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Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday, 24 September 2019

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 24 September 2019

The Speaker (The Hon. Jonathan Richard O'Dea) took the chair at 12:00.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[Notices of motions given.]

Bills

JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2019

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 21 August 2019.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (12:17): I resume my contribution to debate on the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I spoke previously on schedule 1.13, which introduces the title of justice of the peace (retired) for people 65 years or older when they cease to hold office as a justice of the peace [JP]. Enabling these individuals to apply for the title of justice of the peace (retired) would recognise their service and their status in the community. The application process will be quick and simple. Information on how to apply will be available on the website of the Department of Communities and Justice and also will be circulated by the JP newsletter, which is distributed widely around New South Wales.

I turn to the amendment at schedule 1.18, which will enable current JPs to witness the execution of documents for use in other States and Territories or in relation to Commonwealth matters where the law of another jurisdiction permits them to do so. JPs in my electorate would be well aware that JPs are regularly asked to witness interstate documents, including legal documents such as mortgage papers. However, the power of New South Wales JPs to witness documents is derived from New South Wales legislation. This means that even if the law of another State permits them to witness a document, JPs are not authorised to do so under New South Wales law. This creates confusion for the community and limits the range of services that JPs can provide. In some cases, interstate authorities have issued guidance stating that New South Wales JPs can witness particular documents, making the situation even more confusing.

This uncertainty is further compounded by the fact that JPs can already witness statutory declarations for use in other jurisdictions. It is only other types of documents that cannot be witnessed. The amendment at schedule 1.18 is a very simple change to section 26A of the Oaths Act 1900. Nevertheless it will clarify an issue that has been causing practical difficulties for JPs and the public. It will also provide a real benefit to the New South Wales community by making it quicker and easier to complete interstate transactions, especially property transactions. Our JPs provide an important and high quality service to the people of New South Wales. I am pleased to support the amendments, which will both improve the quality and availability of JP services and recognise the significant contribution that many JPs provide to their local communities over many years.

The second point of considerable interest to my electorate is covered in schedule 1.4 to the bill, which contains amendments to the Coroners Act 2009. As the Attorney General said, the purpose of those amendments is to improve coronial processes and reduce delay in the system. In my electorate there has been ongoing concern about the impact of the current processes for coronial services on local residents in regional New South Wales. I appreciate those concerns are not confined to the Albury electorate alone and I thank the members for Cootamundra, Wagga Wagga and Murray who have also advocated on this issue. The issue first came to my attention in the lead-up to the State election in March. Following the election the issue was raised with me by John Vogel, a director of Lester & Son Funeral Directors in Albury-Wodonga. Since our discussions, John and I have been advocating in our own directions and channels for solutions that will help reduce the attendant delays that have occurred as bodies of the deceased are sent from the Albury electorate to Newcastle, Sydney or Wollongong for autopsies.

In May this year, the Country Women's Association of New South Wales conference was held in Albury over five days. The 460 delegates and other visitors discussed many issues that affected their communities, from drought to mental health and beyond. One of the key issues was the impact of coronial investigations for rural residents. Janet Drummond, secretary of the Table Top branch and a retired nurse, moved a motion to end autopsies being limited to Newcastle, Sydney or Wollongong. She told the conference, "With ... advances in

forensic medicine it is very difficult to understand why rural and regional families have to endure long delays for results of a post mortem." A motion was successfully put to the conference in these terms: The CWA of NSW lobby the NSW Government to change the unreasonable monopoly of post mortems undertaken in metropolitan areas to regional and rural centres where there are PET and CT scanners available for such procedures.

The loss of a loved one is a time of immense grief. In January 2019 Mr Tony Iverson, local to Albury, passed away. His father, Graham Iverson, alerted us to the fact that there was a 31-day delay before Tony could be buried—a consequence of increased demand on coronial services at that time. The trauma for the Iverson family is a reminder to us that this issue is not a statistic on paper, but the heart-rending reality of everyday families. Grief and anguish at a time of loss can only be compounded by delays in the return of the deceased to the bereaved. It is important therefore that we work together to review and improve where we can the coronial service to ensure that our vulnerable and bereaved constituents experience less stress in what is a terrible time.

The first step, as set out in schedule 1.4 [1] to the bill, is to amend the meaning of what constitutes a reportable death under the Act. Any person who has reason to believe that a death is reportable within the meaning of section 6 of the Coroners Act must report the death to a police officer, Coroner, or Assistant Coroner. Of particular note is section 6 (1) (d), which currently provides that a death is reportable if the person who died did not see a medical practitioner in the six months prior to their death. The first amendment to this part of the Act will remove the requirement in section 6 (1) (d) 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. It is expected that this reform will result in a reduction in the number of natural deaths unnecessarily reported to the Coroner. As a guide, it is estimated that around 60 per cent of all cases reported to the New South Wales Coroner each year are the result of a natural death.

Importantly, this amendment brings New South Wales into line with all other States and Territories other than the Australian Capital Territory, which is another element that is significant for my border community. By removing the requirement to report a death to the Coroner just because the person had not seen a medical practitioner in the six months before their death and allowing a pathologist to carry out a non-invasive preliminary examination of the remains of a person without the need for a post-mortem investigation direction from a coroner, the sort of situations I have just described may never have to occur again.

The amendments to the Coroners Act 2009 will better serve families during a difficult and stressful time, helping them get the answers they seek more promptly about a loved one who has passed away unexpectedly. I also acknowledge that the Attorney General has said that further opportunities for appropriate ways to improve the coronial process are to be explored. I welcome the establishment of a review of the coronial system to be conducted by a combined Department of Communities and Justice and NSW Health task force. I thank all those in the Albury electorate who have contacted me on this issue. I thank the Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, the Hon. Mark Speakman, and the Government for introducing this legislation. I note the support and considerable work of the Minister for Health and Medical Research, the Hon. Brad Hazzard, and thank him. I support the bill.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (12:25): I make a contribution to debate on the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The member for Liverpool has expressed the Opposition's position, which I support as I am bound to, and nothing I say should be seen to be inconsistent, either expressly or by implication. I wish to confine my remarks to schedule 1.4 to the bill, whereby items [1], [2], [3] and [4] seek to amend the provisions of the Coroners Act 2009. I observe that tinkering with the Coroners Act to avoid delay, as the Attorney General expressed in his second reading speech, is hardly a substitute for the long outstanding statutory review of the Coroner's Court or the Coroners Act. I suggest to the House that the Coroner's Court is currently in crisis and has been for quite some time. Simply trying to reduce delay to enable a focus on inquests, as is the basis of the provisions of schedule 1.4, ignores the fact that the crisis in the Coroner's Court is due to both structure and the quality of appointments.

The problems in relation to the Coroners Act and the outstanding review were highlighted in a publication by the former Deputy State Coroner Hugh Dillon that was published in the 2019 autumn edition of the *Bar News*. Hugh Dillon is an adjunct professor at the University of New South Wales Law School. He was a magistrate from 1996 to 2017. He was the Deputy State Coroner from 2008 to 2016 and he is now the Deputy President of the Mental Health Review Tribunal. He is not a person whose views should be ignored. With respect to the problem with the structure and quality of appointments and the manner in which the Coroner's Court discharges them, I quote from Mr Dillon on page 10:

The criminal justice orientation of the Local Court limits the effectiveness of the coronial system. The cultural habits of mind and practice of magistrates are oriented towards managing and processing large volumes of relatively uncomplicated criminal matters as efficiently and as quickly as possible. Single cases are dealt with *seriatim*. Magistrates have no jurisdiction or capacity to treat them epidemiologically. Decisiveness and speed are the qualities most admired in magistrates by those who run the Local Court. High clearance rates are the KPI that keeps the Chief Magistrate's Office happiest. Some senior magistrates refer to the coronial

jurisdiction of the court as a "tick-a-box" jurisdiction – their view is that coronial cases can be disposed of almost effortlessly in most instances before they return to the real work of punishing drink-drivers, hotel heroes and other miscreants. It would be sad if that was the magistrate's view of the coronial jurisdiction. The Coroner is the oldest known office to the English legal system and it dates back to 1194—some 825 years. The basis of the coronial jurisdiction is to ensure that no-one loses their life without society knowing the manner and cause of death as best as possible. It is because society has for 825 years valued human life that the coronial office has continued over that period of time in England and in Australia. The problems with the coronial jurisdiction, as I said, relate to structure.

Whilst I agree with some of Hugh Dillon's comments, I do not agree with all of them. To categorise the magistracy as Hugh Dillon has really does not speak of the high regard that the Coroner's jurisdiction was held in when I was counsel assisting in a number of inquests. To speak like that of former State Coroner John Abernethy or former senior Deputy State Coroner Jacqueline Milledge, who has subsequently become a personal friend, or Dorelle Pinch or Carl Milovanovich really understates how outstanding they were. Unfortunately that has not been the case since those appointments and since the amendments of the Coroners Act.

The solution is one of structure. I suggest that the State Coroner have the status of a District Court judge at the very least, and that the Coroner's Court needs to be removed from the supervision of the Chief Magistrate and the magistracy. I also assert, when I relate to appointments, that the appointments should be made by the Attorney. Whilst he should engage in the normal consultation process, the Attorney is a highly regarded silk in his own right. I would far better trust his appointments to the Coroner's Court, even if he appoints his own Liberal Party colleagues, than leaving it up to the current bureaucratic method that has allowed the Coroner's Court to descend into the shambles that it currently is.

You cannot have the State Coroner and the coroners that operate in the Coroner's Court be subject to a tick-a-box. You cannot have State coroners under pressure to dispose of matters in the name of efficiency, because every reportable death is different and every requirement or inquest into the manner and cause of death is different. Lest this House think that coroners are not under pressure, I can indicate that through my involvement as counsel assisting the Coroner I have seen subtle pressure being placed on coroners. I was counsel assisting the Coroner in respect of the inquest into the death of Dianne Brimble, a lady who was killed on a cruise ship more than 15 years ago. When I turned up on the first day of the inquest the then Deputy State Coroner, Jacqueline Milledge, who I indicated previously has since become a personal friend, said to me, "Ron, this inquest will ensure that I never become State Coroner." My response was, "Jackie, don't be silly."

But the reality of the situation was that right the way through that very lengthy inquiry to determine the manner and cause of death of a woman who was treated abysmally and killed in the most terrible circumstances, the Coroner was subject to considerable criticism from within the profession and from within the magistracy. There were brazen attempts at lack of cooperation, or lack of effort in trying to make available telephone intercepts that were recorded as part of the police investigation in South Australia as to the manner and cause of Mrs Brimble's death, and there was a pressure to finish the inquest and get it out of the way.

That is the sort of pressure that gets placed upon the coronial jurisdiction if they be subject to control, oversight or pressure by the Chief Magistrate or a Chief Magistrate's Office when dealing with the manner and cause of death. There is another issue of some concern in relation to the way these things operate. I was consulted by the senior Deputy State Coroner who was to hold an inquest into the death of Kovco, an Australian soldier that had died in Iraq. The death of Kovco was subject to a military inquiry which resulted in a determination that Kovco had died by his own hand. Following the military inquiry the Coroner determined to hold an inquest into Kovco's death. [*Extension of time*]

During a conference with the Coroner and senior officers of the police Homicide Squad some material was made available to the Coroner and I that provided a possible alternative motive for the killing of Kovco. I cannot disclose what that material is because it is subject to national security. I was contacted by the Crown Solicitor's Office to indicate my available dates for that inquest. I spoke to Frank Hollis, a former Crown Prosecutor who appeared for the family at the military inquiry, and suggested that he may wish to remove his request for a jury inquest. I gave my available dates and expected to receive a brief to appear as counsel assisting. Within a short period of time after doing that the Kovco inquest was removed, in my view unlawfully, from the Deputy State Coroner. It was taken by the State Coroner and another counsel was briefed to appear. The information disclosed to me in conference, I am told, was never subject to any evidence before the jury. We cannot have a situation where coroners are subject to any pressure or control. The jurisdiction of a coroner begins as soon as a death is reported.

The other inquest that I will reference to is notable for the pressure that a coroner is placed under. Deputy State Coroner Dorelle Pinch held an inquest into the manner and cause of death of the Balibo Five, the Australian journalists murdered by Indonesian soldiers—as so she found—in East Timor. There was considerable pressure, I am told, to not have that inquest for national security reasons. So concerned was the Coroner that she had Mark Tedeschi, the then Senior Crown Prosecutor, act as counsel assisting in that inquest. The function of the

Coroner is not just to determine the manner and cause of death but also to make recommendations as to how to prevent deaths in the future and to improve safety. For example, the inquest into the death of Dianne Brimble resulted in recommendations that have substantially changed the entire cruise industry, not just in Australia but around the world. Mrs Brimble did not die in vain because her killing has resulted in substantial changes.

I want to say this about the magistracy: Hugh Dillon is critical of magistrates being appointed and believes that coroners should have their own permanent jurisdiction. My view is that there is no reason why any judicial officer cannot be appointed to the office of Coroner or be a Deputy State Coroner. Coroners need to be well rounded. It is like presiding at any other court or presiding at the Police Integrity Commission, the Crime Commission, or the Independent Commission Against Corruption. They are things that judicial officers and barristers do every day. The roles are spelt out in the legislation and the bar rules. There should be no assumption simply because you rotate coroners that magistrates are not fit and proper people to hold that office.

I say that the person appointed to be the State Coroner on any review of the Coroners Act needs to be at least a District Court judge—at least a judicial officer with the status of a District Court judge. That will make it more difficult for that undetectable pressure to be placed on trying to speed matters through. Human life is so precious to us. Indeed, the English common law for 825 years has recognised that no person should lose their life unless society is satisfied as best it can be as to their manner and cause.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (12:40): I speak to the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The purpose of the bill is to make amendments to various Acts within the Stronger Communities cluster to address emerging issues, support procedural improvements, clarify uncertainty and correct drafting errors in legislation. Justice legislation miscellaneous amendment bills are typically introduced into Parliament each session as part of the Government's regular legislative review and monitoring program. There are a number of major points within this legislation. I will focus on an issue very dear to those on both sides of the House—justices of the peace [JPs].

In each New South Wales electorate we are all blessed to have a large number of justices of the peace. In the Tweed electorate we have a significant number of JPs who volunteer their time, usually in the local shopping centres, to sign affidavits and legal documents. There is also a steady flow through the doors of many electorate offices, including mine, for this service. Schedules 1.13 and 1.18 to the bill contain amendments to the Justices of the Peace Act 2002 and the Oaths Act 1900 respectively. For more than 200 years JPs have provided an invaluable service to the New South Wales community.

The primary role of a JP is to witness a person making a statutory declaration or affidavit and to certify copies of original documents. These kinds of documents are often needed for official and legal purposes. JPs come from all sections of the community and are widely available across New South Wales. They also provide their services on a voluntary basis. The amendments in this bill also provide an important recognition of the significant time many JPs have dedicated to their local communities over many years.

Schedule 1.13 [5] to the bill introduces the title of "Justice of the Peace (Retired)" for people 65 years or older who have ceased to hold office as a JP and who have provided at least 10 consecutive years of service. On a number of occasions the Attorney General and I have awarded certificates to JPs who have performed 50 years or more of service. It is absolutely amazing that those people have been able to do that. The title of JP holds personal significance for many current and former office holders.

It is a reality that some JPs will need to relinquish office as they advance in age or otherwise find that they cannot fulfil the requirements of the role. Enabling those individuals to apply for the title of "Justice of the Peace (Retired)" recognises their service and status in the community. The application process will be quick and simple. Information about how to apply will be available on the Department of Communities and Justice website. Information will also be included in the JP newsletter, which is circulated widely around New South Wales.

I turn now to the Oaths Act 1900. The amendment in schedule 1.18 to the bill will enable current JPs to witness the execution of documents for use in other States and Territories in relation to Commonwealth matters and where the law of another jurisdiction permits them to do so. This is a very important amendment, particularly in border areas such as the Tweed, where we have a steady stream of Queenslanders wishing to conduct business in New South Wales and, conversely, New South Wales people wishing to conduct business in the State of Queensland who would like documents signed. Up until now that service has been declined.

Justices of the peace are regularly asked to witness interstate documents, including legal documents such as mortgage papers. However, the power of a New South Wales justice of the peace to witness documents is derived from New South Wales legislation. This means that, even if the law of another State permits them to witness a document, justices of the peace are not authorised to do so under New South Wales law. This creates confusion for the community and limits the range of services that justices of the peace can provide.

In some cases, interstate authorities have issued guidance stating that New South Wales justices of the peace can witness particular documents, which makes the situation even more confusing. This uncertainty is further compounded by the fact that justices of the peace can already witness statutory declarations for use in other jurisdictions. It is only other types of documents that cannot be witnessed. The amendment in schedule 1.18 to the bill will make a very simple change to section 26A of the Oaths Act 1900. Nevertheless, it will clarify an issue that has been causing practical difficulties for justices of the peace and the public. I know that my staff will agree this change will make their lives a lot easier. It will also provide a real benefit to the New South Wales community by making it quicker and easier to complete interstate transactions, especially property transactions.

Justices of the peace provide an important and high-quality service to the people of New South Wales. I am pleased to support the amendments in this bill, which will improve the quality and availability of justices of the peace services and recognise the significant contribution that many of them have provided to their local communities over many years. Recently I was privileged to be granted my re-accreditation as a justice of peace. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (12:46): I make a brief contribution to the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. This omnibus bill contains numerous miscellaneous amendments; however, I will only address a few of them. As part of the bill, the standard non-parole period for bushfire arson offences under the Crimes Act 1900 will be increased from five to nine years. This change is in line with community expectation to crack down on those individuals whose recklessness and stupidity places a significant cost and burden on to our State. Bushfires pose a significant risk to life. They can destroy wildlife habitats, homes, businesses and communities. Families can also lose their livelihoods and sometimes, their lives.

It is well known that for every bushfire that starts across our State, our emergency service workers are the ones called to the frontline to tackle the situation at hand. To know that these brave men and women are putting their lives on the line as a result of an arsonist's reckless behaviour is sickening. These individuals need a stronger deterrent to make them think twice before starting a fire. Recently we saw the trials and hardships faced by our firefighters as they battled fires throughout northern New South Wales. Our emergency services personnel have enough on their plate, let alone having to deal with man-made infernos set to wreak havoc and threaten lives. I commend this amendment. I pray it serves as a stronger deterrent for any would-be fool who wishes to recklessly endanger people's lives and livelihood throughout the State.

