canada very soon. I note especially that Holly Harris will be competing in the elite women's cross country event, Katherine Hosking will be competing in the under-23 division and Emily Wooster will be competing for the very first time in the junior division at the world championships. All three women are not only outstanding mountain bikers but also wonderful young women and advocates for and representatives of their communities and families. I wish them every success as they travel internationally for what I predict will be the first, the second and the third of many world championships from which they will bring back gold medals.

#### **NELSON BAY COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION BRANCH**

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (20:27):** For seventy years the Country Women's Association [CWA] of Nelson Bay has been serving its community with friendship, comradeship and the most welcoming hospitality. The Nelson Bay branch of the CWA was formed in 1949, which was a transformative year in Australia. It heralded the start of Australian citizenship, Aboriginal people were given the right to vote in New South Wales State elections and Robert Menzies was elected Prime Minister. In the same year the Nelson Bay branch of the CWA was formed and began a campaign for a baby health centre in the area. I was delighted to attend the celebratory luncheon to recognise the 70 years of service to the Nelson Bay community. I commend branch secretary Carol Rigby and President Rona Tilden for their ongoing leadership and service to their community. Across the nation the CWA is an institution. For decades CWA members have served their local community with fundraising, advocacy and fellowship. In a few years we will be celebrating a centenary of the CWA's formation in 1922. I look forward to joining local CWA members again at that time to recognise the many reforms the Country Women's Association has championed in regional communities across New South Wales.

#### **RUBENA AMY WILBOW**

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (20:28):** I pay tribute to a great Hawkesbury constituent by the name of Rubena Amy Wilbow, or Ruby as she is more often known. I commend and thank Ruby for her efforts over many decades of volunteering for numerous organisations in many ways. Ruby has been volunteering for the Hawkesbury District Health Service for over 36 years and at 92 years of age she has no plans to stop. Ruby also spent many years delivering Meals on Wheels and also spent time volunteering at the old Windsor Hospital before the new hospital was built in 1996. To this day, Ruby continues to demonstrate the same qualities that won her recognition as the 2010 Hawkesbury Citizen of the Year. I commend and thank Ruby for her continued service to volunteering and wish her good health and happiness ahead.

#### **WOY WOY COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION BRANCH**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:29):** Members of the Country Women's Association in Woy Woy are always working on new projects to better our community. Recently our local branch helped out a family experiencing the loss of their mother and grandmother. Julie and her two daughters, Jess and Kimberly, did not want to part ways with their late family member's clothes. Julie's daughter suggested they craft her clothing into a memorial quilt. The only problem was that no-one in their family knew how to make the quilt. Without sounding too clichéd, members of the Country Women's Association [CWA] came to the rescue after Julie's neighbour, who is a member, asked her to contact them. Jane and Wendy, two resident quilters, accepted the task and together they crafted two quilts, piece by piece, over a few months. Earlier this month the members presented the quilts to the family who were very thankful. It is the helping hands of our CWA members who help our community, piece by piece, to get back on their feet time and again, no matter the circumstance. I thank all members of the Country Women's Association in Woy Woy for their continuous contributions to our community.

#### **NORTHOLM GRAMMAR SCHOOL STUDENTS**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (20:30):** I congratulate an amazing group of year 11 students from Northholm Grammar School. Ella Cotrona, Emma Mercieca, Ciaran Dyson and Denique Shai-Hee organised the amazing Masquerade Dinner on 22 June. I was very pleased to be able to attend the event. It was a wonderful event and a credit to the hard work of those students. The students, who are part of the year 11 leadership program, raised \$29,200, which will be donated to Destiny Rescue, an organisation helping abused children around the world. It is part of the leadership program that students have an opportunity to work for a project that makes a difference in the community. Ella, Emma, Ciaran and Denique should all be very proud of their phenomenal achievement. The future is certainly looking bright in Hornsby with students like them coming through our schools. I give a special shout-out to Emma Burke and Jack Tanner who are currently watching this speech online.

#### **VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION**

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government)—**On Sunday August 18, over 150 locals gathered to acknowledge our service men and women as we commemorated Shoalhaven

Vietnam Veterans' Day at Walsh Park. This year marked the 53rd anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, which took place in a rubber plantation near Long Tan on August 18, 1966. 18 Australian and New Zealand servicemen lost their lives as the 105 member force faced off against an enemy of well over 2,000. South Coast service personnel served across various battles throughout the war and today they continue to share stories of the heroic actions of so many.