It is my understanding that the Coroners Act creates an unfortunate set of circumstances for families living in rural and regional New South Wales who have lost a loved one in suspicious or unexpected circumstances. Deaths of this type currently need to be reported to the Coroner for a coronial investigation. That objectively places rural and regional communities in a state of limbo as delays in retrieving the body of the deceased may range from three days to three weeks, sometimes even longer. This prevents families from making funeral arrangements or allowing them to appropriately begin to grieve, given the delays may vary on a case by case basis.

Meanwhile communities in rural and regional New South Wales have been left with no alternatives. The proposed amendments to the Coroners Act will provide reassurance to those living in rural and regional New South Wales that the process will be significantly faster and less intrusive on the family of the deceased. This will be achieved by the revocation of the requirement to refer all unexpected deaths to the Coroner for a coronial inquiry. Pathologists will be allowed to carry out less invasive examinations to determine whether a full post-mortem examination is necessary or if the matter should be referred to the Coroner. The intent of these changes aims to ensure matters are resolved quickly and to allow for bodies to be returned to families without unnecessary delays in most circumstances. It is a sensible amendment that will greatly benefit rural and regional communities.

I also mention schedule 1, part 1.13 and the amendment to the Justices of the Peace Act 2002 No 27. This amendment will allow for former justices of the peace who are 65 years or older to apply to use a retirement title after their names. This means any former justice of the peace—who was 65 years or older when they ceased holding office and have served as a justice of the peace for a period of 10 consecutive years or more—may apply to the secretary of the department to use the title "JP (Retired)". The title will serve as an acknowledgement to our State's justices of the peace for their longstanding service to the community over the years and will be a way to show our sincere appreciation for their efforts. In my electorate of Fairfield a number of justices of the peace are over 65 years of age and have been providing their services to our community for many years. I am pleased many of these longstanding contributors to our community will have the opportunity to apply for a JP (Retired) title once they are ready to finally put down the quill. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:51): I support the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. While the bill makes amendments to various Acts, the area I will speak about focuses particularly on domestic violence, including the introduction of Legal Aid NSW as a member of the Domestic Violence Death

Review Team [DVDRT]. I am pleased that the bill enables Legal Aid NSW to become a member of the Domestic Violence Death Review Team. I am especially passionate about any efforts that will help put perpetrators of domestic violence behind bars and these amendments should be supported wholeheartedly. In my electorate of North Shore a number of organisations are working very hard to protect the survivors of domestic violence. One such organisation is Mary's House, which is a refuge that organises accommodation for women and children who are escaping domestic violence—it provides outstanding care for our community's most vulnerable people.

The object of DVDRT is to investigate the causes of domestic violence deaths in our State so as to reduce the incidence of these deaths, and to facilitate improvements in systems and services. As part of the investigation the DVDRT undertakes qualitative and quantitative analyses. The team also looks into specific cases of domestic violence and uses them to provide a window into domestic violence offending so that specific opportunities for intervention and prevention can be identified. The multidisciplinary team includes government and non-government representatives, and is convened by State Coroner Teresa O'Sullivan.

The bill will amend section 101E of the Coroners Act 2009 to include a representative from Legal Aid NSW as one of the members of DVDRT, which plays such an important and invaluable role in the State's response to domestic violence. This amendment is a natural and highly beneficial progression, given Legal Aid NSW already plays such a key role in responding to domestic violence. One of the ways that Legal Aid NSW does this is through its domestic violence unit, which is a specialist domestic violence service. Some of the many functions of this unit include helping victims of domestic violence obtain apprehended domestic violence orders, sorting out arrangements for children, resolving property disputes, assisting with legal problems, and organising for the provision of child support and maintenance.

I take this opportunity to reflect on the Government's recent decision to join Our Watch, which took effect on 1 July 2019. Local domestic violence advocacy groups in my electorate have spoken with me about that in the past. The decision to join Our Watch was the first recommendation, recommendation 1.1, of the New South Wales *Domestic Violence Death Review Team Report 2015-2017*. In closing a loophole and looking at the importance of the Domestic Violence Death Review Team, Our Watch provides us with another opportunity to drive nationwide change and the cultures that lead to violence against women by working closely with members to implement strategies and initiatives. The decision to join Our Watch will change the way that our primary prevention work in New South Wales is coordinated. As part of a cohesive and national primary prevention approach, we can address domestic and family violence through attending the board, inputting into the national agenda, engaging with key advocates and considering opportunities to pose prevention projects.

In this term of government we have chosen to join Our Watch because we know that with all of the investments we have made in previous terms of government in frontline service delivery, we now have the capacity through our strong budget management to provide additional funding for frontline service delivery, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety Limited membership, as well as being a member of Our Watch. I know this membership will be a valuable investment to help stem the prevalence of domestic, family and sexual violence, and ultimately to save lives, which is a fundamental goal. That commitment builds on the State's existing prevention work such as the innovative projects funded through the \$20 million Domestic and Family Violence Innovation Fund.

I will reflect on some of the investments and work that the New South Wales Government has put into tackling this grave social issue of domestic violence. The Government invests hundreds of millions of dollars annually to combat domestic and family violence through mainstream services in Justice, Police and Health, and child protection, social housing and homelessness services. The Government is committed to being tough on perpetrators, but is also investing a record amount of money to support victims and help keep them safe. The Government has invested in a number of different programs including Rent Choice Start Safely.

Members probably will be aware that this program supports people escaping violence to move into stable housing in the private rental market. The Government has introduced behavioural change interventions for high-risk offenders and, as I already mentioned, the Domestic and Family Violence Innovation Fund. Some of those investments go into innovative prevention, early intervention and crisis responses. The Government's Safer Pathway program is a response that uses multiagency interactions to address high-risk domestic violence victims. It operates in many locations across New South Wales, including in my electorate of North Shore.

I have spoken in this place before about the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service NSW, which supports victims through the criminal justice system. I had the great opportunity of joining staff at Manly Court House, where the majority of domestic violence cases from my community are heard. I acknowledge the work that it does. Josie Gregory has spent quite a bit of time with me at Manly Court House and has spoken with me about the increase in demand for the agency's services, and the growing number of clients from my electorate who require its support. I thank her and her team for the work that they do in supporting and investing in the women who are facing domestic violence cases at Manly Local Court.

The New South Wales Government's Staying Home Leaving Violence initiative supports women and their children to remain safely at home by removing the perpetrator. It also invests in the NSW Police Force through the Domestic Violence High Risk Offender Teams. It also has a number of non-government community-based organisations leading perpetrator interventions. The North Shore Police Area Command in my electorate has a range of specific liaison officers in place to support different, vulnerable or at-risk communities. Historically it has had domestic violence liaison officers led by Superintendent Allan Sicard. Recently I met with Superintendent Sicard again and we spoke about how the changes in the police area command had enabled him to look at the structure of those support groups and to introduce additional resources to his team to broadly support vulnerable groups within our community.

There is such a strong focus on proactive policing in our community and on providing support and advice to people experiencing domestic violence, whether they be women, people in family relationships such as parents and children, or even flatmates who might be experiencing violence. The North Shore Police Area Command is working very hard to address what is one of the highest levels of crime that occurs within my electorate and community. As I said before, in my electorate we have the Lower North Shore Domestic Violence Network. I have worked with that network, as I have with the court advocacy service, to try to achieve the support necessary for women and other people escaping violence.

I thank the shelter manager of the Manly women's shelter, who took me to meet with some of the women who were seeking refuge at the Manly women's shelter and to talk about what they do to address this issue in our shared community. I also thank the North Shore Women's Benevolent Association, which opened Mary's House women's shelter in the first place. I also thank the volunteers and supporters of Share the Dignity, for whom I am a collection point every year. I know that the Assistant Speaker and member for Oatley is a very avid supporter of Share the Dignity; he has very significant drives and gets a lot of materials and donations together for women escaping violence and homelessness in our community. I know a number of members in this place do the same.

We all know that domestic violence, sadly, is often hidden due to embarrassment, fear, control and financial dependence. While I have spoken broadly about the issue of domestic violence, about what our Government is doing to help address, reduce and minimise domestic violence in our community and about the roles of my local organisations, this bill specifically looks at involving Legal Aid representatives in the analysis of domestic violence-related deaths. That will help us better identify opportunities to prevent domestic violence and to support victims—survivors, really—throughout the legal system. I commend the bill to the House.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (13:01): I contribute to the debate on the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The Opposition will support the bill and so I, too, will help secure its passage. I first acknowledge the good work of the member for Liverpool and shadow Attorney General in bringing much of the content of this bill to the spotlight. The shadow Attorney General's commitment to the constant improvement of the bureaucracy of justice in this State is a credit to himself and to our side of the House. If only Joseph K. had had access to the member for Liverpool in his time of need, his fate must have been much different. The bill introduces a number of amendments that bring many pieces of legislation in line with contemporary society and the technology that we now use to engage in the public sphere and civic life. That, after all, is why we are here: to ensure that the laws of New South Wales remain up to date and adequately reflect the communities that we are elected to represent.

I commend the work that the bill does in closing some of the gaps in our current law and removing some inefficient and imprecise crossovers between pieces of legislation. Most significantly, I recognise the improvement the bill brings to the administration of the New South Wales justices of the peace system—a significant and important role played throughout our communities by volunteers who deserve better representation and acknowledgement. To some extent the bill will improve that through the introduction of the title "JP (Retired)", which acknowledges those over the age of 65 with 10-plus years of service.

To begin with I turn to the progress the bill will bring. Schedule 1.4 [1] amends section 6 (1) (d) of the Coroners Act 2009 No. 41. The amendment 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. This amendment brings New South Wales law in line with that of all other States of Australia and with the Northern Territory. It removes some of the administrative burdens placed on coroners and the coronial system by deaths that are clearly natural in cause. In practicality this should hasten the coronial process, reducing costliness and improving outcome times for families during what can be some of their most harrowing days. The amendment also will allow coroners to allocate a greater amount of their time and energy to inquiries into suspicious or violent deaths and to prioritise public health, safety and security.

The amendment should also improve the accurateness of a coroner's decision-making by removing a great weight of unnecessary rulings. Their job is difficult—it involves long hours and the requirement to process emotionally challenging content. Easing the burden on those vital public servants, in particular in regional and

rural communities where the strain is felt the most, is welcome. The bill also seeks to make amendments to legislation surrounding the work of justices of the peace [JPs]. I acknowledge the good the bill will bring in this space. I will touch on that detail later.

I have received a significant amount of correspondence from constituents and groups within my electorate about the proposed amendments to the Oaths Act 1900. In the main, I acknowledge the correspondence from the Eastern Suburbs branch of the NSW Justices Association. Many of its contingent volunteer at the Waverley customer service centre and the Waverley Council Library daily and understand firsthand some of the bureaucratic frustrations that the bill seeks to address. Further, I acknowledge the work and insights of Paul Tracey, OAM, who offers his time as a JP within my electorate office. Paul seeks to keep me up to date with the nature of the documentation he tends to and has strongly advocated to me the virtue of some of the proposed changes to the legislation governing the work of JPs.

I have received a large amount of correspondence about the proposed amendments to the Oaths Act 1900, specifically urging me to push that the legislation go further than currently slated. I refer to the proposed amendments to section 26A of the Oaths Act as detailed in schedule 1.18. Section 26A as it stands allows for a JP to witness a statutory declaration for use in another State, Territory or the Commonwealth, if that act is permitted by the other jurisdiction in question. Schedule 1.18 extends this by adding "or witness the execution of a document". Quite often, that might involve the witnessing of a land title document. Herein lies the shortfall as it clearly makes little sense to allow JPs to witness interstate statutory declarations, but not other documents. Potentially the most problematic shortcoming of the amendment is that it does not allow JPs in New South Wales to witness overseas documents.

As is the case in many other electorates in New South Wales, a significant number of my constituents are first-generation Australians, having lived a large proportion of their working lives overseas. As such, many of these constituents receive transfer payments from overseas governments—payments they have earned rightfully and payments that ease drawings from our own social support networks. Such payments provide an overall positive benefit to individual people and their communities but often they come with complex administrative burdens. For example, often residents require proof-of-life forms to receive payments from overseas governments. For many years New South Wales JPs signed such documents until the department issued a directive that they not do this. The only alternative to a JP witnessing is a public notary, which will cost the individual several hundred dollars—usually an amount similar to that of the pension the person would receive and on many occasions more. I agree with my colleague the member for Liverpool who described this situation as Kafkaesque.

I now mention the proposed amendment to the bill of the reinsertion of "being a member of a terrorist organisation" into the Crimes Act. While the Opposition does not oppose this, it would be remiss of me if I did not note that it was this Government that allowed it to expire. Furthermore, while this Government continues to spruik its hard stance on anti-terrorism, the offence has somehow managed to fall off its books. Several other sections of the bill are worthy of mention. I comment on those that seek to bring legislation in line with the realities of modern civil life.

The alteration of the time allocated to postal delivery is significant and overdue. The amendment reflects the reality of a slower postal service and seeks to eliminate the no-fault escalation of issues, fines and outstanding correspondence. A counterbalance in improving efficiencies can be found in the alterations to the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act. The suggested amendments allow for applications for notices to produce to be returned electronically, significantly expediting the administrative process surrounding Local Court submissions. The majority of the bill comprises good, logical alterations to legislation. Our role in this place is to facilitate the process by which our constituents navigate civil society. I believe the bill does that in the main. The Opposition does not oppose the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (13:08): As the Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Justice I am pleased to support the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, which the Attorney General introduced on 21 August this year. The bill reflects a whole suite of justice reforms made by this Government, which I am certainly proud to support. This bill makes an amendment to 22 different Acts of this Parliament. The objectives of the bill run to no fewer than 32 items. Today, however, I focus my attention on the elements of the bill that seek to improve the New South Wales justice of the peace [JP] system. I know all members will come into contact with this system in their electorate offices and in local shopping centres and libraries. Many of my fellow members will also, I am sure, have members of staff who are JPs.

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 justice of the peace associations: NSW Justices Association, Australian Justices of the Peace Association, Northern NSW Federation of Justices of the Peace, and Tweed Valley Justices' Association Inc. It was this particular review that identified the three amendments proposed in the 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)".

We all know that our local JPs gift their time and expertise to helping people at key moments of their lives, whether it be buying a home, accessing superannuation, or more routinely with the filling-in of various government forms, verifying identity and witnessing agreement to subcontracts. The introduction of the new title of "JP (Retired)" 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 recognised properly and they can maintain the dignity of their position within their workplace or community organisation, even after they are no longer able to perform the functions of a JP. 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. This is a commonsense measure, which will make it clear and easy for our justices associations and individual JPs in the community to know that they are capable of witnessing the execution of any document of any Australian government jurisdiction—State, Territory or Commonwealth.

I share in the Attorney General's thanks to the NSW Justices Association, all the JP associations and JPs for identifying and raising this issue. I particularly thank, among others, Mr Paul Mannix, former President of NSW Justices Association, and Mr Peter Enderby and Bruce Gibbs of that association, who invited me to speak at the NSW Justices Association State conference on ethics, which was organised by the Cumberland branch. It was an absolutely fantastic event. It is wonderful to be a patron of the Cumberland branch of the NSW Justices Association. The Cumberland branch of the NSW Justices Association is currently thriving under the leadership of its dedicated and capable committee executive team led by president Phillip Chown, vice presidents Alan Ezzy and Rees John, secretary Nino Strangio and treasurer Deanna Cartwright. The Cumberland branch meets on the third Monday of each month at Wentworthville Leagues Club, just outside my electorate of Seven Hills.

In order to supplement the traditional search function on the New South Wales Government's Department of Justice, the NSW Justices Association provides a comprehensive list of all the community desks where members make themselves available to exercise their functions as JPs. The NSW Justices Association also does an excellent job keeping its members updated on policy changes, and rules and guidelines for exercising the functions of a JP. I have no doubt that the amendments contained in the bill will feature in an upcoming handbook and circulars of the association, which now has 3,500 active members and 23 separate branches across the State.

The association was established in 1911 as a non-political and not-for-profit professional association. Two Saturdays ago the association held an advisory meeting and its annual general meeting will be held on 16 November this year. I am sure all members in this place will join me in wishing the association all the best as it continues to promote the good work of our JPs in our respective electorates and communities. As a member of Parliament, I relish the opportunity to encourage and support the activities and work of JPs in the local community. I understand the dividend they bring to our local communities and support their efforts wholeheartedly. We may well be living in the digital age but, as Dr Cassandra Cross said in her speech at the 2017 justices conference, online fraud remains an important issue, particularly for seniors and young people in our community. Despite the shift to online identity verification, nothing beats the human-to-human check that New South Wales justices of the peace provide for our community. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate interrupted.

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

Members

MEMBER FOR HORNSBY

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Energy and Environment and member for Hornsby had a birthday last week. I acknowledge that and wish him happy birthday.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to five members of Advance Diversity Services, guests of the member for Kogarah. I also welcome to the Chamber staff from the NSW Electoral Commission who are

visiting Parliament today. I had the opportunity at lunchtime today to attend part of the presentation that was given and thank them for that. I was pleased to see a good attendance at that forum.

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPH

The SPEAKER: There has been approval for a number of photographs to be taken today for the purposes of the annual report, website and social media of the Parliament. There is an approved photographer present in the Chamber today.

Members

REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: On behalf of Ms Gladys Berejiklian: I inform the House that on 18 September 2019 in accordance with section 36 of the Constitution Act 1902 Her Excellency the Governor authorised Dr Geoffrey Lee, MP, to act for and on behalf of the Mr John Sidoti, MP, as Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

Question Time

MASCOT TOWERS

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:19): My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. The residents of Mascot Towers are desperate to get back into their homes and they face financial ruin. Why has the Government not offered a low-interest loan so residents like Roslyn, Kasumi, Brian and Thomas, who are sitting in the gallery today, can fix their damaged building?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (14:20): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question. I thank the residents of Mascot for coming to the Parliament today. As you know, I have been there on site. I was there in June when we announced the accommodation support and assistance package for residents of Mascot Towers. I cannot begin to understand what it would be like to return home to find that you are unable to access your home—stuck in the street with the clothes on your back and personal possessions still in the property.

When the residents were evacuated from Mascot Towers on Friday 14 June we moved very quickly to support them. Fair Trading NSW provided rapid support for displaced residents and set up the Mascot Towers telephone hotline, added the frequently asked questions to the Fair Trading website and updated social media sites with information for affected parties. In addition to that, the Government moved very quickly to announce the accommodation package for up to three months to assist residents whose homes in Mascot Towers are temporarily unsafe to occupy. We made sure that it was easy to access in relation to three-bedroom units, two-bedroom units and one-bedroom units, what they could access and where they could go so that at least they had some emergency accommodation during a time of great uncertainty. It was a time when they did not know what the next day would bring, when they did not know what their next steps would be, when they did not have—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order—

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

Ms Yasmin Catley: It is standing order 129. Please let me finish.