Locally, we pay tribute to the eight pilots, 24 maintenance personnel, four observers and six support staff from HMAS Albatross who were assigned to the US Army's 135th Assault Helicopter Company as part of the first Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam as well as each member of our defence force who served. I acknowledge Shoalhaven Vietnam Veterans' Association president Clyde Poulton and members of the association who each year organise a moving event that pays tribute to the fallen and acknowledges the sacrifice of so many in our community. Lest We Forget.

### **POWER WOMEN**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—The Northern Star newspaper at the weekend named its Power Women The Northern Rivers' 50 Most Influential across many fields of endeavour. I take this opportunity to salute all of our region's fabulous women for their rich contributions to family and community life. For the record, and from 1 to 50, are this year's Power Women:

Rebekka Battista

Cr Danielle Mulholland

Pam Brook

Shelley Oldham

Deb Cox

Isabella Pennefather and Elizabeth Abegg

Mandy Nolan

Janelle Saffin MP

Jyllie Jackson

Karen Hogan

Liz Ellis AM

Jane Laverty

Tamara Smith MP

Justine Elliot MP

Cate McQuillen and Dirtgirl

Jenny Dowell OAM

Mieke Bell

Narelle Gotting

Toni McCaffery

The Knitting Nannas

Sarah Smith

Cr Eddie Lloyd

Megan Phillips and Cherie Small

Tracey Everingham-Armstrong

Dr Sally Towns

Emma Lane

Anna Ludvik

Mary Betteridge OAM and the late Emily Betteridge OAM

Belinda Jeffery  
Beth Trevan AM  
Delta Kay  
Toni Childs  
Katrina Kanetani  
Katrina Beohm  
Bridget and Sophie Thomson The Fauna Fetchers  
Lynne Weir  
Sonya Lopes  
Jesse Blackadder  
Salome Gallagher  
Anne Thompson  
Trudi Luke  
Dr Ros Irwin  
Shirley Smith  
Rebecca Fagan  
Nicqui Yazdi  
Dr Ros Derrett OAM  
Elsa Pataki  
Beth Shelley  
Sara Rosborg  
Kelly Nelde.

#### **COOTAMUNDRA ELECTORATE**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—I rise to congratulate Tania Botha from Temora for taking out a state wide award for exceptional business management, doing my hometown of Temora proud. Ms Botha won the Helloworld Travel NSW Manager of the Year for her work at Temora Travel, trouncing competitors from Sydney and across the entire New South Wales and Canberra regions. She's owned and managed the business for eight years and was rewarded for her passion for staff development, team collaboration and best practice. Thank you Tania for your contribution to the business community in Temora and congratulations!

#### **SOUTHERN ILLAWARRA MUSIC FESTIVAL**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I'm happy to announce rehearsals for the Southern Illawarra Music Festival are now well underway. The Annual Music Festival is now in its 44th year and will take place over three nights in October at Wollongong University's Grand Hall. Schools within the Shellharbour electorate: Koonawarra, Warilla North, Flinders, Oak Flats, Dapto, Mount Brown, Lakelands, Mount Warrigal, Hayes Park and Lake Illawarra South are all participating in this year's event. I would like to take this opportunity to wish every student and every singer that's participating in the Southern Illawarra Music Festival all the best for their upcoming performance. It takes a huge amount of effort and practice to deliver the great music these kids are capable of. Well done everyone.

#### **BRAVERY IN HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AWARDS**

**Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt)**—I wish to congratulate Mr Axel Tritton from my electorate on receiving a Bravery Award, presented to him by His Excellency the Honourable David Hurley, Governor General. This award is presented for an Act of Bravery in Hazardous Circumstances. Mr Tritton and two colleagues were dismantling a tower crane when the structure collapsed over the side of the building. This incident left Mr Tritton and two injured co-workers hanging by their harnesses approximately 14 floors above the road. Despite his injuries, Mr Tritton showed immense bravery by climbing to the top of the crane whereby he attracted the attention of other co-workers who assisted Mr Tritton in using a recovery crane. Mr Tritton was lowered in a

"man box" to reach his stranded colleagues, helping them into the box before being lowered to the ground. Mr Tritton displayed considerable courage and I take this opportunity to also recognise his Bravery.

#### **MID COAST BUSINESS AWARDS**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)**—I rise to recognise the outstanding business community of the MidCoast Region, who on Saturday night the business community came together for the MidCoast Chamber Business Awards Gala Dinner. It was a great night that saw local identity John Mansour of Manning Shoes inducted into the Hall of Fame. Small and Family Business are our region's largest employers and they give so much back to their respective towns and villages through support and sponsorship. Can I congratulate all the nominees and winners including;

Best Start Up - Stacey Lee's Centre Stage.

Health and Wellbeing - Kenetic Medicine.

Trades and Construction - Admire Skincare and Beauty

Tourism & Hospitality - Sea Horse Diamond Beach

Retail Services - Jungle Surf

Professional Services - Allied Health Admin Services

Customer Service - R & R Property Bulahdelah & Stroud

Excellence in Business - Kinetic Medicine

Outstanding Business Leader - Nicole McMullen from Sunrise Supported Living

People's Choice

Winner - Blue Water Gifts. Forster

Runner Up - Ashlea Road Boutique. Wingham

Business of the Year

Winner - Sunrise Supported Living

Runner up - Stacey Lee's Centre Stage

Community Service Awards - Ted Bickford - Graffiti Buster

#### **EID AL ADHA**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)**—It was a great pleasure to attend the Eid Al Adha festival in Bankstown organised by the Islamic Charity Projects Association on Sunday 18th August 2019. I thank the Islamic Charity Projects Association President, Mr Mohamad Mehio and the entire ICPA Board for their efforts in organising the festival, their warm hospitality and for the privilege of saying a few words. I acknowledge the Chairman of Darulfatwa Islamic High Council of Australia, Professor Sheikh Salim Alwan. It was pleasing to see so many families and community members gathered this holy day, which honours and celebrates sacrifice, and is marked by a day of prayers and communal gatherings with family and friends. I would also like to acknowledge members of the Bankstown community who have marked the occasion of Eid Al Adha by undertaking the long journey to Mecca as part of the Hajj pilgrimage. I take this opportunity to wish them a prosperous journey and a safe return home. Eid Mubarak.

#### **2019 SYDNEY MARKET FRESH AWARDS**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)**—I congratulate Paul Moraitis of Sylvania Waters, who is the owner of Kareela Grocer, for winning 'Greengrocer of the Year' at the prestigious 2019 Sydney Market Fresh Awards. The Awards gather the best greengrocers, florists, growers, wholesalers and fresh bloggers from across NSW and the ACT, all who are recognised for being the top in their fields. They encourage and recognise best practice and innovation in the growing, retailing and wholesaling of fresh produce and flowers. Kareela Grocer is a one-stop shop for the Shire's finest and freshest produce, continental groceries, flowers and delicatessen. Owned by Paul and his family, 98% of Kareela Grocer's in-store produce is proudly Australian grown, sourcing as much local produce as possible. The esteemed awarding of Greengrocer of the Year to Kareela Grocer reflects not only the high quality produce and service provided by this local business, but also the nearly 40 years of industry experience held by Paul. I would like to congratulate Paul and his team on this outstanding achievement and extend my best wishes for the future.

### HEART-SAFE CITY

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the life-saving work of Australian Red Cross first aid trainer George Chapman. George has been in first aid for more than 25 years, but was astounded when, on a recent trip to Singapore, he saw Automated External Defibrillators on every corner. George was determined to make Dubbo a heart-safe city and in July, after more than a year of fundraising, he achieved an extraordinary feat: installing Dubbo's 100th AED at the Dubbo Neighbourhood Centre. Each defibrillator is worth \$3300, so that gives you an idea of how much support the community has thrown behind this initiative. Survival rates for cardiac arrest rise dramatically if there is an AED nearby, so I have no doubt these defibrillators will save many lives. Congratulations George, and thank you.

### HELLO KOALA

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**— recognise the awarding winning and culturally acclaimed Hello Koala sculptures for taking out awards at the 2019 Holiday Coast Credit Union Greater Port Macquarie Business Awards and the Destination North Coast Regional Tourism Awards. It could be described as a revolution that is taking our regional tourism industry by storm. The Hello Koala Sculpture Trail has yet again won more accolades for its uniqueness and masterful design that has captured the hearts of people across the Port Macquarie electorate.