The SPEAKER: Very briefly.

Ms Yasmin Catley: My point of order is that the Minister is not answering the question.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. The Minister will continue. He is being relevant.

Ms Yasmin Catley: No, he is not.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Ms Yasmin Catley: He is not answering the question.

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

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I update the House that on 22 August a meeting was held with residents and a resolution was passed to approve the Fair Trading deed in relation to the assistance package. The Government is happy to provide ongoing further assistance. I announced the extension of that package for a further six months while owners work through the problems they face in relation to insurance claims to get the building fixed. We understand that there are four stages to fix Mascot Towers: stage one, expansion joints rectification; stage two,

general non-structural defects; stage three, transfer beams; stage four, foundation works in relation to the evacuation. I update the House that we have met frequently with representatives from Mascot Towers. They inform us that engineers have said that works next door to Mascot Towers have contributed to problems with the building known as Mascot.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The question is specifically whether the Minister is offering low-interest loans to the residents.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being generally relevant to the question. The Minister has the call.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: We were informed by the owners corporation that the work next door had affected the structural problems with Mascot Towers.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. We have residents in the gallery today. They want to know about low-interest loans, which is the question I asked. They are appreciative of the rental assistance but they are in a desperate state. Will the Minister offer them low-interest loans?

The SPEAKER: Before the Minister continues, I have ruled that the Minister is being generally relevant and I will continue to rule that way. He has heard the question and is being relevant in a general sense, which is what the standing orders require. The Minister has the call.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: We have been informed that they are now pursuing the insurance companies to claim against the work next door. We implore the insurance companies to crack on and release the funding from their insurance claims so they can get on with the rectification works and allow the residents to go back home. I am very happy to meet with the residents who have come to see us today. I offer our heartfelt feelings to them and we will do everything we can to support them.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order—

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

Ms Yasmin Catley: My point of order is under Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: I will not hear another point of order. The member will take her seat. The Minister has the call.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: We implore the insurance companies to release the funds on the claims now so that residents can get access to the funds to start the rectification works. We have also spoken to banks. They have switched off mortgages and insurances. We ask all the other banks to come online as well and stop the repayments while this is going on.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (14:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on stamp duty savings for first home buyers?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:26): I thank the member for Camden for asking me this important question about housing affordability. We recall about 2½ years ago, when we asked the people of New South Wales, their biggest concern was about housing affordability and in particular people getting into the market for the first time. As the Government we appreciated what a serious issue that was. Until that time we had always argued, quite rightly, that the issue was with supply. If more houses are approved and built, that puts downward pressure on prices and there are more available places to live. At that point the Government also realised that supply alone was not doing the trick; it was not working. People were feeling discouraged about the Australian dream of ever owning their own home in New South Wales, in particular in Sydney where housing affordability was especially a challenge.

At the time, because the budget was in a strong position, we were very pleased to announce a number of grants for first home owners, which in the last two years alone has encouraged nearly 68,000 people to get into the market for the first time. Two years ago only 17 per cent of home buyers were buying their first home. Now, when one looks at total purchases, it has gone up to 27.5 per cent. In the last two years alone nearly one in three people buying a home is doing so for the first time. We also know that people are saving around \$24,000 on average every time they buy a home for the first time.

Yesterday, the Treasurer, the Minister for Finance and Small Business, and I were able to meet with Jacinda and Callum, who bought their first place in Marrickville. They saved \$16,000 because of the State

Government stamp duty concession. They said they had been looking since last Christmas. They are expecting their first child in November and fortuitously they were able to get into the market for the first time. We know that 68,000 times in the last two years we have been able to support people in New South Wales make their dreams come true by getting a foot in the market. We always say the first place is often not the best place, but it allows equity to be built and then a bigger place can be built or bought in the future.

I commend the member for Camden for asking me the question because his electorate represents perhaps one of the fastest growing parts of New South Wales. I thought the House might be interested to know the suburbs that have benefited the most from the Government's support with the grants. The member for Liverpool would be interested to know that over 1,200 people in his community benefited from owning their first home. Similarly, in Campbelltown about 1,200 people were able to buy their first home. In Kingswood, which covers both Penrith and Londonderry, 1,084 are in the market for the first time. In Camden, 1,032 people have entered the market for the first time, similarly in Westmead, Riverstone, Blacktown and West Hoxton. In Penrith 693 people were able to buy a home for the first time and in Ingleburn over 600 people. This is critical because we know that we have done our part. By running a strong budget and a strong economy we are able to provide these stamp duty concessions to support those most in need to get into the housing market.

In addition to the stamp duty concessions which we have provided, the New South Wales Government has a scheme in place called the First Home Owner Grant, which provides \$10,000 for new housing constructions. This is important because in suburbs like Riverstone, Camden, Kingston and Liverpool—the same suburbs that are benefiting from the stamp duty concessions—not only do local residents get the stamp duty concessions but also if they are purchasing a brand new property, which is very encouraging, they are getting an extra \$10,000 of support. We know that if their first place is a new place, they are doing pretty well. Our Government's responsibility is not just to ensure housing affordability, not just to ensure that nearly 68,000 people are in the market now—when two years ago they would not have been—but also to ensure that in those communities we are building the schools, hospitals, roads and the public transport links to support them. [*Extension of time*]

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The good news for local residents who buy their first home is that not only will they be able to take pride in their new home, but also they can rest assured that the Government—if we have not done it already—is building the schools and the hospitals, the infrastructure needed, not only to make their home their castle, but also to support them as their family grows into the future. I stress that this would not have been possible had we not had a strong budget and ensured that New South Wales was in a strong economic position.

We look forward to supporting future entrants in the housing market, because we want people to appreciate that New South Wales is the best place to live, to work, to do business and to buy their own home. That is what we believe in very strongly. We will make sure that we keep providing a strong budget, a strong economy so that people can have a good quality of life and reach their full potential, and in so doing ensure that their children and grandchildren also have those opportunities which we create for future generations. I again thank the member for Camden for his question. I say to the community of this great State that we are here to support them in their efforts. Housing affordability is one of the areas we identified as a major challenge and now the results speak for themselves.

MASCOT TOWERS

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (14:33): My question is directed to the Premier. On 16 August the Building Commissioner proposed low-interest loans as a way to help the residents of Mascot Towers fix their building. That was more than five weeks ago. It is now in the Premier's hands. Will the Premier commit to a solution by the end of the day?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:33): I acknowledge the residents who are here today and echo the words of the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation to say that we strongly empathise with their circumstances and appreciate the stress that they are going through. If there is anything further we can consider, of course we look forward to doing that.

Ms Jodi McKay: Low-interest loans, Premier.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Could you please let me answer the question. You asked the question.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say to those residents who are here today: Firstly, thank you for making the time to be here. We completely empathise. I cannot imagine what it would be like to be in your shoes.

I will not pretend to say that I know because I have not been in the situation where I have had someone knock on my door and say, "It is no longer safe to live in your home". I can only imagine what that would be like. But I also say to all of you that if there is anything further we can do to support you, we will obviously consider it. I also wanted to stress the point that we did appoint a Building Commissioner, Mr David Chandler. He has been outstanding with the advice he is providing government in terms of what he feels—

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. The Premier is answering the question.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The issues that have arisen here are very complex and as the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation said, we will be on the back of those insurance companies to come good on what they need to do. We stress the point also that we appreciate the very complex matters around the Mascot Towers building specifically, especially given when the buildings were built and the time that has elapsed since, and also the substantiated circumstances around what is happening—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: We do not need a history lesson.

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

Ms Yasmin Catley: Stuart Ayres gave a low interest rate for \$350,000 and the Premier is ignoring those people in the gallery.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I hope you take up the opportunity to meet today with the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, who has agreed to meet with you today. Again I thank you for being here. Please note that the issues that have impacted you we do not want see impacted on anybody else in New South Wales and that is why we have appointed the Building Commissioner. That is why very shortly we will be introducing legislation to Parliament which will ensure that everybody in the industry, whether they are involved in construction, regulation or compliance, fulfils their responsibilities so that what has occurred to you does not happen to anybody else in New South Wales.

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (14:36): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade. Will the Deputy Premier outline the benefits of forestry to the New South Wales economy, especially in our regions?

The SPEAKER: I will put the Leader of the Opposition on a call to order if she continues. The Deputy Premier has the call.

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:36): I thank the member for Clarence for his question, a good question. He is a member who understands the importance of diversity in our local economies. He is part of an electorate that sees significant interest in forestry. Forestry plays an important part in his local economy. It creates jobs, prosperity, has been part of that landscape for decades and has been an industry that is well supported not just regionally but across the State. Last night the member for Clarence, along with many other Liberal and Nationals members in this House attended the Timber NSW Industry Supply Chain dinner, an opportunity for members of Parliament to engage with an industry that is so important to the New South Wales economy. The industry is worth about \$2.5 billion, both softwood and native forests, but it also employs tens of thousands of people right across the State.

Last night was an opportunity to hear from Dr Rob de Fegely, Chair of the Australian Government's Forest Industry Advisory Council. He made a presentation to those who attended. As I said, a number of Ministers and Liberal and Nationals members were there. The presenter spoke about a number of key issues within the industry and the opportunities for Australia and especially New South Wales for the future. We know that over the past couple of decades demand has risen between 30 per cent and 40 per cent and the demand over the next decade and a half will be another 40 per cent growth. It is a product that is well received by our voters, the citizens of New South Wales. It is a product that is received highly in the construction industry. Why? Because it is a renewable product. It is a product that has more respect than bricks and mortar, steel, et cetera. For a lot of Australians, timber, a natural product, is part of the landscape that we want to see in our homes.

It is a shame that as a nation we are a net importer of timber, especially with the estate that we hold, the opportunity to grow more and the opportunity to grow the industry and create jobs in regional and rural New South Wales. If one thinks about the product itself, it is a product that is grown by the sun, it holds carbon, it is respected by people for what it is, it is a renewable product and it is a tree, and a tree can then be turned into the timber products that we take for granted every day. I often get letters, many that are against forestry. They probably sit at their imported teak desks in their studies in the eastern suburbs because of decisions of the past where we

surrendered our responsibility as a global player in the forestry industry and instead we import timber from across the globe.

We import timber also from countries that have no sustainable management of their forests. We do not want to be privy to that. At a time when everyone talks about every nation taking responsibility for climate change and the environment, the forestry industry in Australia is one that is sustainable, has been here for generations and we are able to do that in a way that allows us to grow an estate. It is so important for Australia to be at the heart of this and for New South Wales to have the opportunity for its softwood plantations and of course our native forests. There is an opportunity to do better, to do more, to grow the industry and the opportunity for regional and rural New South Wales. Those who are interjecting will travel in regional New South Wales, pretend they care about the jobs, pretend to care about this industry, come back to Macquarie Street, get stuck in ideology and they forget about what they are fighting for. So let us actually talk to that. We have recently released—

The SPEAKER: I will put members on calls to order if they continue to interject.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Let us talk about the scoping study that we have announced. A scoping study into forests has more importance to the softwood plantation estate, an estate that has not grown for the past few decades and an estate that has an opportunity to grow more jobs. We have gone out for a scoping study to deal the future of pine plantations under the model of ForestCorp. There is nothing wrong with that.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: There is no decision at this stage in relation to the future of ForestCorp and the pine plantations. But what I will not do is sit idle, as the Minister—

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: As if you care. You don't care because you wrote to me against the forestry industry.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I am not going to be lectured by you; I am not going to be lectured by those lefties who live here in Sydney.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I don't take anything you say seriously. I cannot take it seriously. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: I will continue put members on calls to order if they interject. There is too much general noise and interjection in the Chamber. I want quiet for the next two minutes if the Deputy Premier continues to answer the question in the sensible way that he has been.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: My question is to the member for Summer Hill: What timber floorboards do you have in your home? What timber doors? What timber cabinetry? I am sure the desk she works at at night is a timber desk, probably made from foreign timber because she does not want a sustainable timber industry.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Summer Hill that she is already on two calls to order. I call the member for Wollongong to order for the first time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: In relation to the scoping study, it is an opportunity for us to maybe grow the estate, an opportunity for more jobs in rural and regional New South Wales but those opposite are not interested in supporting regional and rural New South Wales an industry that is so important.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: They get stuck in the ideology about privatisation or not privatisation.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: What about opportunity for further investment? There is an opportunity—

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Again there are interjections by those opposite. I can make it absolutely clear there is no de-gazettal of national parks but there is an opportunity—

Ms Kate Washington: That is not what you told your members.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Seriously, the member for Port Stephens gets out in the media, she spins the myth—

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: They do not like it. The chance for you guys to debate timber will come shortly and we will see what side of the debate you are genuinely on—if you are about supporting regional jobs and regional economies but the truth is you are not going to be able to. Do members opposite know why? It is because the factions in the Labor Party will tear themselves apart. These are the sorts of issues that the Labor Party struggles with, even though the CFMMEU—the "F" is for Forestry—supports timber workers and supposedly supports the Labor Party. Labor will struggle with this issue, which is so important. I will not be lectured by members opposite. All I know is that the Liberals and Nationals support a strong and sustainable timber industry in New South Wales.

STOCKTON BEACH

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:49): My question is directed to the Premier. If Bondi or Manly were crumbling into the sea it would be a top priority for her. Will the Premier outline to the House what steps she is taking to coordinate a whole-of-government response to the unfolding catastrophe at Stockton Beach?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will remain silent.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:45:1): If the Leader of the Opposition had done her homework she would realise that since 2011 our Government has provided in excess of \$1.2 million to the Newcastle council to support that coastline.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I also emphasise that in August last year our Government provided a grant of \$147,500.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I apologise to the Premier for this interruption. The member for Swansea, the member for Londonderry, the member for Summer Hill and the member for Port Stephens are on two calls to order. The member for Wollongong is on three calls to order. A number of other members are on their first call to order. Any member who is on their second call to order or third call to order is in danger of being removed from the Chamber for the rest of the day. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The council is matching the funding provided by the New South Wales Government to support the region's coastline. We appreciate how stressful a time this has been, especially for those who use or are connected with the childcare centre on the coast, but I assure everybody in New South Wales that our Government is providing—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am answering the question, Mr Speaker.

Ms Jodi McKay: No, you're not. You said there is \$140,000 for a community that is washing away? I do not think you are answering the question.

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

Ms Jodi McKay: It relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about a whole-of-government response to a community that is washing away.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have heard enough from the Leader of the Opposition. The Premier is answering the question. The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. The Leader of the Opposition and the Minister for Local Government will cease interjecting across the Chamber. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the second time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I think the Leader of the Opposition is experiencing some frustration because when she was the member for Newcastle she was not able to deliver the billions in infrastructure that we have on roads, the light rail—you name it.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. If the Premier wants to talk about infrastructure, the preschool is closed. The cafe is washing into the ocean.

The SPEAKER: I will not hear further on the point of order. The Premier has the call. The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time.

Ms Jodi McKay: Mr Speaker, this is a catastrophe for a community.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. I warn the Leader of the Opposition that she is close to being called to order for the third time. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I simply make the point that as a Government—

The SPEAKER: Order! Someone is about to be removed from the Chamber. If any member wants to leave the Chamber, they only have to speak again. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am pleased to inform the House of a matter that I think is public information. If it is not, I apologise to the Minister. Minister Hancock will be visiting Stockton Beach in the near future.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Newcastle to order for the first time. I call the member for The Entrance to order for the second time. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is important to note that the Government has not only provided financial support but also ensured that all government agencies, such as primary industries—

Ms Jodie Harrison: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. Is the point of order based on Standing Order 129?

Ms Jodie Harrison: It is.

The SPEAKER: I will not hear it. The Premier has the call. I call the member for Charlestown to order for the first time.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say to residents of the Hunter region, and especially to the community affected directly by the erosion at Stockton, that the Government appreciates what that coastline means not just to the people who live near it and use it but also to the whole of the region. It is symbolic. That is why the Government has provided the dollars, in conjunction with the council, and is also supporting the council in its efforts. All New South Wales government agencies with expertise, including the Environment Protection Authority, the Department of Primary Industries and Roads and Maritime Services, are supporting the council in its efforts. That is really important. The notion raised by the Leader of the Opposition that we would put one part of New South Wales ahead of another is simply disgusting. It is disgusting.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Mr Speaker, can you please stop the clock?

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. Does the point of order relate to Standing Order 129? If so, I will not accept it.

Mr Greg Warren: Yes, stop the clock because I want to hear the rest. My point of order relates to Standing Order 59. The Premier's statement is irrelevant and inconsistent.

The SPEAKER: The member for Campbelltown has tried this one before. Standing Order 59 relates to relevance. The member for Campbelltown will resume his seat. I thank the member for Campbelltown for being innovative, but there is no point of order. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I assure the residents impacted by the Stockton coastal erosion that the Government is onto it. We have been onto it for a while. We will continue to support the people of the area. But the Hunter and Newcastle have received more investment from the Liberal-Nationals than they ever did under Labor. Opposition members can't handle the truth. All they need to do is walk down the main street of Newcastle.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I will hear the point of order from the member for Newcastle because he does not often take points of order. I ask him to not base it on Standing Order 129.

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

The SPEAKER: The Premier's comments were not directed at a specific individual. The member for Newcastle will resume his seat. I call the member for Newcastle to order for the second time. I call the member for Newcastle to order for the third time. He is very close to being removed from the Chamber. The Premier has the call.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: When we announced that we were building the light rail, members opposite said, "Don't build it." Now they are saying, "Extend it." When we announced that we were investing in schools and hospitals they did not believe us. We have done more for Newcastle than they did and we will continue to invest in the region.

POLITICAL DONATIONS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (14:52): My question is addressed to the Leader of the House, and Minister for Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on public affairs with particular reference to electoral donation reform?

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will wait until members are silent. I remind the member for Baulkham Hills that last week I called him to order. I do not want to call him to order again, but I will if he continues to interject. I warn the member for The Entrance not to interject. I am aware that the question may be volatile, but I ask members to show respect. I remind members that a number of them are very close to being removed from the Chamber.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (14:53): I thank the member for Manly for a very important and interesting question. Members will recall that last week the Premier of New South Wales indicated a cap on cash when it comes to electoral donations, which was an absolutely important statement. I would hate to see anybody elected to this place on a margin of, say, 1.8 per cent and elected on the basis that their margin, albeit 1.8 per cent, was somewhat enhanced as a result of donations that should not have been made. One of the reasons that the Premier made this statement was very clear.

The SPEAKER: The member for Cessnock will cease interjecting.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I think it is important to contextualise the statement from the Premier. I have become aware of a function held in September 2014.

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It was a function for a marginal-seat campaign for someone who was trying to become a first-time member of this place. What was interesting about that fundraiser for a Mr Minns was that—

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, Standing Order 73 and Standing Order 128 (2) (d), (e) and (g). This question is clearly designed to antagonise members and make a personal reflection on a member of this place for no other reason than to disrupt the House and impugn another person.

The SPEAKER: I have heard the points of order. The Leader of the House is being relevant. He is not transgressing Standing Order 73 or Standing Order 128 at this stage. The Leader of the House has the call.

Mr Greg Warren: To the point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I have ruled on all three points of order. I want new information.

Mr Greg Warren: I appreciate that. With all due respect to you, we saw this last week. The Leader of the House is—

The SPEAKER: I have made my ruling. Does the member have another point of order or something specific?

Mr Greg Warren: It is further to your ruling.

The SPEAKER: I have made my ruling. The Leader of the House has the call.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I want to reflect on the September 2014 fundraiser because it was interesting to see an email appear from Labor's head office in relation to that lunch.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was not about emails—

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the first time. The member will resume his seat. If he continues to speak after I have told him to sit down he will be placed on three calls to order.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I am about to explain why this is relevant. It relates to cash that was raised at that fundraiser. After the fundraiser there was an email from Labor's head office titled "Chris Minns raffle money". There was \$725 in cash. At Labor's head office a Mr Kendrick Cheah, by chance, sent an email stating that the Minns raffle needs someone to account for it with a signed form. Interestingly, that email went to a Mr Dominic Sin, who asked how best to do that. Then an email came back from Ernest Wong to Dominic Sin, basically saying that he can sign the form that he is the donor of that amount of money. That is what went on at Labor's head office in relation to the treatment of cash.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time.

Ms Kate Washington: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73.

The SPEAKER: I am satisfied that the Minister is not breaching Standing Order 73 at the moment.

Ms Kate Washington: If this is not an imputation of improper motives, I do not know what is. If this is not an imputation of improper motives—

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. I understand the standing order. The Leader of the House is containing himself to the presentation of alleged facts. I am satisfied that he is not transgressing Standing Order 73.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: To help with the facts, I am happy to table the email. It is interesting who was at that function. Ernest Wong should have stayed off Twitter, because he put up a photograph—

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I do not want a repeat of the point of order. What is the member's point of order?

Ms Lynda Voltz: It relates to Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Government is being relevant to the question. The member for Auburn will resume her seat.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I am also happy to table a photograph of Mr Yee, Mr Wong and Mr Minns.

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: If the points of order relate to the use of props, the Minister has put the photograph away.

Ms Lynda Voltz: My point of order relates to Standing Order 74.

The SPEAKER: I will not hear further points of order from the member for Auburn.

Ms Lynda Voltz: If I could at least explain the point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Auburn will resume her seat.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Around that time, September through to March—and I will remind everybody that we had an election in March 2015—there was a fundraiser. Since last week's question time—

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

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Fact: The member for Kogarah initially told *The Australian* that he was not aware of Ernest Wong being involved in this fundraising.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: On Friday he told *The Sydney Morning Herald*—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Ryan Park: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73. If I can just explain: Last week we had a repeat of this procedure from the Leader of the House. We listened and it kept going.

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

Mr Ryan Park: Now we are back here doing the same thing.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Kiama to order for the second time. I am trying to listen to what the member for Keira is saying. Government members will cease interjecting.

Mr Ryan Park: We are happy to have a substantive motion brought where we will have an opportunity to debate the issue, but let us do it properly.

The SPEAKER: I am satisfied that the Minister is not breaching Standing Order 73.

Mr Ryan Park: How close is he?

The SPEAKER: I am listening very carefully, in case the member for Keira had not noticed. The Minister has the call.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It is a fact that a member of this House told *The Sydney Morning Herald* on Friday morning that they put \$900 back through the Electoral Commission. Then it was reported yesterday that over the course of the weekend he told *The Daily Telegraph* that over \$5,000 had been returned. In relation to the fundraiser held in September 2014, it is also interesting that Mr Yee was in attendance. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: I remind the Minister to stay in the same vein and not breach Standing Order 73.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: I am absolutely happy to stay in the same vein. I know that most members get together with campaign volunteers after an election, usually to celebrate. On 31 March 2015 there was a celebration held, and again it was a Chinese helpers thank you dinner at—guess what—Mr Yee's restaurant, Emperor's Garden. What is interesting about that night is that it was a karaoke night.

The SPEAKER: Government members will be quiet.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: The point I am making is members opposite cannot sit here and claim that they do not know who their donors are and then, all of a sudden, a couple of years later start making contributions back to the Electoral Commission, having been elected on a paper-thin margin. That then brings me to the question of what donations might have been received at the last election in 2019 when we know there was a close contest in one particular seat. For goodness sake, we have a member opposite who sits on the front bench and the Leader of the Opposition refuses to take action. On our side of the House, I remember Glenn Brookes sitting up there after an allegation in relation to a staff member. He sat on the crossbench.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira will cease interjecting.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: We have a Leader of the Opposition who is refusing to take action against one of her shadow Ministers in relation to cash and cheque donations. But there is one thing I cannot help but laugh about. Can you imagine what they were singing at karaoke? We would have had Ernest Wong singing *Money, Money, Money* by ABBA.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: We would have had the member for Kogarah singing *Take the Money and Run* courtesy of—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will resume his seat. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the third time.

Mr Paul Lynch: The Leader of the Government is clearly in breach of Standing Order 73, particularly in relation to that last outburst.

The SPEAKER: I ask the member for Liverpool to direct my attention to the specific reference that is the problem.

Mr Paul Lynch: It is the allegation that he just threw at the member three seconds ago. His other comments about karaoke and saying that things must have been the case are clearly speculation. They have moved well beyond facts. He is clearly now breaching Standing Order 73.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House is going close, but I am not satisfied that he is in breach of the standing order at this stage.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: Ernest Wong said it was a karaoke night. Imagine what they were all singing: *Money, Money, Money, Take the Money and Run* and *Jailhouse Rock*. But their favourite song would of course be *Smooth Criminal*. There is no doubt the Leader of the Opposition must take action, but she will not do it because she is absolutely gutless and she is afraid of the member for Kogarah.

NORTHERN BEACHES HOSPITAL

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (15:04): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the damning evidence presented at the Northern Beaches Hospital inquiry—which her Government did not want to happen—including evidence that a patient died after being labelled "Do not resuscitate" without them or their family being consulted, will the Premier finally admit that her privatisation of health care has been a complete and utter failure?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:04): Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Health and Medical Research will let the Premier answer the question.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I appreciate the matter raised by the Opposition, but when I inquired into how the hospital or department had responded—and I call on the family of that alleged victim to come forward—the hospital's best advice and the advice I received from health officials and the Minister himself is that there are no details of such a case. I appreciate that it has been discussed today, but I ask anyone with information about that case to please come forward. When I heard about it I was concerned and upset. But when I inquired what our response had been I received advice from the hospital that to date—and if the advice is incorrect I will stand corrected—no case with those details has presented itself. The hospital has not been able to respond because there is no evidence that the incident occurred. The Minister assures me that it has not been to the Health Care Complaints Commission; it has not been raised with the hospital; it has not been raised—

Mr Ryan Park: Let's not talk about that organisation.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: This is a serious issue.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is giving a serious answer. Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: If the Opposition has details on the family or the patient impacted, I ask that they please give those details to us and we will follow it up. As the Premier of the State, if I hear, read or see something that is of concern and that does not pass the public interest test, I will ask questions. I sought the advice. If those opposite have details on the family and the alleged patient—and I use the word "alleged" because we have not yet received any evidence that the incident occurred—I ask that they please bring that information forward. I appreciate that there is a public inquiry into the hospital going on.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We have not been backward and we have been up-front with the issues, especially during the first few months of the challenges at the hospital.

Mr Ryan Park: The Minister called them "teething issues".

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Which they were.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I say to those opposite: If, in fact, this example is validated, it is a serious issue and we will deal with it appropriately. But I ask Opposition members to please make sure that the hardworking doctors and nurses do not have to face these allegations if they are not substantiated. That is all we are saying. If they are substantiated, we will be the first ones to take action. The Minister for Health and Medical Research has assured me that if subsequently details do emerge that show that this did in fact happen we will contact the family and the patient to make sure that the New South Wales Government has taken appropriate action. It is not appropriate to use a quote or a grab here and there to come into this place and raise community concerns—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: That's just outrageous.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is true.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: If that event occurred it is an extremely serious issue. I ask anybody to please bring any details forward and to please raise the issue with the relevant authorities. When you are responsible for ensuring the health and wellbeing of eight million citizens, you take that seriously. I know the

Minister for Health and Medical Research does, I do, and my whole team does. Ordinarily, every day thousands of people are dealt with in what I think is one of the best health systems in the world. From time to time mistakes happen. When they do we need to make sure that they never happen again.

If anybody has any details, they should come forward. It is a human system supported by thousands and thousands of hardworking health professionals. But if an error does happen we will take action to make sure it does not happen again. If those opposite have any details about that case I ask that they please bring them forward. To the best of my knowledge, from the advice I have received, as at the start of question time there had been no formal complaint made. If that changes and it is found that this case did occur, of course we will take the necessary action.

BUSHFIRES

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (15:09): My question is addressed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Will the Minister please update the House on the fires across the State and how the Government is supporting communities to prepare for summer?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (15:09): I thank the member for Dubbo, whose interest in policing and emergency services is well known. Only last month I visited his electorate, where we opened up the new Rural Fire Service academy, something that will be of great benefit to our very brave firefighting volunteers. I advise the House that as of today there are 23 bush or grass fires burning across the State, six of which are uncontained. There are 300 firefighters combatting those fires. As I have said before, most of those firefighters are volunteers. They are being supported by 91 vehicles and 36 aircraft from the well-accredited and increased airborne capabilities of the Rural Fire Service.

When we talk about those volunteers and the risks being taken by them and their communities, it is very easy for us to just focus on a figure. But we must recognise that those figures are made up of individuals. Today I pay tribute to a couple of those volunteers. The first is Kieran Pritchard, the captain of the Mudgee brigade in the electorate of Dubbo. Kieran has completed two tours during these current fires, one as a strike team leader and one as a crew leader. A couple of weeks ago I had the opportunity to meet with Kieran. I was very impressed with his enthusiasm and positive leadership, despite the very trying conditions. He inspires not only his crew but also the whole strike team.

I also had the opportunity to meet with group officer Trevor Hessel, who has served day in and day out as the Long Gully Road incident controller. A Drake resident himself, Trevor has worked tirelessly to protect his community. Kieran and Trevor are just two of the 300 volunteers deployed at the moment. As I said to the House, last week we had up to 700 volunteers fighting the fires. They represent communities such as Tenterfield, Tabulam and Drake along the Bruxner Highway, which are once again confronting a significant fire threat after earlier fires at the beginning of this year. In particular I mention the people of Drake, who I visited along with the member for Lismore and the Deputy Premier a couple of weeks ago.

This morning the Drake community woke up to their twentieth day of staring down the Long Gully Road fire. When you consider that that fire is burning through 64,000 hectares of bushland, you realise that that community has faced 20 days of anxiety, 20 sleepless nights and 20 days of not knowing whether their homes will be in any further danger. Despite the best efforts, unfortunately I advise the House that this firefighting season we have already lost 33 homes. However, we have provided more than 250 nights of accommodation to displaced residents. That is the sort of support that governments should provide and it is certainly the sort of support that this Government is in a position to provide thanks to its good stewardship.

This early start to the bushfire season is a wake-up call to all of us to make sure that we are ready and that our properties are ready should they be at risk of fire. It is a wake-up call to ensure that we have a plan. It is a wake-up call to remind every individual, community and business in regional New South Wales that should disaster strike they will need to be prepared. The Government understands that people cannot prepare to evacuate at short notice and—

The SPEAKER: Members on the Government front bench will lower their voices. They are distracting the Minister.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: This Government understands that people cannot prepare to evacuate at very short notice and that is why we make no excuses for the fact that we provided record funding and investment to the NSW RFS. That is not only to provide support for our frontline firefighters, but also to assist the recovery that inevitably comes. Bushfires do not just happen overnight and that is why we have ensured record investment since the election of this Government in 2011 not only in capital, but also in training and ensuring that fire mitigation is the best possible scenario. [*Extension of time*]

Last week I joined a number of members of this House, as well as representatives of various communities, to celebrate resilience. We provided a number of awards acknowledging the actions of people who went beyond the call of duty in ensuring recovery and resilience in their communities. It is important that these people are recognised. The awards should be used as inspiration for people in other communities in the event they face a similar tragedy. Many of those awardees were represented here in Parliament House. I acknowledge the Goobang Community Resilience Network in the electorate of Dubbo for its leadership. The network put together a "go box" filled with the sorts of documentation that we take for granted until we lose it. I also acknowledge the Tathra Chamber of Commerce, hosted by the member for Bega, which required a resilience and resurgence in its tourism fraternity after its fires.

The member for Tweed may rightly boast that Tweed Shire Council was acknowledged for its Industry Central Land Swap, which successfully moved landowners and businesses out of a high-risk flood zone in South Murwillumbah to flood-free land. As the Minister responsible for the Rural Fire Service, I was thrilled to see the RFS awarded a government category award in recognition of its "Prepare. Act. Survive." campaign which, I believe, has already saved many lives. This State is a firefighting State that can boast that it is now a world leader when it comes to equipment and capability, and the largest volunteer firefighting force. We have a state-of-the-art headquarters at Homebush and we have an ability to roll out technology—the *Marie Bashir* large air tanker did such a good job. I commend the firefighters. I encourage all members of the House to promote firefighting and fire-ready campaigns in their electorates.

WAGGA WAGGA POPULATION

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (15:16): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. The Government outlined a target population for Wagga Wagga of 100,000 by 2038. This Friday the Committee 4 Wagga, Wagga Wagga City Council and the Housing Industry Association are hosting a summit that will bring together 250 community leaders to start the hard work of making this a reality. How will the Government support the region to reach the target in a responsible and sustainable way?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (15:17): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for his question—a good question—about a city in regional and rural New South Wales. I am excited not just about the electorate of Wagga Wagga, but also the city of Wagga Wagga. Last year the New South Wales Government released its 20-year economic blueprint, which is a vision for New South Wales in growing jobs, growing centres and growing communities. I hope it will be a period of prosperity underpinned by funds of \$4.2 billion that have been set aside from the transfer of the Snowy Hydro to the Federal Government. Wagga Wagga will be the first regional city to hit a population of 100,000. It is exciting for the people of Wagga Wagga, but it is important that the growth is managed in a sustainable, practical and pragmatic way, and that the services and infrastructure are delivered in a timely manner—something that the Government is focused on.

The planning for an economic blueprint for regional and rural New South Wales enabled the Government to map regions, city centres, towns and villages for the first time. We looked for places of opportunity that had initial organic growth. There are great centres right throughout the spine of regional and rural New South Wales, places such as Tamworth, Armidale, Dubbo, Bathurst, Wagga Wagga—I cannot leave out Queanbeyan in my electorate. These centres have organic growth and attributes that will enable opportunities for the Government to partner with them and turbocharge their economies and communities.

After a number of years of mapping out regions, the Government saw these opportunities and that led to the economic blueprint. At the heart of the economic blueprint is the Snowy Hydro legacy fund of \$4.2 billion. Every single cent of that fund is to be spent in regional and rural New South Wales and the five areas or five pillars that underpin the program. Firstly, and most importantly, it is about building transformational and generational infrastructure. The Snowy Hydro scheme built an infrastructure project that has gone beyond the generations and is just as important today as it was when it was first envisaged. With that same thinking, the funds of the Snowy Hydro legacy are about transformational and generational infrastructure and will be used to build water security infrastructure around dams and pipelines—something that we understand very clearly in our present climate.

Connectivity is an issue that was addressed in this year's budget. For the first time the New South Wales Government announced funding of \$400 million towards connectivity, with \$300 million to continue our mobile blackspot program and \$100 million for two data centres. It is clear that one of those data pilot areas will be Wagga Wagga. Another Government initiative is the instigation of Special Activation Precincts, which will provide an opportunity for the Government to look for diversity in local economies and to grow jobs—not just any jobs, but great jobs—in regional and rural New South Wales. I can update the House that Parkes has been identified as the Government's first Special Activation Precinct because of its inland rail and we are now seeing

Parkes develop as an inland port. There are opportunities for businesses involved in logistics, manufacturing and others in the supply chain.

Parkes has become a centre and an attraction for investment by the private sector. A second Special Activation Precinct is planned for the electorate of Wagga Wagga at Bomen Business Park. The Government is intending to unlock 4,000 hectares of land to attract more industries and more businesses to Wagga Wagga. If you want people to live in regional and rural New South Wales, you have to create jobs—great jobs—not just for today, but also for the future and the generations to come. I am proud that our State is partnering with local government and industry to deliver these great jobs and opportunities, which are underpinned by our economic blueprint. Of course, building the infrastructure is important.

The electorate and city of Wagga Wagga have seen an investment in infrastructure such as roads and rail, and a significant investment in health. The Wagga Wagga Base Hospital has received funding in excess of \$300 million. It is not just a hospital for today, but a hospital for the future. There has been investment in schools across the electorate, such as the new primary school in Estella, and a Government commitment to upgrade the hospital at Tumut. These are the services and additional infrastructure that come with growth. We want to learn lessons in the regional areas, out of the Sydney area. If we are to attract people to the regional areas to raise their families, to call it home, to work and be part of the community—and more importantly for the next generation of kids to be business leaders, community leaders and political leaders—we must create an environment for growth. I congratulate the member on his question today.

REGIONAL WATER SECURITY

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (15:22): My question is addressed to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing. Will the Minister update the House on what the Government is doing to protect jobs that are at risk from drought?

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (15:22): I thank the member for Cootamundra for her question and her support for her community, the jobs in her district and her region. As the member knows, the Lachlan system, which she proudly represents, is one of those systems that is struggling through the drought and lack of inflows. Over the past year the Lachlan system has experienced 8.8 per cent of the average inflows into the water system, which is 107 gegalitres. The average inflow is 1,212 gegalitres, and that is why Wyangala Dam is down to only 21 per cent and why we are proud, as a Government, to be able to deliver a doubling of the dam's capacity. When the next drought comes we will have caught enough water to ensure the sustainability of jobs, industries, towns and communities—all those that rely on water.