Recognised as the gifted architect of the Hello Koala concept, Margaret Meagher recently accepted the Excellence in Innovation honours at the Greater Business Awards Gala Dinner for her creation's originality and contribution to our local tourism economy. Hello Koalas then won Gold for Cultural Tourism at the Regional Tourism Awards. I would like to acknowledge local artist, Pauline Roods for creating the Lachlan Macquarie sculpture and Kim and Wayne Staples for designing Charlie the Botanic Horticulturalist in honour of Charles Frazer. I commend Margaret for her brilliant masterpieces and encourage all lovers of contemporary art to visit the Hello Koalas Sculpture Exhibition display at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney on the 4 October to 30 November 2019.

### COMMUNITY 2168 PROJECT

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)**—I rise to recognise the Community 2168 Project which held an event on 15 August this year celebrating twenty years of the Project's achievements. It is a renewal and capacity building partnership located at Miller within my electorate. The project commenced in 1999. I've been on the Management committee since the Project's foundation and was involved with its predecessor organisation, the Miller Recovery Group which had been established in 1997. The major funding bodies had historically been Liverpool Council, the local area Health District and what was once known as the Department of Housing. There has also been involvement from various NGOs, including the local Migrant Resource Centre. Crucially, the Management committee has also featured community representatives. The Project has done lots of positive things and was acknowledged as representing a unique model. I remember meeting with representatives of other areas to explain to them the characteristics of the model. It has done very good work.

### MAITLAND AROMA FESTIVAL

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)**—I rise to congratulate Maitland City Council and the many businesses and individuals who worked to make the recent Aroma Festival a great success. The Aroma Festival is Maitland's annual homage to coffee and chocolate. Dozens of vendors selling an array of craft, food, chocolate, and coffee fill the carpark alongside the Hunter River during the two-day event. This year we also had Masterchef stars Steph de Sousa and Reece Hignell on stage giving cooking demonstrations, and a pop-up cocktail bar featuring coffee.

The Seven Network even broadcast its Sunrise program from the bank of the Hunter River on day two of Aroma. During its Maitland stay the crew filmed live crosses to other Maitland destinations including Morpeth, where Trevor Richards from Campbell's Store was interviewed about his ginger beer, and The Cabin Collective, where Dave Bean told viewers that Maitland was the 'hipster capital of the world'. With my husband Robert and our family, I had a great time at the festival, as did thousands of others. Thank you to all who worked to make the event the great success it was.

### SOUTHERN DISTRICTS SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION PRESENTATION NIGHT

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)**—After another successful year for Southern Districts Soccer Football Association (SDSFA) clubs, I would like to as Co-Patron with Mr Alfred Vella, put on record how incredibly proud we are of the Association's achievements during season 2019. The annual presentation evening acknowledged the efforts of so many club volunteers who continue going out of their way to make sure football is enjoyed by all players, coaches, managers and officials. Present on the evening were President Mr Andy

& Mrs Cheryl Favaloro, SDSFA Committee Members, Former Matilda Ms Catherine Canulli, Clr Nathan Hagarty, Clr Charishma Kaliyanda and Western Sydney Wanderers FC officials. I commend and congratulate the SDSFA Committee for supporting all clubs throughout the year while promoting good sportsmanship and participation. I would also like to give special thanks to the Association sponsors for their generous support with each passing season.

#### **JUST BEC-CAUSE FUNDRAISER**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—On Sunday 28 July, the Just BEC-Cause fundraiser was held at the Colliery Inn, in memory of a young woman named Bec who tragically passed away due to cancer at the young age of seventeen. The fundraiser managed to earn \$12,368 for childhood cancer research at the John Hunter Children's Hospital. According to Dawn Fuller, who helped organise the event, they had a fabulous day with a packed house, and raised funds through raffles, auctions and donations. The outpouring of love and support in Bec's memory is indicative of just how much Bec gave to the world during her too-short time with us, and displays the giving-spirit of the Wallsend community. My thanks to Dawn, to Bec's mum Dana Thompson and to all who were involved in this very successful day. My thanks to the many supporters of the fundraiser, the Colliery Inn Wallsend, Art Mania Studios, Aditi Hair, Biggies Barbers, Dave's Barbershop, Everything Floral, Farnham's Butchers, Sienna Rae, Divalina's, Max Eye Care, Newpower Wallsend, Opulence hair, Pharmacy Plus Plaza, Genesis Health and Fitness, Hairs Rok and Wallsend Rotary Club.