We all know it is not just the Lachlan Valley that is suffering; the whole State is reeling with the 31 months to July 2019 being New South Wales' driest 31 months on record. On current projections Dubbo, Bathurst and Tamworth could run out of water within months. The town of Tenterfield is even worse, with fewer than 230 days of water supply left. But this morning we got a call from the general manager at Tenterfield Shire Council, which was doing some bore work today and hit some water. So there is some relief in sight for Tenterfield.

[Members applauded.]

I thank the member for Tamworth and the member for Lismore for applauding. It is great news. We have been working alongside the council to ensure that that community is able to sustain its town water supply. From an economic perspective, we now know that this drought has resulted in a cost to the New South Wales economy of \$5.7 billion. It has resulted in 20,200 fewer jobs this financial year than if we had had average rainfall. That is likely to worsen, with expectations of a further 11,200 jobs to be lost next year. I am reminded of a terribly sad scene I saw in May. I was in the main street at Inverell and I saw a young mum; she had her kids in the car and she was returning the keys of her rental property to the real estate agent. She had to leave that town with her kids and her husband to go to Western Australia to find more work. That is the life of many people suffering in this drought: They have had to make plans to move to other parts of Australia where it has rained and where there has been relief. It demonstrates the crippling impact that the drought has beyond the farm gate on towns, cities, workers, families and businesses.

Our Government has invested and supported those communities with \$1.8 billion since 2005 to soften the effects of the drought, including \$1 billion in the Farm Innovation Fund to get drought innovation measures on people's properties to save water. We are doing all that we can as a State government, with \$130 million in emergency provisions to keep town water supplies moving. Last week the member for Tamworth, the Minister for Finance and Small Business in the other place and I went to Tamworth and had an inspection of the Baiada chicken plant. We are going to stand by that plant, which employs 2,000 people indirectly and directly within the

local communities. It is important that we do that. Those jobs are vital to the economic and social sustainability of Tamworth.

With the member for Dubbo, I visited Taronga Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo, which is investing in more water recycling facilities and doing its part—like Pedro—in ensuring every drop counts. Water availability for animal welfare is a significant issue, whether it is for our stock, our native animals or the animals at Dubbo zoo. Taronga Western Plains Zoo has done a tremendous job in water management to reduce its potable water demands and improve its water security. Animal welfare is an issue in the current drought. We prioritise stock water as a high-priority need, along with domestic supplies. We have been working with the zoo to ensure that we work through those issues. As an example, the zoo has developed its own water management plan to dramatically reduce its consumption of potable water. That means that the zoo is able to better manage the water supply and the welfare of the animals. [*Extension of time*]

When I got to the zoo with the member for Dubbo, we met Pedro the spider monkey. In a drought you need some good news stories and Pedro is the most incredible good news story. There had been a drought in baby spider monkeys at the zoo, and then along came Pedro. Pedro has done wonders. I will show members a photo of Pedro—I got this envelope at the Emperor Gardens. This is Pedro. He is quite incredible. Pedro has arrived.

The SPEAKER: Pedro has special exemption.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: For 13 years no spider monkeys had been born at that zoo; Pedro arrives and we have three baby monkeys. Do you know what a baby monkey is called, Mr Speaker? An infant. He has ensured a sense of renewal and excitement for the zoo. It is important that we hear good stories and positive stories around the drought and its impacts—unlike those stories that are not so good to hear that involve the former shadow Minister for Water. In fact, I ask the Leader of the Opposition to show leadership and set their own standards by the same standards they want us to set and do the right thing for the Labor Party and a good Opposition in New South Wales.

Committees

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Reports

Ms FELICITY WILSON: As Chair, I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 5/57*, dated 24 September 2019. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I also table the minute extracts of the committee meeting regarding *Legislation Review Digest No. 4/57*, dated 17 September 2019.

Bills

ROAD TRANSPORT AMENDMENT (MOBILE PHONE DETECTION) BILL 2019

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (15:32): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. In doing so, I welcome to the Chamber Claire Murdoch—Director, Strategy and Policy at the Centre for Road Safety—and her father. Claire is on annual leave; coming along to the Chamber is a great way to spend it. She was instrumentally involved in this legislation and I thank her for being here. The purpose of the bill is to amend road transport legislation to further support camera-based enforcement of offences involving mobile phone use while driving. The risks of using a mobile phone while driving are clear and undeniable. Mobile phone use while driving is associated with at least a four-fold increase in the risk of having a casualty crash.

From 2012 to 2018, there were at least 158 casualty crashes involving a driver or rider using a handheld mobile phone on New South Wales roads, resulting in 12 deaths and 212 injuries. Of course, as we all suspect, mobile phone use in crashes is underreported due to difficulty of obtaining evidence at crash scenes. A single fatal crash is estimated to cost the community \$8.4 million and a serious injury crash \$562,779. Members will recall

that the Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Road Safety) Bill 2018, which was assented to in May last year, provided the foundations for prosecuting drivers caught by an approved camera device illegally using their phone. Subsequently, the global market was tested and the best available camera technology has been piloted in New South Wales at two fixed sites, as well as across a number of locations, using a transportable version of the same technology.

New South Wales is leading Australia in the pilot use of these cameras. The pilot has resulted in some pretty interesting outcomes. The pilot ran from January 2019 to June 2019 and found the technology to be reliable in detecting illegal mobile phone use by drivers. During the pilot, over 8.5 million vehicles were checked and over 100,000 drivers were detected using their phones illegally. No infringements were issued during the pilot, but there is a clear and pressing need to address this road safety risk and be in a position to infringe drivers. Analysis of the pilot identified opportunities to strengthen the current legislative provisions to support prosecution of camera-detected mobile phone use offences and make the rules clearer.

The high-resolution images captured by the camera clearly depict drivers holding objects that have the form of a mobile phone and are being held in a manner consistent with using the functions of a mobile phone, such as talking, texting or touching a screen. The technology uses artificial intelligence to automatically analyse images and identify those that are likely to show a driver using a mobile phone. These images are referred for further review and verification by appropriately trained personnel. Images that the system deems unlikely to contain an offence can be quickly, automatically and irretrievably deleted. The system does not in any way interfere with, or monitor, a mobile phone signal from the vehicle or the driver's hand.

In relation to privacy, information relating to drivers and passengers is captured for law enforcement and road safety purposes only. As committed to during the introduction of the Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Road Safety) Act 2018, Transport for NSW undertook detailed consultation with the NSW Privacy Commissioner during the pilot of the program, and will continue to engage with both the Privacy Commissioner and the Information Commissioner on the rollout of the program. Using a mobile phone while driving is, as members would no doubt agree, a road safety risk.

Despite the strong photographic evidence available from these cameras, which is verified before an infringement is issued, offenders may challenge the offence in court claiming that the prosecution has not conclusively established that the object they were using while driving was a mobile phone. Accordingly, it is intended to amend the Road Transport Act 2013 to provide that an object being held by a driver and shown in a photograph from a device approved for mobile phone use offences is deemed to be a mobile phone unless the accused driver can establish that it was not. This will only apply to camera detected mobile phone use offences, not to mobile phone use offences detected on our roads by New South Wales police.

As with all New South Wales camera enforcement programs, infringements for mobile phone use offences will not be issued based on the technology alone. A final adjudication of images is undertaken by an appropriately trained officer before action is taken against a driver. An infringement notice will not be issued if there is doubt that the object is a mobile phone. The amendment will support prosecution of camera-detected mobile phone use offences, but it is also a balanced change to our law. The presumption is rebuttable, meaning that drivers are open to make their case if, even after rigorous adjudication, they believe an error has been made and they were not using a phone. The court will then decide, based on all the evidence, whether the object was or was not a mobile phone. While making this change, we are also making it explicit in the road rules that it is not an offence for a driver to comply with a requirement made by a police officer or other authorised officer to hand the mobile phone to the officer.

This does not create any additional power for officers to require a driver to hand over their mobile phone. To avoid any doubt, a police officer or other authorised officer may not require a driver to hand the mobile phone to the officer unless the officer is authorised to make the requirement under the Act or another law. To be clear, these minor changes will not otherwise limit a driver's ability to use a phone if it is safely secured and is currently permitted by the rules. Unrestricted licence holders are permitted to use a mobile phone for audio calls and music functions provided the phone is secured in a cradle or can be operated without touching the phone—such as via bluetooth or other technology. When secured in a cradle, mobile phones can also be used as a driving aid, such as navigation. Provisional and learner drivers are not permitted to use a mobile phone at all while driving. These core rules will not change.

All members, please note that it is also proposed to review the road rules in order to ensure they are keeping pace with new technology and digital functionality. This review will support our customers' evolving use of technology while ensuring road safety outcomes—for example, the use of devices such as mobile phones to make contactless transactions safely in road-related areas such as car parks and drive-through services. Members should know that the amendments in this bill will support progress in tackling the problem of illegal mobile phone use on our roads.

I will say time and time again until I go blue in the face, unfortunately this year the road toll is not where we want it to be. I do not want this State to become a nanny State, but I want people to do the right thing. In the past 48 hours I have heard some interesting comments through the media in relation to this planned rollout. I have said publicly and I will repeat in this Chamber that I do not care about those critics who say that it is a revenue-raising measure. If people do the right thing legally the Government will not raise any revenue, and currently the funds are hypothecated to the Community Road Safety Fund to try to teach drivers to do the right thing. The Government is not saying that people in cars cannot use phones; it is giving people the option to use a cradle and bluetooth. If an individual owns a phone and pays the phone bill, for goodness sake, they should be able to put a cradle in their car and do the right thing. It is simple.

I also want to be clear about the advisory signage. The Government wants everybody who backs a car out of their driveway onto the road network to know that they could be caught anywhere at any time. A significant number of signs will advise motorists around New South Wales that they can be detected by these cameras, but that could occur anywhere at any time. I have also said publicly that the use of a mobile phone in a car—looking down at one's lap—can mean being distracted for a couple of seconds, during which time the car, if it is travelling at 60 kilometres per hour, has travelled around 30 metres along the roadway. During that time the driver has not paid any attention to what was going on in or around that motorcar or on the roadway. A kid could have run out. A cyclist could have moved in front of the vehicle in that time. The driver could have run up the back of another car. The driver could have run off the road and hit a tree or, worse still, could have run off the road and killed somebody else. This bill is not just about the driver: It is also about the passengers and other road users.

For the life of me, I cannot understand why people cannot pull over to the side of the road and turn the engine off before taking a phone call or making a phone call. That is not hard. Unfortunately police fined in excess of 35,000 people in the past 12 months, which is an indication that members of the community have not got the message. I am hopeful that the use of these cameras will result in a drop in the number of infringements issued, and a change in behaviour. I was appalled to see that during the pilot 100,000 people were busted by three cameras—two of them fixed and one of them portable—including one at a location at Moore Park. I want everybody in this State to get the message that the moment they put their cars on the roadway they could get caught, in a similar way to random breath tests. The effect of driving while using a mobile phone, in terms of a lack of concentration, is akin to being drunk behind the wheel of a car.

I must pay tribute to Vicki Richardson, who lost her daughter, Brooke, in a terrible incident when Brooke made a simple mistake. She was on her way to work when she texted whilst driving on a country road. Unfortunately the car left the roadway. Vicki, who stood with me on Sunday—God love her—has done the decent thing after losing her daughter: She set up a foundation to campaign against texting and driving. It is called the Don't Text and Drive Foundation. Very bravely, Vicki has actually gone and told this story.

I do not want to stand up at Christmas and deliver the news to the community that our road toll is up without everybody reflecting that this is about human beings. These are not statistics. These are people who got up in the morning and did not realise what was about to transpire that day, little knowing the effect on family and friends forever. We are going to do our level best to continue to drive down car crashes and the lifelong serious injuries that they cause. We are going to do our level best to get the road toll down. Victoria is having a difficult time at it. In the work being undertaken between the Centre for Road Safety and the NSW Police Force I know that people are ripping their hair out trying to devise ways to keep the community safe. I know better than anyone in this place what it is like to walk away from a high-speed head-on in the bush. I again echo to everybody that an accident can happen anywhere at any time.

To those critics of the bill—there are not too many of them, very pleasingly—we need to save lives. This is about saving lives. I hope that all members are 100 per cent supportive of the bill. I commend it to the House. I hope the upper House likewise will no doubt carry the bill without amendment so that we can put the cameras in this December. The Government is doing the right thing insofar as allowing a three-month grace period in which warning letters will be issued to people over the Christmas period. But let me tell you: If highway patrol catches up with you over the same period and you are holding a mobile phone to your ear or you are texting or distracted by that phone and driving dangerously, particularly during the double demerit points period, you can lose 10 demerit points, which in many ways is far more impactful than a fine. This State needs to get this message. I know the Queensland Government has been debating the best way forward in terms of fines, but we are a world first in terms of this technology. I particularly acknowledge Acusensus, which has been the technology partner in this program. We want to save lives and that is why we are introducing this bill. I commend it to the House.

Debate adjourned.

JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2019**Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health and Medical Research) (15:47): I support the amendments in the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 that particularly relate to coronial matters. There can be nothing tougher than having a family member pass away and then, because of the circumstances of that passing away, having to delay the final farewell—usually by way of a ceremony that may lead to cremation or burial. Yet that is what we have had here in New South Wales for quite some time: a delay which has made many families' lives even more agonising after they have lost a loved one.

About two years ago, after I became health Minister, this issue was brought to my attention by the former member for Wagga Wagga. However, I note that it has been very much brought to my attention because of particular circumstances by a number of members of Parliament, including the current member for Wagga Wagga, Joe McGirr, the member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke, and a number of other members across the State who have had families in their electorates experience the delays that can occur in the coronial process. Just a few weeks ago the member for Wagga Wagga came to my office with a family whose son had passed away. The delay that was occasioned on that family was just terrible. It was extremely sad to hear the young fellow's parents talking about how it had impacted on their lives.

The issue was such that about 18 months to two years ago I asked for the forensic pathologists to come down from Newcastle to talk to me because what I was hearing was that there was a backlog of bodies that had been transported from quite remote areas—areas that were certainly well outside Newcastle, Sydney or Wollongong—and that families were suffering because of that very long delay in getting the work done. What became apparent was that there was a shortage of forensic pathologists in New South Wales and indeed right across Australia. That was certainly not what many in regional communities wanted to hear. There had been suggestions that, for example, we could have had forensic pathologists located in Wagga Wagga, thereby reducing the time taken for family members who had passed away to be transported from there to Newcastle. As a result I started considering what other options there might be.

I remember talking to the Chief Medical Officer, Dr Kerry Chant, about these issues over quite a number of meetings. In the course of one of those meetings I asked her about the whole process and other experts came in to talk about it. It was clear that the process was quite complex. It struck me that the rule that had been in place for quite some time, which requires somebody who has passed away to have a coronial investigation simply because they had not seen their GP for six months, may have been counterproductive and unnecessary. So I asked the Chief Medical Officer to look at what options existed in other States and Territories. I had it in my head at that stage that we might simply double the period from six months to 12 months but the evidence came back upon that review that other States had no time limit. That meant that all of the circumstances were looked at in each individual case.

This bill is part of that process. The bill removes the need for a person who has passed away to have their death go through a coronial process simply because that person had not seen their GP within the six months prior to their decease. In my view it is a sensible amendment and brings New South Wales in line with all other States by providing that deaths would no longer be reportable to the Coroner simply because the person did not see a medical practitioner within that six-month period or within any particular period before their death. I stress that this amendment has been put forward following consultation with the current State Coroner; the current New South Wales Chief Magistrate, His Honour Judge Graeme Henson; the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners NSW&ACT; the Australian Medical Association; and the forensic pathologists within NSW Health Pathology.

There is another aspect and that is that it seemed as we progressed that it was a complex chain. It is often the most junior police officer who is sent out to the site, for example, if somebody were to die by suicide or what appears to be suicide. That junior police officer may or may not feel confident in making decisions about the cause of death and, of course, may not make it as clear as someone who has had a lot more experience might, and that tends to lead on to the coronial investigation. There are other aspects that are now being looked at as part of a complete review that I have directed happen and I hope to come back to the House at some stage in the next six to 12 months with some more changes.

Another change that is happening in the bill is something that also seemed a little illogical. In the normal course, if there are no suspicious circumstances and the doctors or pathologists need to look at what the cause of death was, the taking of, for example, blood samples, X-rays, CT scans or MRI scans—in other words, non-

invasive procedures—could assist in the conclusion as to the cause of death without having to transport the body long distances. The change in item [2] in schedule 1.4 goes to achieving that.

I thank the member for Wagga Wagga and the member for Cootamundra, who have been extremely constructive and very positive, along with other members of the Ministry of Health, the Department of Communities and Justice, NSW Police and NSW Health Pathology in acknowledging the need for a high-level task force to look at the entire end-to-end process that is currently involved in the coronial system. My purpose in asking for this to occur and working with the Attorney General, Mr Mark Speakman, was to ensure that we bring the best of the best together—those people who really understand the entire process—to look from beginning to end at how we might be able to further streamline the processes.

As I said, recently a family whose son had passed away in very sad circumstances came to see me with the member for Wagga Wagga. I am not going to name the family in this address but I will say this: You know who you are and I want you to know this is very much reflecting the concerns that you raised. Hopefully you understand that your son's passing has contributed to a much better outcome for so many others and I am sorry that it was not available in your circumstances. I am sure that members in the House look forward to seeing the outcome of these amendments but also the work that will now be done at a high level to try to work out how we can make it so much better for families whose loved ones have passed away in very difficult circumstances.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I acknowledge behind me in the Speaker's gallery Mr Michael Egan, the former Treasurer of New South Wales.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (15:58): I speak in support of the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I congratulate the Attorney General, Mr Mark Speakman, for introducing this beautifully written piece of legislation. It is masterfully crafted; it is jurisprudence poetry in motion, this wonderful piece of legislation. Before I get into the meat of the legislation, in an earlier contribution the member for Heffron mentioned former Deputy State Coroner Jacqui Milledge and I concur with what he had to say. She was an outstanding coroner and an outstanding member of our State. She did a wonderful job and had a great career on the bench and in her previous life as a police officer. The objects of the bill are to amend various Acts and regulations relating to courts, crimes and other Stronger Communities portfolio matters. The objects are:

- (a) to provide that notices relating to complaints made by post under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* are presumed to have been made 7 working days after posting,
- (b) to clarify that committal proceedings for serious children's indictable offences are dealt with under the *Criminal Procedure Act 1986*,
- (c) to correct references to the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network,
- (d) to extend the period for which a person may be appointed as an Official Visitor to correctional centres and detention centres from 2 to 4 years,
- (e) to establish a Victims Register for victims of young offenders, enabling those victims to be provided with certain information about the movements of offenders,
- (f) to remove the requirement to report deaths occurring in circumstances where the deceased person had not been attended by a medical practitioner 6 months before their death,
- (g) to enable pathologists to conduct certain non-invasive preliminary examinations of a deceased person's remains in coronial matters,
- (h) to provide that the Domestic Violence Death Review Team is to include representatives of the Legal Aid Commission of New South Wales,
- (i) to include portable document scanners as a type of recording device that is prohibited from use in court premises,
- (j) to clarify that the prosecution of a child sexual offence where there is uncertainty as to exactly when the alleged conduct occurred may be brought where the potentially applicable sexual offences have the same maximum penalty,
- (k) to clarify that a person whose release from custody has been delayed with the person's consent continues to be held in custody as an 'inmate' until the day of release,
- (l) to clarify that provisions limiting or authorising the disclosure of information obtained in connection with the administration or execution of the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* include information to which certain persons have or had access,
- (m) to increase the standard non-parole period for bushfire arson offences under the *Crimes Act 1900* from 5 to 9 years,
- (n) to provide a savings and transitional provision enabling the court to call up breaches of good behaviour bonds entered into in connection with suspended sentence orders that had expired before those orders were repealed by an amending Act,
- (o) to clarify that a prosecutor's requirement to certify in a charge certificate that a disclosure certificate under section 15A of the *Director of Public Prosecutions Act 1986* was received and considered does not extend to offences prosecuted by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions

- (p) to clarify that an accused's legal representative's obligation to explain the sentencing law, penalty or effect of a plea for the purposes of case conferences is limited to offences that are covered by the Early Appropriate Guilty Pleas scheme under Division 1A of Part 3 of the *Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999*,
- (q) to provide an exception to the requirement to file a case conference certificate where a matter is to be dealt with summarily or is not to proceed to committal,
- (r) to provide that certain indictable offences relating to a person's misuse of health practitioner titles and practice restrictions under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW)* may be tried summarily unless the matter is elected to be dealt with on indictment,
- (s) to clarify that children who are eligible to give evidence by means of a pre-recorded hearing in child sexual assault proceedings remain eligible even if the child has become an adult before relevant orders are made,
- (t) to extend the defence of absolute privilege afforded to certain publications under the *Legal Profession Uniform Law (NSW)* to matter that is published in a report of a compliance audit of a law practice under that law by or to certain local regulatory authorities (for example, the Bar Council, Law Society Council or Legal Services Commissioner) or by a person appointed under that Law to conduct the compliance audit,
- (u) to confer a defence of absolute privilege to the publication of defamatory matter published by the Independent Planning Commission (or its predecessor) in a report or other document under certain planning legislation,
- (v) to remove references from the *Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985* to the Poisons List, which is covered by the *Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966*,
- (w) to enable the Secretary of the Department of Communities and Justice to delegate the Secretary's functions under the *Justices of the Peace Act 2002* or its regulations to senior Departmental staff members, (x) to enable certain eligible former justices of the peace to apply for the use of a retirement title after their names,
- (y) to clarify that appeals under the Acts against building product rectification orders are to be heard in Class 2 of the Land and Environment Court's jurisdiction (i.e. similar to local government appeals),
- (z) to enable applications for notices to produce documents under the *Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002* to be made by email and any other method authorised by the regulations,
- (za) to provide that the minutes of the Legal Aid Commission's Board meeting be submitted to the Minister with reasonable promptness after the meeting is held,
- (zb) to enable justices of the peace to witness the execution of documents for use in any other State or Territory of the Commonwealth if permitted by the jurisdiction,
- (zc) to provide that the indictable offence of engaging in unsafe conduct as a provider or driver of passenger services may be dealt with summarily or on indictment,
- (zd) to clarify that the Sheriff's functions include those conferred or imposed on the Sheriff under the laws of the Commonwealth, another State or a Territory (including functions conferred by delegation),
- (ze) to relocate the exclusion of certain sexual offences from the offences covered by the *Young Offenders Act 1997* from the regulations to the Act ...

In his second reading speech to Parliament regarding the bill the Attorney General stated that the bill introduces a number of miscellaneous amendments. He said:

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.

It is highly commendable that these amendments go through. I turn to an amendment to section 80AF of the Crimes Act. The amendment clarifies that where there is uncertainty about when a sexual offence occurred and, because of a change in the law or age of the child, the alleged conduct would have constituted more than one sexual offence during the period of the alleged conduct, a person may be prosecuted under whichever offence has the lesser maximum penalty—this is the current law—or, where the offences have the same maximum penalty, under either offence. This proposal ensures that section 80AF works as intended—to ensure uncertainty about the time the sexual offence occurred does not prevent successful prosecution, even in situations where the potentially applicable offences carry the same penalty. In many investigations I was involved in as a police officer and many cases where I represented people at trial, uncertainty as to the date of offences was always a big issue for the prosecution to be able to prove its case and was an issue that often assisted defendants in their trials. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:08): I make a brief contribution on the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I intend to restrict my contribution to only one aspect of the bill relating to the removal of requirements for referral of people to the Coroner who have died without having seen a general practitioner in the six months prior to death. On the face of it this is a seemingly innocuous change, but I speak to the importance of this change. I heard the Minister for Health and Medical Research today outlining his ongoing concerns about the delays, particularly in rural and regional New South Wales, that families are experiencing in

the tragic situation where they have lost a loved one. I have had direct experience of this in my community when a friend's husband who passed away tragically and suddenly was referred to the Coroner.

The delay that family then experienced is something I would not wish on any other family, but I accept that her situation is one that is experienced by many across New South Wales. Thankfully, we are not often privy to those experiences ourselves. However, having been privy to her experience—and it is no doubt experienced by others—I commend this change and urge the Government to make additional efforts to facilitate earlier and more timely access for families who have lost loved ones. This family experienced significant delay in their loved one's body being returned so they could finally bury him and celebrate his life in the way that ought to have happened earlier. However, it did not end there because it took 38 weeks—nine months—for that family to receive the Coroner's report and an autopsy report. Even when those reports were received by the family, there were inaccuracies and inconsistencies that indicate a system under immense strain.

I appreciate that there is a worldwide shortage of forensic pathologists and that there are no easy solutions to the situation. However, I have spoken to residents of Wagga Wagga and the member for Wagga Wagga, who has advocated strongly for increased support and pathology services for his community. When a new hospital or expansion of the existing hospital in a town like Wagga Wagga does not include pathology services and families who lose loved ones are seeing their loved ones sent to Newcastle for pathology services, this demonstrates a real problem. Wagga Wagga would be a centre capable of providing services far and wide to the southern part of the State, so this is a lost opportunity.

The absence of any plan means that additional pressure will continue to be placed on services like those in Newcastle, resulting in serious impacts on families far and wide in the north of the State—in communities just like mine, where a family close to me experienced something it should not have had to experience. This small change should assist in reducing delays for families that are already under great strain. I look forward to hearing from the Minister about additional changes the Government is going to make to allow families to lay their loved ones to rest in a timely manner and to manage their financial and legal obligations in a timely way. These current delays are placing families under much greater stress during a time when they can least afford it.

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (16:14): It is with pleasure I contribute to debate on the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The bill will enable the Government to make amendments to various Acts administered within the Stronger Communities cluster as part of the Government's regular legislative review and monitoring program. One of the provisions of this amending bill increases the non-parole period for bushfire arson from five to nine years. This is a timely amendment, given that our bushfire season started earlier than usual, our State already has experienced horrific fires with homes lost, and adverse bushfire impacts are being experienced by communities that already were under pressure from drought. Our communities need to be assured that if a fire is deliberately lit the offender will be dealt with as the community would expect.

The bill also contains an amendment to enable Legal Aid NSW to become a member of the Domestic Violence Death Review Team. It is important for all of us to understand the circumstances of a victim of domestic violence. We should find out if they have engaged any support services available to them while also understanding the stigma that is sometimes felt by victims of domestic violence. Bringing on board Legal Aid NSW will enable those in a domestic violence situation to know that legal assistance is available and that they need not feel that help is not available. Unfortunately, domestic violence victims often find themselves unable to work due to the violence and feel they are alone. Without access to legal aid, victims may feel that their ability to obtain legal representation may be out of reach because of cost and their situation may continue while they feel they have nowhere to go. We are all very much aware of the plight of victims of domestic violence. As a government, we must ensure that victims are supported in every possible way. This amendment will ensure that legal help is available and that legal assistance is offered to victims who would not normally have been able to afford it.

The bill will improve coronial processes by removing the requirement to report a death to a coroner if the person had not consulted a medical practitioner in the six months prior to their death. Giving pathologists the ability to carry out a non-invasive preliminary examination may lead to dispensing with an inquest if the Coroner is satisfied the deceased died of natural causes or the family of the deceased does not want a post-mortem examination. The bill also will enable Youth Justice to maintain a victims' register and provide registered victims of young offenders with certain information about their parole and leave decisions that may affect the victims. The amendment will enable Youth Justice to keep victims of youth crime informed of the movements of offenders. As a government, we should provide continual support to victims of crime. Furthermore, the bill will give courts the power to deal with breaches of expired historical good behaviour bonds that were imposed in connection with a suspended sentence.

One of the amendments will improve the justice of peace system to include a title of "JP (Retired)". Providing JP services to a community is in some way a lifetime commitment, but due to unforeseen circumstances some people cannot continue. However, it is important to recognise retired JPs for the service they have given.

An amendment to the Justices of the Peace Act 2002 will enable JPs to witness interstate documents, which is common sense. The demand for JP services is increasing and it simply makes sense to empower a New South Wales JP to witness interstate documents where the law of another State permits them to do so.

The bill was drafted in consultation with several stakeholders, including the Local Court, the District Court, the Supreme Court, the Children's Court, the Law Society of New South Wales, the New South Wales Bar Association, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid NSW, the Public Defenders Office, victims, the NSW Police Force and Corrective Services NSW. The purpose of the bill is to amend various Acts administered by the Stronger Communities cluster to enable the Government to deal with emerging issues, support procedural improvements, clarify uncertainty and correct drafting errors in the legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (16:19): I participate in debate on the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, which will amend various Acts administered by the Stronger Communities cluster to address emerging issues, support procedural improvements, clarify uncertainty and correct drafting errors in the legislation. Justice miscellaneous bills typically are introduced each session as part of the Government's regular legislative review and monitoring program. I highlight one part of the bill that relates to great work that has been done in our communities over many years—the work of justices of the peace. Schedule 1.13 and schedule 1.18 to the bill contain amendments to the Justices of the Peace Act 2002 and Oaths Act 1900 respectively. Justices of the peace, or JPs, have provided an invaluable service to the New South Wales community for more than 200 years. The primary role of a JP is to witness a person making a statutory declaration or affidavit and to certify copies of original documents that often are needed for official and legal purposes.

JPs come from all sections of the community. They are widely available across New South Wales and they provide their services voluntarily. The amendments in this bill provide an important recognition of the significant time many JPs have dedicated to their local communities over many years. I have personal knowledge of many JPs who are doing great work in the Tamworth electorate by certifying documents and enabling people to make statutory declarations or affidavits as part of legal proceedings. JPs appear in many locations across electorates, such as downtown in shopping precincts, in courts and even in my electorate office. I have two justices of the peace who are regularly called upon to assist people by certifying the veracity of copies of documents and to assist people to make statutory declarations or complete affidavits. Simon Chamberlain and Rachel Wells are amenable to ensuring the community has access to JP services when required and are called upon a lot to provide services such as certification of documents.

Schedule 1.13 item [5] introduces the title of "JP (Retired)" for people who were 65 years or older when they ceased to hold office as a JP and had provided at least 10 consecutive years of service. The title of JP holds personal significance for many current and former office holders because they love what they do, they love serving their community and they love helping people out. Of course they provide a valuable service to our communities. However, the reality is that some JPs need to relinquish office as they advance in age or otherwise find that they cannot fulfil the requirements of the role. By enabling those individuals to apply to use the title "JP (Retired)" their service and status in the community can be recognised appropriately. The application process will be quick and simple. Information about how to apply will be available on the Department of Communities and Justice website. Application of the title is for JPs who perhaps are getting on in years and who are of advanced years. That is not the case with the JPs in my electorate office, either Simon Chamberlain or Rachel Wells, who I know will be watching this debate. I give them a big shout-out for their services. We want to make sure that service recognition goes on. To be afforded the title "JP (Retired)" I think is fitting.

In relation to the Oaths Act 1900, the amendment at schedule 1.18 will enable current JPs to witness the execution of documents for use in other States and Territories, or in relation to Commonwealth matters where the law of another jurisdiction permits them to do so. JPs are regularly asked to witness interstate documents, including legal documents such as mortgage papers. However, the power of New South Wales JPs to witness documents is derived from New South Wales legislation. This means that even if the law of another State permits them to witness a document, JPs are not authorised to do so under New South Wales law.

We see that when people come into my electorate office in Tamworth. There are times when we are unable to assist them when they do come from another State. It does create confusion for the community and it limits the range of services that JPs can provide. In some cases, interstate authorities have issued guidance stating that New South Wales JPs can witness particular documents, making the situation even more confusing. This uncertainty is further compounded by the fact that JPs can already witness statutory declarations for use in other jurisdictions. It is only other types of documents that cannot be witnessed. The amendment at schedule 1.18 is a very simple change to section 26A of the Oaths Act 1900. Nevertheless, it will clarify an issue that has been

causing practical difficulties for JPs and the public. I know that issue has been raised, even in my office, so I am really pleased.

I know two JPs in my office, JPs right across the electorate and two eminent JPs who are coming up for an award next week, namely Mal MacPherson and Max Ellicott. They are just two of the many JPs who have served for many, many years and will be justifiably recognised next week for their service and dedication to the community. This change will clarify that issue. It also provides a real benefit to the New South Wales community by making it quicker and easier to complete interstate transactions, especially property transactions. JPs provide an important and high-quality service to the people of New South Wales. I am pleased to support the amendments in this bill, which will both improve the quality and availability of JP services and recognise the significant contribution that many JPs provide to their local communities over many years. Now I ask that my staff go back to work. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:27): From the outset, I note that the Opposition does not oppose the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I would like to acknowledge the contributions today from the members representing the electorates of Cootamundra, Albury, Tweed, North Shore, Seven Hills, Wakehurst, Camden, Myall Lakes and the excellent contribution most recently from the member for Tamworth. I support the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. There are a number of parts of this bill that I wish to address this afternoon. Firstly, this bill provides amendments to prevent defamation law from having a chilling effect on the functions of statutory bodies.

Schedule 1.11 to the bill contains amendments to schedule 1 to the Defamation Act 2005. The purpose of these amendments is to ensure that the threat of defamation proceedings does not impede the legitimate functions of certain New South Wales statutory bodies being carried out as intended by the laws that govern those bodies. The amendments afford that protection by specifying instances where particular publications required to be produced under statute are subject to absolute privilege under section 27 of the Defamation Act. In the context of defamation law, absolute privilege means that certain materials or publications are subject to absolute protection from defamation claims. The policy rationale for absolute privilege is that there are particular types of publications that must be permitted to be made with complete freedom.

Accordingly, the privilege may be made available when there are public policy grounds, particularly when the privilege is indispensable to the effective performance of a judicial, legislative or other public function. In the Government's view, the amendments in the bill protect essential public functions of exactly this nature. With regard to compliance audits by local legal regulatory authorities, New South Wales has a co-regulatory legal profession scheme with the Legal Services Commissioner, the Bar Association and the Law Society each having regulatory duties under the Legal Profession Uniform Law.

The Uniform Law provides that each of these bodies is authorised to conduct compliance audits of law practices and to provide compliance reports of such law practices to each other for further action. Although the Legal Services Commissioner conducts regular compliance audits of this nature, the commissioner has not provided its report to the other regulatory authorities since 2017 because of legitimate concerns that such publications under the current law do not attract absolute privilege from defamation proceedings. The amendment set out in schedule 1.11 [1] to this bill will ensure that each local regulatory authority can provide copies of its compliance audit reports to the other regulatory authorities without fear of defamation proceedings against it.

In turn, the amendment will ensure that ethical and legal issues arising in the administration of law practices in New South Wales come to the attention of the appropriate regulatory bodies and are dealt with promptly so that users of legal services in New South Wales are properly protected. This bill also addresses publications of the Independent Planning Commission. The Independent Planning Commission is a statutory corporation established under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 as a consent authority for State-significant development in New South Wales. The commission also holds public hearings in relation to particular planning matters at the request of the Minister.

As well as publishing its findings and determinations about particular matters, the commission is also required to include in its publications a summary of submissions made to it and community views on development applications. Because of the highly sensitive nature of some development proceedings, which may involve multiple competing stakeholder interests, it is not uncommon for participants in stakeholder consultation forums to make accusations about third parties that could, in some circumstances, be considered defamatory. While the commission itself would not embrace such views, it is compelled under legislation to provide accurate reports, transcripts of meetings and public hearings, which may consequentially expose it to the risk of defamation proceedings as the publisher of defamatory statements.

By making particular publications of the commission subject to absolute privilege, it may be satisfied that it can continue to fulfil its legal functions as intended without exposing itself to undue legal risk. Defamation

law is fundamental to protecting the reputation of individuals from harm. Nevertheless, the costly threat of defamation proceedings must not be allowed to have a chilling effect on the ability of public bodies to carry out their legitimate statutory functions. The amendments in this bill provide important protections for bodies with statutory functions in New South Wales and, by extension, help to ensure that they can achieve their statutory purpose to serve the people of New South Wales.

I am pleased to support the amendments in this bill, which will ensure that both the New South Wales legal regulatory authorities and the Independent Planning Commission can fully carry out their functions as intended by the law. In addition, I want to address items [1] and [3] of schedule 1.8. This part of the bill aims to improve criminal investigation and enforcement, specifically in relation to bushfire arson offences. By amending the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure Act) 1999, the standard non-parole period for the bushfire arson offence will be increased to nine years. Currently, section 203E of the Crimes Act 1900 provides that a person who intentionally causes a fire and who is reckless as to the spread of the fire to vegetation on any public land or land belonging to another is guilty of an offence.

In 2018 the Government increased the maximum penalty for this offence to a period of imprisonment from 14 years to 21 years. However, the standard non-parole period for the offence was not amended at that time. The standard non-parole period represents, taking into account only the objective factors effecting the seriousness of the offence, the middle range of seriousness. Together with the maximum penalty for an offence, it is one of the guideposts used in the justice system for the sentencing of offenders. Prior to and following the 2018 amendments I have just mentioned, the standard non-parole period remained at five years. As members would be aware, in 2018 the Attorney General asked the NSW Sentencing Council to review that. In June 2019 the report back from the Sentencing Council was received. Recommendation 4.1 suggested that the non-parole period for that offence should be set somewhere in the range of eight to 10 years. This bill will amend the standard non-parole period from five years to nine years.