#### **ARPAD AND ELISABETH MAITZ**

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields)**—One of the great joys, and privileges, of serving as a Member of Parliament is the people I meet in the community. I was delighted to meet Minto Heights' Arpad and Elisabeth Maitz, who this year celebrate 50 years of marriage. An incredibly special milestone, and one worthy of recognition and celebration. Arpad and Elisabeth came to Australia as children – Arpad from Hungary and Elisabeth from the Netherlands. They met in their late teens at a dance and, as they say, the rest is history. The couple have four children and 11 grandchildren, and celebrated their special milestone at home, with family by their side.

Like any great partnership in life, Arpad and Elisabeth believe compromise is the key to a long and happy marriage. The couple look forward to a sojourn to Queensland to mark their anniversary, retracing their honeymoon. It will be an opportunity to make more special memories together and reflect on the journey that has led to a happy and successful union of two people, and a loving family. I wish Arpad and Elisabeth every happiness for the future.

#### **NORTH EPPING RANGERS**

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer)**—I pay tribute to the North Epping Rangers Sports Club. The club was founded in 1963 and currently boasts over a thousand members across its soccer and netball teams, ranging from 4 years old to a quite incredible 65. Last weekend I was fortunate enough to attend the last soccer game of the season at Ron Wayne Park, North Epping and it was great to see so many kids having fun and – with their parents – enjoying the game. North Epping is little enclave surrounded by bushland on three sides and the M2 Motorway on the fourth. As a result, it has a great community feel to it, and a great community spirit.

The spirit is especially evident as athletes take to the soccer field or the netball court, as supporters cheer on the sidelines, and as mums and dads man the game day barbeque. It was great to be part of it. I congratulate President Michael Stern and the Rangers executive committee, all the coaches and managers, the parents who volunteer, and especially the players – they have all done a fantastic job. Congratulations on a great season, and I wish you all the best in the next.

#### **BRISBANE WATER POLICE DISTRICT AWARDS**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)**—I had the privilege of attending the Brisbane Water Police District medal and awards presentation ceremony hosted by the fantastic Davistown RSL Club. We had the honour of the attendance of the NSW Police Commissioner Mick Fuller and our own Superintendent Tony Joice. It is on this special day each year that we are able to acknowledge some 75 police officers for their conscientious service to our community and the State of NSW. Our police personnel are remarkable people who persevere in the face of adversity and go above and beyond.

We also recognised the conspicuous efforts of ambulance officer Darren Cauchi, and several civilians Joshua Sonda, Jason Ferguson, and Paul Corbett for their bravery in intervening in dangerous situations in the defence of human life. To hear their stories and reflect on their courage is a humbling experience. Also recognised was long-time advocate for the Gosford CBD, Deborah Warwick, who has done amazing work to improve amenity

and community focus in Gosford. I congratulate all the police personnel who received awards and commendation during this occasion and thank them for their exemplary service on the front line serving and protecting the community.

#### **LOCAL LAND SERVICES SCHOOLS PROPERTY PLANNING COMPETITION**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales)**—I recognise and congratulate the schools and students who participated in and took out this year's Northern Tablelands Local Land Services Schools Property Planning Competition. Each year, this competition gives high school agriculture students first-hand experience in investigating the real-life challenges faced by local farmers. The competition recognises students for their understanding of core issues like sustainable agricultural production, biosecurity and natural resource management. The Perpetual Champion team this year was from O'Connor Catholic College – students Eliza Boland, Jamie Ellis, Lucy Barley and Samuel Graham.

The Reserve Champion was Glen Innes High School's Harry Lyn. Highly Commended was The Armidale School – students Oliver Kearney and Henry Pitman – and another team from O'Connor Catholic College – students Erin Porter, Hain van Eyk, Macey Clarke and Analiese Wark. This year students were set the challenge of developing a management plan for the property 'Bald Blair' near Guyra, owned by Sam and Kirsty White. Students had to develop a strategy to make the enterprise both economically and environmentally sustainable. I also congratulate the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services' Johnelle Stevens, who did a great job co-ordinating this year's competition.