Bushfires are one of the scariest events that our regional communities face every season. In my electorate of Terrigal on the Central Coast many suburbs are surrounded by national parks and bushland. I note the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services, and member for Kiama, is in the Chamber. His community is almost identical to mine. Time and again we have seen bushfires deliberately started by people. That is certainly the case on the Central Coast, as it would be in the Port Macquarie electorate, which the Deputy Speaker represents, and the Kiama electorate. Our local communities are very keen to ensure that those responsible for starting bushfires are appropriately punished. Every year on the Central Coast hundreds of volunteer Rural Fire Service firefighters put their lives on the line to take care of lives and property across the Central Coast, as volunteers do across New South Wales. They do that to protect us, in some cases risking their own lives. But often these fires are deliberately lit by arsonists. My community is absolutely delighted about the increase in penalties for arsonists. [*Extension of time*]

The people of the electorate of Terrigal welcomed with open arms the increase in penalties for arsonists delivered by this Government. They will be just as pleased with this amendment and the extension of the standard non-parole period. Every summer people on the Central Coast live in fear of this sort of antisocial, criminal and negligent behaviour by people who think it is perfectly acceptable to light fires. It is not. This Government has made it very clear that it will not tolerate that sort of behaviour and that the community will not tolerate that sort of behaviour. This bill sends a clear message to would-be arsonists that significant penalties will apply to them—a nine-year non-parole period. That penalty is more than fitting. As I said, this behaviour will not be tolerated and the penalties will be suitably enforced with the legislation before the House today. I commend the Attorney General and his team for their work on the amendments for the non-parole periods for arsonists. We have zero tolerance for this sort of behaviour, which puts lives at risk and creates maximum levels of fears in the community. I commend those amendments.

In closing, I acknowledge also the amendments that deal with justices of the peace [JPs]. I listened to the contribution of the member for Tamworth and, like his community, the Central Coast and my electorate of Terrigal are home to many justices of the peace. I thank them for their volunteer work. They are passionate about and love what they do to assist people with paperwork and other services. There is a JP stall set up at Erina Fair shopping centre on a regular basis. I also acknowledge my staff, Kerryanne Delaney, Donna Golightly and Ben Sheath, who are all justices of the peace in my office. Every day they are all too willing to help our community as JPs. Not a day goes by that people do not come into my electorate office in Erina to have documents either witnessed or certified by our fantastic team of JPs. I thank them for taking on those duties and responsibilities. In fact, all the shops at Fountain Plaza—including the banks, chemists and other businesses—refer people who are seeking JP services to my office to see Kerryanne, Donna and Ben.

It is a great service. I thank all the JPs across New South Wales, especially those in the Central Coast. I acknowledge those who will now be given the title "JP (Retired)". It is absolutely fitting that we thank those

people for their service. It is always a pleasure to come into this place and acknowledge the JPs who have provided 50 years of service. There are so many JPs on the Central Coast and in my electorate of Terrigal who have provided 50 years of service. I thank them all for their dedication to our communities as justices of the peace. I thank the Attorney General and his team for that amendment. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (16:40): In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Liverpool, Cootamundra, Wagga Wagga, Albury, Heffron, Tweed, Fairfield, North Shore, Coogee, Seven Hills, Wakehurst, Myall Lakes, Port Stephens, Camden, Tamworth and Terrigal for their contributions to this debate. I foreshadow that I will move a Government amendment to the bill. First, I will address some matters that members have raised in the debate. The member for Liverpool asked if the risk of homicides and deaths due to neglect and mismanagement will increase because of the amendment to omit section 6 (1) (d) of the Coroners Act. The amendment will remove the requirement for the Coroner to consider deaths simply because the person did not see a medical practitioner within the six months before their death. This will remove the requirement for the Coroner to consider deaths that are obviously from natural causes.

It is anticipated that the amendment may help with the faster resolution of other coronial matters by reducing the number of natural deaths reported to the Coroner. The obligation under the Act to report unnatural, violent or suspicious deaths and sudden deaths from unknown causes to the Coroner will remain. The member for Liverpool also commented on the resourcing levels of the Coroners Court, coronial delays and the statutory review of the Coroners Act. The Government is committed to addressing coronial delays. However, a holistic approach must be taken when developing any reforms to the coronial system. There are two reforms to coronial procedures in this bill that take an immediate response in recognition of the distress to family members when the finalisation of coronial proceedings is delayed. I thank the members representing the electorates of Albury, Cootamundra and Wagga Wagga for their advocacy on that important issue.

In addition to those amendments, the joint Department of Communities and Justice and NSW Health taskforce is undertaking an end-to-end review of the coronial process. The taskforce is concentrating on the delays and timeliness of coronial procedures. It is also looking at a number of other procedures, including the reporting of a death to the Coroner, the diversion of natural causes deaths from the coronial system, case triage, the transport of the deceased, autopsies, the return of bodies to families, report finalisation, the determination of whether to hold an inquest and the provision of information to next of kin. The recommendations of the taskforce will inform future reform to the coronial jurisdiction. The completion of the statutory review of the Coroners Act will await the taskforce's recommendations to ensure a holistic reform process.

The Government has already taken other important steps to improve coronial jurisdiction matters and to reduce delays. First, the Government established the new \$91.5 million Forensic Medicine & Coroners Court Complex, which opened in Lidcombe late last year. Those extensive high-tech facilities will enable more comprehensive and timely investigations of sudden and unexplained deaths. Second, the Government established a coronial case management unit by bringing together staff from the Department of Communities and Justice, the NSW Police Force and NSW Health to work as a single team. The establishment of that unit will enable the Coroners Court to engage with grieving families earlier and provide more detailed information than was previously provided.

However, the issue of coronial delays is complex and there are many other factors contributing to it. The biggest contributor to coronial delays is the international shortage of forensic pathologists. Post-mortem examinations can only be carried out by appropriately qualified and credentialed specialised forensic pathologists. Coronial jurisdictions across Australia are experiencing difficulties filling vacant forensic pathology positions, impacting time frames and post-mortem services. NSW Health Pathology is exploring options for international recruitment of forensic pathologists and there are currently six registrars in training.

The member for Liverpool noted that the number of inquests in New South Wales has declined. The number of inquests held in any one year may be impacted by a number of factors. Delays in inquests may be caused due to the finalisation of post-mortem reports or the nature of individual inquests. For example, the coronial inquest into the Lindt cafe siege had an effect on the completion of coronial inquests over the two years that it took to hear and conclude. In 2018 there were 111 inquests held in New South Wales, which was an increase of 27 inquests compared with 84 inquests completed in 2017. Although the number of completed inquests is lower than in previous years, it is hoped that the opening of the new Lidcombe facility and the establishment of a coronial case management unit will increase the number of finalised inquests. There have been around 109 inquests conducted so far this year, indicating that the number of coronial inquests for 2019 will again trend upwards from 2018.

I note the member for Liverpool's comments about resourcing of the coronial jurisdiction in comparison with other jurisdictions. However, the appropriate measure is not resourcing but outcomes. The 2019 data from

Report of Government Services indicate that the New South Wales coronial jurisdiction's percentages of cases which are pending for more than 12 months or for more than 24 months are lower than comparable indicators in Victoria and Queensland. The member for Liverpool commented on amendments made to the Coroners Act in 2016 to move the Domestic Violence Death Review Team [DVDRT] from annual to biannual reporting.

This amendment was made following a recommendation arising out of the statutory review of chapter 9A of the Coroners Act and which came from a submission from the then State Coroner being the convenor of the DVDRT. As the former Attorney General, the member for Vaucluse explained in this place when the amendment was debated that the requirement to report annually did not allow sufficient time for the development of evidence-based policy recommendations within a collaborative inter-agency framework. It also did not allow sufficient time to monitor adequately the implementation of the team's past recommendations.

I now turn to amendments relating to justices of the peace. The member for Liverpool queried why the bill does not contain amendments to permit New South Wales JPs to witness overseas documents, a role currently undertaken by notaries. This issue was considered as part of the consultation paper that was released in August 2018. Some stakeholders, including the St George-Sutherland Regional Law Society and the NSW Justices Association, considered the witnessing of overseas documents to be a particularly complex area. If JPs were permitted to witness these documents they would require significant awareness and training of foreign legal processes, rights and obligations, as notaries are required to have special qualifications and accountability protections. Some stakeholders submitted to the consultation paper that this puts notaries in a better position to deal with this complex area.

In terms of "proof of life" forms, I am advised that there are already procedures in place through the Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Centrelink to support customers to make claims for foreign pensions where Australia has entered into an international social security agreement with the relevant country. The member for Liverpool also suggested that a provision is required that would indemnify JPs who act in good faith and he pointed to Western Australian legislation as an example. Justices of the peace do not require a standing indemnity for litigation as the likelihood of JPs being found to be in breach of their duty of care to clients is extremely low. In New South Wales JPs are given clear information in their handbook about their duty of care and the actions they are required to undertake in order to discharge that duty of care.

The member for Liverpool observed that certain offences under the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act and Health Practitioner Regulation National Law being tried summarily will increase the workload of the Local Court and place that court under additional pressure. In relation to offences affected under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, it is not expected that allowing those offences to continue to be tried summarily will materially increase the workload of the Local Court. That is because under the national law, until it was amended in March this year, to increase the maximum penalty for the offences from two to three years those offences were always tried summarily.

The effect of the amendment to the national law would be to automatically make prosecution of those offences indictable if this amendment were not passed. All jurisdictions have agreed that the national law should have the flexibility to allow less serious instances of this offending to continue to be dealt with summarily. While I expect that more serious instances of offending will be dealt with in the District Court, unnecessarily requiring these matters to be heard on indictment has the potential to create delays in the court system and to increase the cost of appeals. In relation to prosecutions under the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act, I am advised that those offences will not significantly contribute to the volume of matters heard in the Local Court. I note that earlier this month I announced the appointment of two new magistrates to the Local Court as part of a \$4.1 million package to help deal with the rise in the number of criminal matters in the Local Court.

In conclusion, this bill will make amendments to a number of Acts within the Stronger Communities cluster to address emerging issues, to respond to developments in case law, to support procedural requirements, to clarify uncertainty and to correct errors in legislation. In particular the bill provides a very clear message about the seriousness of bushfire arson by increasing the standard non-parole period to nine years. It makes some important steps towards improving coronial processes and reducing delay while other significant work is undertaken by the Government to improve the coronial system in a holistic manner and it recognises the invaluable contribution that justices of the peace make to the community. As previously foreshadowed, I will move Government amendments to the bill.

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

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Mr Mark Speakman.

Consideration in Detail

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: By leave: I propose the bill in one group of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 to 3, and schedule 1 be agreed to.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (16:52): By leave: I move Government amendments Nos 1 to 3 on sheet c2019-168 in globo:

No. 1 Membership of terrorist organisation

Page 9, Schedule 1.6. Insert after line 9—

[2] Part 6B

Insert after Part 6A—

Part 6B Terrorism

310I Definitions

In this Part:

Commonwealth Criminal Code means the Criminal Code set out in the Schedule to the *Criminal Code Act 1995* of the Commonwealth.

terrorist organisation and *member of a terrorist organisation* have the meaning they are given by section 102.1 of the Commonwealth Criminal Code.

310J Membership of terrorist organisation

(1) A person commits an offence if—

- (a) the person intentionally is a member of a terrorist organisation, and
- (b) the organisation is a terrorist organisation, and
- (c) the person knows the organisation is a terrorist organisation.

Maximum penalty: Imprisonment for 10 years.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply if the person proves that he or she took all reasonable steps to cease to be a member of the organisation as soon as practicable after the person knew that the organisation was a terrorist organisation.

310K Multiplicity of offences

If—

- (a) an act or omission is an offence against both this Part and the Commonwealth Criminal Code, and
- (b) the offender has been punished for that offence under the Commonwealth Criminal Code,

the offender is not liable to be punished for the offence under this Part.

[3] Schedule 11 Savings, transitional and other provisions

Insert at the end of the Schedule, with appropriate Part and clause numbering—

Part Justice Legislation Amendment Act 2019

Re-enactment of Part 6B

(1) Part 6B, as inserted by the amending Act, is taken to have commenced on 13 September 2019.

(2) Accordingly, anything that would have constituted an offence against section 310J, as inserted by the amending Act, during the relevant period had that section been in force is taken to constitute an offence against the section.

(3) In this clause—*amending Act* means the *Justice Legislation Amendment Act 2019*.

relevant period means the period—

- (a) commencing on 13 September 2019, and
- (b) ending immediately before the day on which Part 6B is inserted by the amending Act.

No. 2 Membership of terrorist organisation

Part 9, Schedule 1.6, line 11. Omit "The proposed amendment". Insert instead "Item [1] of the proposed amendments".

No. 3 Membership of terrorist organisation

Page 9, Schedule 1.6. Insert after line 15—

Item [2] re-enacts Part 6B (Terrorism) of the *Crimes Act 1900*, which was repealed on 13 September 2019. Item [3] provides for the re-enacted Part to be taken to have commenced on the day of that repeal.

Yesterday the Department of Communities and Justice advised me that part 6B of the Crimes Act 1900 had been automatically repealed after a sunset clause took effect. Part 6B contains the New South Wales offence of membership of a terrorist organisation. Given the identical Commonwealth offence in section 102.3 of the Criminal Code, the automatic repeal of part 6B has no operational impact and poses no risk to community safety. The counterterrorism Minister, and member for Lane Cove, and I have directed the secretary of the department to ensure that in future robust procedures in place for reviewing forthcoming timed repeal of regulations also apply to timed repeal of statutes.

Out of an abundance of caution the Government is moving an amendment to the Justice Legislation Amendment Bill that, if passed, will re-enact sections 310I, a definition section, 310J, the New South Wales membership of a terrorist organisation offence, and 310K, a double jeopardy provision of part 6B of the Crimes Act, with effect retrospective to 13 September 2019, the date of the repeal. The sunset clause in section 310L is not proposed to be reinstated so that the New South Wales offence of membership of a terrorist organisation will be permanently retained. I commend the amendments to the House.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:53): The Opposition does not oppose the amendments but I have to say this is utterly extraordinary. There is a sunset clause and someone forgets to renew the thing before the sunset clause comes into effect. The Government keeps telling us how seriously it takes the threat of terrorism. It is one of the greatest threats to our society, yet this Government cannot keep the offences against it on the statute book. It is utterly extraordinary.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (16:54): I thank the member for Liverpool for his observations. Those in glass houses should not throw stones. In 2010, when the member for Liverpool was a Government Minister, that Government allowed to lapse for 14 days—from 13 September to 27 September—the definition of "terrorist act" in section 27A of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002. The temporary absence of part 6B from the Crimes Act poses no threat to community safety. On one view, given the identical Commonwealth offence in section 102.3 of the Criminal Code, it might be thought that there is no necessity to continue the equivalent New South Wales offence. However, out of an abundance of caution, we are doing so to make sure that New South Wales continues to have the strongest terrorist legislation in the country.

No other State or Territory has counterterrorism laws as strong as those of New South Wales. We have introduced a post-sentence detention and supervision regime, the Terrorism (High Risk Offenders) Act. We have tightened pre-charge investigative detention by extending the pre-charge investigative detention period to a maximum of 14 days. We have tightened police powers at the time of the terrorist incident to give legal protections to police officers who need to use lethal force against terrorists during an incident. We have tightened the presumption against bail so that a court must refuse bail for someone charged with a terrorism-related offence, except in exceptional circumstances.

We have tightened the parole presumptions so that the NSW State Parole Authority must refuse parole for terrorism-related offenders unless satisfied that the offender will not engage in, incite or assist others to engage in terrorist acts or violent extremism. We have the strongest counterterrorism package of any State or Territory in the country, which includes the new supermax prison now open at Goulburn as part of a \$47 million package. On one view, the renewal of part 6B is not necessary. There is no threat to community safety. The strong powers we have by way of covert surveillance, investigative detention, preventative detention and police powers in a terrorist emergency all remain on foot in the meantime. I commend the amendments to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that Government amendments Nos 1 to 3 on sheet c2019-168 be agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that clauses 1 to 3 as amended be agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 3 as amended agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that schedule 1 as amended be agreed to.

Schedule 1 as amended agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

*Public Interest Debate***WATER MANAGEMENT**

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (16:58): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the Government for its ongoing management and safeguarding of the precious resource—water—during the worst drought on record.
- (2) Recognises water restrictions as an important water-saving tool.
- (3) Calls on councils to ensure they continue to take all actions in their control to support communities and industries during this drought.

New South Wales is in the worst drought on record—city and country. The 31 months to July 2019 have been the driest on record; 96 per cent of the State is drought affected. New South Wales dam levels are down to 27 per cent capacity—the worst in the country, which averages 49 per cent. On current projections, Dubbo, Bathurst and Tamworth could run out of water within months. The town of Tenterfield is even worse, with less than 200 days left. Inflows into many of our State's arterial rivers are also the worst on record. For example, over the past year the Namoi River has experienced only 1.3 per cent of its average yearly inflows. In the past two years, the Macquarie River has experienced only 6.7 per cent. That is 40 per cent lower than inflows during the millennium drought. Water allocations for general irrigation purposes, such as annual cropping, are zero in all inland regulated river valleys except the Murrumbidgee, which has had a small 6 per cent general security allocation. In some inland river valleys allocations for high-priority users, such as towns, domestic and stock users and industry, are also restricted.

Earlier this year I wrote to each council throughout New South Wales, as their community water utility provider. I asked whether there was anything the State Government could do to help them through this difficult time. Since the beginning of this drought, the New South Wales Government has committed more than \$1.8 billion for drought initiatives. That funding has included: \$1 billion for the Farm Innovation Fund, allowing farmers to be more resilient; \$190 million in drought transport subsidies; and \$205 million for other programs, such as mental health and animal health supports. I am incredibly proud of the \$130 million for water infrastructure projects. They include emerging drought-critical infrastructure water projects, water carting and emergency works on projects to ensure communities have sustainable water supplies for as long as possible. The vast majority of councils are absolutely doing the right thing.

Water restrictions are part of our response to this drought and they are just one lever councils have to help answer concerns about water across the State. In Bathurst the community is on level 3 water restrictions. Orange and Tamworth are on level 4, with Tamworth expected to increase later this week. My community of Kempsey is currently on level 2 restrictions; I have never seen it so dry. The rain last week was a godsend to my community and, I know, to the Assistant Speaker's community in the Hastings Valley. Orange City Council is currently using 140 litres per person per day; that is the lowest water usage of any council across Australia that I am aware of—certainly in New South Wales. Sydney is around 200 litres per day, and it has dropped. During the millennium drought it was around 235 litres per day. I point to the leadership of Mayor Reg Kidd in particular. I met with Reg this week at my offices and was very pleased with the energy and commitment the Orange community has shown to valuing absolutely every drop of water.