#### **LITTLE PORTUGAL IN PETERSHAM**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)**—Inner West Council and the Geographical Names Board have renamed a prominent section of Petersham, "Little Portugal," acknowledging the enduring contribution of the Portuguese community to the inner west and Sydney. Now, when you walk down New Canterbury Rd and Audley Street, you will be visiting Little Portugal, no doubt welcomed by a stunning Portuguese mural or tempted by the world's best Portuguese tarts and flame grilled chicken. This strip has been affectionately known for decades as Little Portugal and its place as the heart of the Portuguese community in Sydney is now official.

Petersham is home to the largest community of Portuguese Australians in the country, and is home to the annual Bairro Portugues hosted by the Inner West Council, which brings together the very best of Portuguese culture. I also acknowledge the commitment of the Consul General of Portugal, Paulo Miguel Guedes Domingues, as well as the Sydney Portugal Community Club and Madeira Club in supporting the Portuguese diaspora in NSW and for fostering and celebrating Portuguese culture across our State. I congratulate Inner West Council, Petersham residents and all Portuguese Australians who call the inner west home on this remarkable milestone.

#### **BYRON WRITERS FESTIVAL**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)**—I wish to congratulate the staff, board and volunteers for their brilliant efforts in putting together this year's 23rd annual Byron Writer's Festival. This fantastic event brings together writers, poets, commentators, politicians, environmentalists and artists from all over the world with readers in our community and beyond. The festival hosts powerful conversations about our world, our environment and what makes us human. This year 140 writers came to Byron Writer's Festival to share their wisdom with our community. The program prompted us to think about the challenges we face, but also to explore the curious beauty of the world and how this shapes our lives. I was proud to sponsor a panel discussion Mother Earth: Humanity's Relationship with Nature which explored this theme beautifully. I would particularly like to acknowledge the work of the Festival Director Edwina Johnson, and the tireless team of dozens of volunteers who donate their time each year to make the important event such a success. I congratulate them on this year's festival and eagerly look forward to the 24th festival.

#### **JERSEY DAY**

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)**—On Friday 30th August, schools and workplaces across Australia will encourage students and employees to wear their favourite sporting jersey to show support for the Donate Life network, which began a conversation with their friends and families about organ donation. Jersey Day was inspired by the story of local resident Nathan Gremmo who was tragically lost in an accident in May 2015. Nathan's family chose to give the gift of life to others to honour the legacy of his generous personality. Nathan's organ donation saved the lives of six people, including five young adults and a baby.

Through the tragedy and the organ donation process, the Gremmo family has campaigned for all Australians to discover the facts about organ and tissue donation, to decide about becoming a donor, to register as an organ donor online and to discuss their decision with the people close to them. Through this advocacy, Jersey Day was created. It is a day to raise awareness about organ donation and create an opportunity for loved ones to

have a conversation and let their donor decision be known. I congratulate the Gremmo family on their dedication in promoting organ donation through this annual awareness day. The true hero in this story is Nathan. Just hours before his death, he wrote on his Instagram account, "You only live once but if you do it right once is enough."

#### **JO PALMER**

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)**—I am proud to say the 2019 winner of the NSW-ACT AgriFutures Rural Woman of the Year, Jo Palmer, hails from my electorate in Wagga Wagga. I had the pleasure of congratulating Ms Palmer at the official presentation in Parliament in June and I would like to do so again today. Ms Palmer, a farming mother from The Rock, has been connecting rural women to jobs through her online platform, Pointer Remote Roles (Pointer). The service is addressing rural skills shortages for small and medium-sized enterprises, providing regional businesses access to a pool of regional talent from across the country. Ms Palmer described this as a "win-win" and I agree. She is also reducing pressures on drought-affected farming families, providing off-farm income opportunities and thus eliminating job location and remote-access barriers. It is important that we continue to foster, support and celebrate the great work being achieved by rural women like Ms Palmer and the other finalists. I wish Ms Palmer all the best in the National AgriFutures Rural Women's Awards in September.

#### **KOMPLETE KAOS**

**Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)**—I wish to congratulate Lilli Pang and the Komplete Kaos FRC robotics team from Helensburgh. This year they competed in the World Championships in robotic engineering held in Houston. It is great to see a group of like-minded teenagers putting their heads together to achieve something great. The team won a number of awards at the competition but I would like to especially congratulate Nicola Pang who was a Deans List Finalist. Out of 160 nominees worldwide, only 13 students were announced as winners, Nicola being one of those. It is an outstanding achievement and I wish her the best of luck when she is flown back to the USA for the Deans List award winner activities.

#### **LINDI KINGDOM**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)**—Today I rise to congratulate Lindi Kingdom Deputy Captain of the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Catering Branch of the Rural Fire Service. Lindi was recently nominated as a finalist in the NSW Rotary Emergency Services Awards. Having been an RFS volunteer for the past 15 years Lindi has made countless meals for the volunteers both when fighting fires and during training. When two storms hit our area late last year Lindi spent over 10 hours providing over 1,000 meals for volunteers out repairing damage from the storm. She then missed her families Christmas to go to Nowendoc in north-east New South Wales to provide Christmas lunch for 800 police working on a special task force. I visited Lindi in the catering unit at Hornsby to see some of the amazing work she does, and she truly is a dedicated volunteer. Lindi may not have won the award on the night but you are a winner to the people of Hornsby!

#### **OUR LADY OF LEBANON PARISH**

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education)**—Last week, I had the honour of attending the Annual Parish BBQ & Family Festival Night held by Our Lady of Lebanon Co-Cathedral, in celebration of the Feast of the Assumption. I offer my congratulations to the Our Lady of Lebanon Parish for continuing to deliver a memorable night for youth and seniors alike every year, and for its valuable work in uniting the community over the course of its history. Our Lady of Lebanon is the largest Maronite Catholic Parish in Australia, and has been cultivating a strong forum of community and social engagement with its parishioners for over 40 years. The Annual Parish BBQ and Family Festival Night attracts a host of people from the 30,000 strong Australian-Maronite population and delivers a night of live entertainment, rides and a wealth of delicious, authentic Lebanese cuisines. I extend my thanks to His Excellency the Maronite Bishop of Australia Antoine-Charbel Taraby, as well as Father Tony Sarkis and all volunteers involved from the Parish for their exceptional work in putting on the event, as well as extending their invitation so I could be a part of another truly magnificent community night.

#### **DAVID LO**

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta)**—I rise today to recognise the achievements Mr David Lo, and his story of hard work and determination. David's story is one that many of my constituents would be able to relate to. Mr Lo was born in Hong Kong, where he later completed a Bachelor of Business Administration. In the face of political tension, Mr Lo escaped to Australia in 1991. Mr Lo and his family was left with almost nothing. Faced with adversity, Mr Lo pushed through with his hard-working mentality. Since coming to Australia almost three decades ago, Mr Lo has achieved many accomplishments.

Starting off as the Manager of the Fairfield City Arts Gallery, he later became a certified coach in both tennis and golf, and completed a Master's Degree in Professional Accounting. Mr Lo is now just one of two Chartered Accountants in Cabramatta, and is the Principal Accountant of his own accounting firm – Gala Tax and Accounting Services. This is David's story. I am honoured to tell stories of such achievement and accomplishment such as David's. Mr Lo is a true role model of how anything can be achievable, even in the face of adversity.

#### **CHRIS GLENN**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today I would like to recognise Mr Chris Glenn for more than 30 years of continuous volunteer service to the Mathoura Rural Fire Brigade in my electorate. Chris became the first life member for the Brigade recently which was an honour truly deserved. Chris is the third generation of the Glenn family to serve in the Mathoura brigade, with his Father serving over 50 years and his son receiving his 10 year service medal at the same ceremony. Chris held the President position for 11 of these years and is always on hand not just for the firefighting callouts but the important community activities Rural Fire Brigades provide like fundraising BBQ's, fire education and Santa deliveries. It is dedicated people like Chris and the countless hours spent behind the scenes maintaining equipment and mentoring new members that ensure these brigades are ready to go when our small communities need them. I congratulated Chris on his life membership and the whole Glenn family on the service you have given to your community.

#### **WARREN MELLING**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)**—I would like to thank my constituent Warren Melling from Charlestown, for raising funds in support of the Westpac Helicopter Service by taking part in this year's Drover's Run. This year's event began in Broken Hill on August 4 and saw about 50 participants travel almost 4,000 kilometres over 14 days – finishing in Tamworth on August 17. The event is one of the largest fundraisers for the Westpac Helicopter Service and this year raised over \$200,000. Warren took part in this year's event to pay tribute to his mother who passed away two years ago.

Warren's mother and stepfather were avid fundraisers for the Westpac Helicopter Service and Warren is continuing that legacy. Warren was joined by his son, Scott and it was an opportunity for him to spend time with his son while supporting a worthy cause. The route passed through the outback towns of Alpana Station; Eyre Creek; Birdsville; Hungerford on the Queensland-NSW border; and a host of other towns before arriving at the final destination of Tamworth. Warren was very pleased to be able to financially support some of the little towns along the way who have been doing it very tough through the drought.

#### **VIETNAM VETERANS DAY**

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)**—On Sunday 18th August I had the pleasure of attending the annual Vietnam Veterans Day service in Bowral. This date commemorates the Battle of Long Tan in which D Company 6 RAR Battalion was engaged. The service was a very moving occasion and was conducted by Rick McCarthy OAM who is a Director of The Honour Our Fallen organisation. I would like to recognise all of those Veterans, serving members of the Armed Services and members of the community who attended the ceremony and pay particular thanks to the Cadet Unit from Bowral High School. They provided a strong link with the Veterans and will ensure that the younger generation will not forget them and continue to honour their memory and their sacrifice.

#### **HARMONY DAY**

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)**—I rise today to congratulate Bernie Friedlander OAM and Moving Forward Together for hosting an impressive Harmony Day Poster and Song Writing Competition. It was a wonderful way to celebrate the diversity of NSW, which is the home to over 200 different nationalities, with close to a third of residents born overseas. The NSW Labor Opposition supports and embraces Harmony Day. The benefits of promoting community harmony include vibrant and varied communities; the ability to learn and grow from other cultures, thereby improving our innovation and productivity; and the ability to show kindness, respect and support for others which is the true mark of a civilised society.

The focus of Harmony Day and of the poster and song writing competition is education. It is about ensuring the students of NSW can lead the way in ensuring all those who have come from other lands can make their home here and feel welcome and included. Credit to B'nai Brith Anti-Defamation Unit, the NRL, Multicultural NSW, Amitran and the Australian Catholic University for sponsoring such a positive community building initiative.

#### **CROOM REGIONAL SPORTING COMPLEX**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services)**—On Saturday 10th August 2019, I had the pleasure of welcoming sporting club members and families to a community

barbecue to celebrate the new cricket and AFL field at Croom Regional Sporting Complex. The new field was built as part of the Albion Park Rail bypass project and is now ready ahead of the 2019/20 cricket season. This is a great win for our sporting enthusiasts in the region, with a new cricket and AFL field, new grass netball courts and amenity buildings, and the junior rugby league fields and horse recreational areas relocated. I would like to acknowledge The Rail Cricket Club and Albion Park Crows AFL Club Representatives that were in attendance at the Opening including-from the Cricket Club:

Matthew Gilly  
Simon Pearce  
Brian Dunham  
Dave Richards  
Werner Gilly  
John Norwell  
Andrew Warren  
Tony McAndrew  
Pat McAndrew  
Steve Bailey  
Tim Goodall  
Grant Tilling (Director of Cricket)  
Dale Stanford  
Jose Villa  
Montel Damoiseaux  
Melissa Damoiseaux  
Brett Gilly  
Kellie Marsh  
Shane Bitschkat  
Hayden Bagoly.

I would also like to acknowledge Craig Pusser President of the Albion Park Crows AFL Club and Auskick Co-ordinator David Jedrzejczak.

#### **WAVERTON HUB**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—I acknowledge the Waverton Hub, an important and valued community organisation in my electorate of North Shore. Operated by residents of Waverton, Wollstonecraft and neighbouring local areas, the Waverton Hub is a fantastic example of neighbourly relationships working at their best. With over 350 people in its ranks, members of the Waverton Hub are helping each other lead healthy, enjoyable and meaningful lives. The Waverton Hub's exercise program is one of the many ways the residents of Waverton and Wollstonecraft are fostering a supportive community. With three strength and balance classes, a range of physical fitness activities and a book club, Waverton Hub is promoting both positive physiology health and mental wellbeing. I was delighted to have joined members at the recent Waverton Club Annual General Meeting to support and recognise their contribution to our community. Congratulations to Waverton Hub President Helen L'Orange AM, Secretary Jill Graham, and Treasurer Nelly Wong on their reappointments. I congratulate also Greg Blainey, Liane Heinke, Luke Keighery, Graeme Pettigrew and Ken Preshaw on their appointments to the Waverton Hub board. I commend all the members of Waverton Hub on their continued dedication to the community.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 20:31  
until Thursday 22 August 2019 at 09:30.**