As I said, Sydney is already at level 1 restrictions and the trigger point for level 2 is fast approaching. It was heartening to see, for the first time as water Minister, that there was an increase in Sydney's catchment levels last week following the rains. But it was pretty miserable; it was only a 0.3 per cent increase. The Sydney Desalination Plant [SDP] is playing a significant role in maintaining Sydney's water supply. The SDP reached full production at the end of July—two months ahead of schedule. The plant is now producing on average 250 million litres a day, approximately 15 per cent of the city's needs. These are not easy decisions to make, but since the plant was turned on in January the current dam depletion rates have improved by around 0.2 per cent per week.

We are facing a very difficult time, with the Bureau of Meteorology not predicting significant rainfalls beyond the summer. Our communities have really been tested, but we have seen the kind of resilience and strength from our communities that we see during times of hardship. The Tenterfield community has been working hard to find new bores to extend the amount of water. As I told the House during question time, today they have struck

water. This is great news for the town of Tenterfield and its mayor, Peter Petty, because that town has been doing it tough, with terrible bushfires and this added burden of potentially running out of water.

I thank the communities that have worked hard and acknowledge that Dubbo city council took a decision at last night's council meeting to go to level 3 and, next month, to go to level 4 water restrictions. I acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of the Minister for Local Government. The Government wants to work in partnership with local councils; we need to do this together. This is a critical situation that we are all facing but the Government will stand with the community and with each town—whether it is Cobar, Nyngan, Orange, Dubbo or Tamworth. I point out that one of the towns that faces the biggest challenge is Guyra. I think we are still carting water into Guyra at the moment because we are waiting on the final testing of the pipeline from Malpas Dam to Guyra to keep that community going. Towns like Guyra and Walcha do not use irrigation; they are situated on the top of the Great Dividing Range. There are no better examples than these of the severity of the drought and the very unusual circumstances we all face. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (17:05): I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting paragraph (1) with a view to inserting instead:

"Acknowledges local councils and 89 local water utilities across New South Wales for their ongoing management and safeguarding of this precious resource—water—during the worst drought on record."

It is timely that we have this debate because on the front page of today's *The Sydney Morning Herald* there was a pretty extraordinary example of the Minister's poorly crafted water diplomacy. The story criticised a local council which has responsibility for delivering water to its community. That council delivers the water to the community with the assistance of WaterNSW, which provides the bulk water supply. The reality is that up until July of this year, WaterNSW had been indicating to Dubbo Regional Council that it would have 100 per cent of its high-security water delivered. On 1 July that was changed to 80 per cent. Dubbo council had in place until last night provisions such that it would not amend its water restrictions until WaterNSW—the Minister's own agency—indicated that the water supply would be cut to 70 per cent or lower. Dubbo council was not only doing everything needed to be a responsible council but was also trying to advance the cause. In May of this year the council moved a motion to have the general manager and the water assets staff look at ways to improve the use of increasingly limited water allocations.

That work has been ongoing. Business papers were released last week indicating that Dubbo council—prior to the Minister's media release to *The Sydney Morning Herald* to get the front page story—had already planned to go to level 3 water restrictions on 1 October 2019. The council amended that last night to include that it would go to level 4 water restrictions on 1 November 2019. The significance of those two steps is that the council needs to indicate to businesses that, at level 3, they need to develop a water savings management plan. The step taken by the council last night gave businesses a one month indicator that they are on their way to level 4. Those indicators that they needed to head in that direction did not come from WaterNSW, the agency that the Minister is responsible for, but from other messages. So it was quite extraordinary for the Minister to take this diplomatic step on the front page of *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

The reporter from *The Sydney Morning Herald* had access to the letter from the Minister prior to the general manager and the mayor of Dubbo council. It reminds me of the relationship the Minister does not have with the National Resources Commissioner, where a leaked letter from her department made it onto the front page of the newspaper prior to the National Resources Commissioner having an opportunity to meet with the Minister to discuss her concerns. That diplomacy was questioned during budget estimates. When the Minister was asked who was responsible for that leak she said that she had not been able to find out but wanted to move on and not worry too much about that. I ask Government Ministers which one of them would not be concerned that a letter had been leaked from their respective departments and would just want to move on? I am pretty sure that Ministers would be interested to know where such a letter came from. The only assumption that can be drawn is that the letter must have come from the Minister herself.

Let us go back to the minutes of the Dubbo council, because the member for Dubbo is in the Chamber. I am reliably informed that one of his staff members happens to be a councillor at Dubbo. The member would have known last week at the earliest—and at least over the weekend—that the motion that was going before the council last night to take the necessary action about water restrictions was in the business papers. He could have informed the Minister before she made her enormous attack on the Dubbo council about the presence of those minutes in the papers.

The Government has had four water Ministers in eight years. One—possibly two—of those water Ministers is being investigated by ICAC, yet the Government is seeking to take credit for responsible management. Last week Government Ministers told the House that in 2016 the dams were full. Three years later the dams are empty but they call that responsible management. Two weeks ago the Minister said that in the year 500 AD there

was a 60-year drought. If that is true, start planning for it. The Opposition supports the amendment; it does not support the original motion.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (17:10): I move:

That the proposed amendment be amended by retaining paragraph (1) of the original motion with a view to inserting the words proposed by Mr Clayton Barr as paragraph (2).

I will start by addressing the suggestion by the member for Cessnock that a staff member has had anything to do with my being aware of any council matters at Dubbo Regional Council. I take offence at that. We certainly do not discuss council matters in any way, shape or form in my office. I would like to talk about water, and the need for water restrictions, after the largest council in my electorate—Dubbo Regional Council—voted to implement level 3 water restrictions from 1 October, before moving on to level 4 a month later. We all know that water is a massive issue—there is no hiding from that fact—but in my part of the world, as members might be aware, things are getting fairly critical. Before I speak more about restrictions I point out that, while the situation is growing worse by the day, and as we look to the skies for a bit of relief, reports of Dubbo running out of water by November are simply wrong.

The Macquarie valley has experienced intense drought conditions that have resulted in record low inflows into Burrendong Dam over the past two years. The Minister has mentioned this before, but I clarify that I am talking about long-term average inflows into the dam of 1,450 gegalitres per year. In the past two years less than 100 gegalitres of water have flowed in—well below previous records in severe droughts. In fact, to this point there has been only 34 per cent of the previous low record inflow.

The Macquarie River has been classified at drought stage 4—the highest of the stages. For that reason it is incumbent on all of us to do our bit to stretch our resources as far as possible. To that end, as the Minister mentioned, the Government announced \$30 million for Dubbo Regional Council to explore a range of measures, including more bores, bore security, effluent re-use and recycling of water. The Minister joined me at Burrendong Dam recently to announce further funding to access remnant water at the dam, should that be required. That will be an additional four months' worth of water at a cost of over \$7 million. It will provide pumps to pump the 21 gegalitres of water that is below the out-take valve but can still be used. It is a step forward.

As I mentioned earlier, Dubbo Regional Council announced last night that water restrictions within the local government area will move from level 2 to level 3 next week and then up to level 4 from November. It has been suggested by some that this should have happened before now, but the good news is that the entire council is on board and things are moving in the right direction. While the number of water sources and demand management options are being looked at, expanding Dubbo's access to groundwater is the most likely option to deliver an alternative supply in the shortest possible time. On that front, council is currently scoping all the necessary works to complete the project. It has started conversations with relevant government agencies and groundwater modellers. The Minister and her department are in close communication with Dubbo Regional Council and the department is currently providing technical assistance to plan for the delivery of any alternative water supplies.

I should point out that one of the often maligned groups when it comes to water security is our farmers, who use water directly for animals or to produce a range of crops for human consumption, but are often criticised by the general public. In this particular situation in the Dubbo electorate, support from the Upper Macquarie Groundwater Group is a really good example of an interested group trying to work with the local council. I congratulate the group on actively being involved and offering to help where possible to ensure an alternative groundwater supply can be obtained. In this case the upper Macquarie group has already offered 120 megalitres of water from bores at Geurie to provide for the ongoing water needs of that town.

This means you can use existing pumps, meters and pipes to deliver potable water in the shortest possible time and at minimum cost to ratepayers. One of the speakers at last night's council meeting talked about the challenge and the immediate crisis, which can certainly be solved by collaboration—working more closely with farmers and irrigators—but also by looking at the bigger challenge. There are some more opportunities for engagement across a range of businesses and that will certainly be happening from now. Businesses are starting to implement their water savings action plans as part of the move from level 3 into level 4 water restrictions in the Dubbo local government area.

It was great to see Dubbo's largest private employer, Roger Fletcher, speak at last night's council meeting. He outlined how supportive he is of council going to level 4 as soon as possible. There are no easy answers in this scenario. However, whatever can be done will need to be done to make sure that we can get through this together. We need individuals and communities taking responsibility for their water usage and not simply saying that this is somebody else's problem. It is our problem. We need to work on it together, support each other and look for innovative solutions for the future.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:15): I welcome the opportunity to debate water management in New South Wales and I support the amendment moved by the member for Cessnock. I am glad that this debate will bring to the attention of the House the crisis that the Coalition Government seems all too willing to ignore. Our State is in drought. Our regions, their people and our primary industries have been crying out for help from this Government from all across New South Wales and Australia—and they have been ignored. Water restrictions have been enforced for residents across Sydney since June. This is the first time in a decade that Australia's largest city has been placed under water-usage restrictions.

These water restrictions have been marketed by this Government as a safeguard for our most precious resource. This is spin. These water restrictions are simply a front for poor planning. They are a kneejerk reaction to the steeply worsening dam levels and steeply worsening polling for the Liberals and The Nationals in regional areas. Today's debate provides yet another example of the Coalition Government's systematic approach to throwing up its hands and handballing complex issues of government to the people of New South Wales—just like the water Minister has done today, buck-passing her problem onto mayors and local councils when the Government has already cost shifted more than \$800 million dollars onto New South Wales councils to date.

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

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: Water is a basic utility. Throughout the history of New South Wales our water supply has been readily provided by the State Government of New South Wales—until now. This is not the first drought this State has seen, but due to the incompetence of this Government it is certainly the worst. The Government claims it is acting and working to solve the problem and provide solutions, yet besides some well-overdue water restrictions the Government has done nothing. I take this opportunity to bring to the attention of the House how a sound and competent Government behaves and the actions it takes. During the millennium drought Labor introduced level 1 water restrictions in Sydney when supply levels were just below 60 per cent.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The Minister will come to order.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: This time the Coalition waited until levels were at almost 50 per cent before commencing water restrictions. When Sydney dam levels dropped below 50 per cent in 2004 level 2 restrictions were introduced. Level 3 water restrictions were introduced when dam levels fell below 40 per cent in June 2005. The difference in these strategies is billions and billions of litres of water. Despite Labor introducing a statewide water tank rebate scheme a whole year before Sydney water restrictions during the millennium drought, the Coalition Government has introduced no such statewide scheme.

The washing machine rebate program was introduced four months before the Sydney level 1 water restrictions were implemented during the millennium drought under Labor; but, no similar program has been implemented today. Not only has the current Coalition Government failed to introduce adequate water restrictions, but it has also failed to introduce any real and prominent water awareness programs. As I stated in my private member's statement last week, prior to the introduction of Sydney water restrictions in 2002 the then Labor Government introduced the "Go Slow on the H2O" campaign, but there is no campaign to be seen. The inaction of this Coalition Government shows.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The member for Rockdale will come to order.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: As of May this year more than 60 per cent of Sydney residents were unaware that a drought even existed in New South Wales.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Terrigal will come to order.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: My question to the Premier and the water Minister is this: How on earth do you expect anyone to even follow your water restrictions when they have no idea a drought exists? While Labor started building a desalination plant in 2004, in 2012—after a few rainy months—some low-altitude flyer on the other side of the Chamber went on record saying that we would never use the desalination plant, and the Government sold it. But on 26 January this year it was switched back on. We are now paying Veolia, a French company, to access resources the United Nations defines as a precondition for human existence and for the sustainability of our planet. That's right: A resource we must consume, which we should be spending money on and that money should be going up into the New South Wales coffers, but it is going to a foreign-owned company.

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

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: One of the great successes of the Labor State Government during the millennium drought was its capacity to work with Federal counterparts to achieve outcomes for everyone. A *Daily Telegraph* analysis of spending during the Howard and Rudd governments between 2001 and 2009 shows that spending totalled more than \$5.7 billion, or just over \$7 billion adjusted today. But between 2014 and 2019

the Federal Government has spent only \$970 million for comparative measures. When it comes to water policies Liberal-Nationals governments at every level are failing the people of New South Wales. Is it sheer incompetence or is it just that the Deputy Premier has fewer friends in Canberra than he does in regional New South Wales and in this place?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Wollongong and the member for Rockdale that they are on numerous calls to order. Order! The member for Wollondilly has the call.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (17:21): I thank the member for Coogee for that comedy routine and her hysterical outrage, considering that for the 16 years that members on her side of the House were in power they got rid of tanks. As a result there was no chance of harvesting water in metropolitan Sydney, which could have helped save water in households. I know this because I used to install them in the Macarthur—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Rockdale will come to order.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: In my electorate of Wollondilly we have a number of dams that supply to the Macarthur regions and the Southern Highlands. But when you turn the tap on here in Parliament House the water comes from Warragamba Dam, which is in the northern part of my electorate. As someone who has spent a great deal of time working with water in my life—not like the apparatchiks sitting on the other side of the Chamber, who have never had a real job or never owned a business in their lives—I know why we need to save water.

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

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: As the water Minister put it very eloquently before, New South Wales is in the worst drought on record—both in the city and country. Just like in the country the Government is supporting local utilities to provide water for communities. Sydney is also preparing for the future. Currently our Sydney dam levels are at 49.4 per cent. This time last year Sydney dams were 65.8 per cent full and in 2017 they were 91 per cent full. This is the biggest decline in water storage on record. Sydney is already at level 1 water restrictions and the trigger point for level 2 is approaching. Despite the terrible outlook for rainfall, thankfully we are in a position to support our communities and get through this long dry. We have recently announced further work to secure water for Greater Sydney with preliminary planning for the expansion of the Sydney Desalination Plant [SDP] as dam levels continue to drop. The SDP reached production two months ahead of schedule—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Rockdale that he is on numerous calls to order.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: The plant produces an average of 250 million litres of water per day—approximately 15 per cent of Sydney's supply.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I call the member for South Coast to order for the first time.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: Since the plant was turned on in January dam depletion rates have improved by 0.2 per cent per week. Should the drought worsen and water levels continue to drop, we are ready to act. If needed, we will increase the capacity of the desalination plant to increase water supply.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I call the member for South Coast to order for the second time.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: This is our insurance for Greater Sydney.

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

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: The Sydney Water "Love Water, Don't Waste It" campaign has reduced consumption by 7 per cent over summer. We have increased Sydney Water staff by 57 per cent. They are all working to reduce leaks caused by this drought—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Wollondilly will resume his seat. The message is clear: I will kick people out of the Chamber, as I did last time and the time before. I am looking in the direction of the member for Wollongong and member for Rockdale as well as the member for South Coast. The member for Wollondilly has the call.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: Recycling is also an important part of Sydney Water, with 43 gigalitres of water being produced in 2017 and 2018.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I call the member for the South Coast to order for the third time.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: These sorts of measures can be used to get water to farmers in areas like Menangle, Cawdor and other farming areas in my electorate. Of course, water restrictions also play a major role. Level 1 water restrictions commenced across New South Wales on 1 June 2019. They are stronger than previous

Water Wise Rules. After a grace period until September 2019 to allow the community time they will be enforceable by on-the-spot fines of \$220 for individuals and \$550 for businesses, with maximum fines of up to \$550 for individuals and \$5,500 for businesses under the Sydney Water Act 1994.

Under level 1 water restrictions hoses must have a trigger nozzle, wand or other attachment with an instant on-off mechanism, and watering of lawns and gardens must be done before 10.00 a.m. or after 4.00 p.m. The use of sprinklers and watering systems is not to be permitted except for drip irrigation systems or automated watering systems with controllers that automatically adjust watering details based on changing soil moisture and weather conditions. A hose cannot be left unattended unless topping up a pool. Hosing hard surfaces like paths and driveways is not permitted; however, areas can be spot cleaned for health and safety reasons or in an emergency. Vehicles, boats and buildings can only be washed with a bucket, hose-fitted trigger nozzle or high pressure cleaning equipment.

These restrictions are fit for purpose and as a result they are stronger than previous Water Wise Rules, which did not restrict the use of sprinklers, washing vehicles or filling pools. The implementation of these restrictions does help reinforce the need for everyone to save water when we are not getting enough rain. I stress, water restrictions have a social and economic impact on our community, therefore very careful consideration has been given to the restrictions that are implemented. While Sydneysiders have shown themselves to be waterwise, under these extreme drought conditions we all need to be wiser and to preserve our water.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (17:26): I move:

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

- (1) Reprimands the Government for its water mismanagement, which has made this drought much worse and much longer than it otherwise would have been.
- (2) Recognises water restrictions should apply to government departments.

No sensible person would praise this Government—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I ask the member for Murray to table her amendment so that the attendants know where we are up to.

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order: What we are seeing in public interest debates are members making up amendments on the run, as evidenced, without signing them and providing them to the Clerk.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! That is why I have stopped the clock and asked the member for Murray to table the amendment.

Mr Andrew Constance: I think it is important to the House. If members are going to get up and act in that manner, it is important that they sign the amendment so that all members can see what silly amendments are being proposed.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! I thank the Leader of the House for his advice. The member for Murray has the call.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: I have done that. No sensible person would praise this Government for its ongoing management and the safeguarding of our most precious natural resource. A recent independent report by the Natural Resources Commission concluded that the Government has brought us into drought three years earlier than otherwise would have been the case. I also question the Government's claim that this is the worst drought on record. The millennium drought lasted nine long years. I ask the House why we never saw then the havoc we have seen over the past year. We never saw the number of towns running out of water that we do now. We did not see the mass fish kill. So far this drought has lasted three years, but it is having a much worse impact due to the water mismanagement and corruption that preceded it.

The changing of the Barwon-Darling Water Sharing Plan in 2012, which allowed pumping during low flows, is a large reason why we are in this mess now. Yet seven years down the track these changes have not been reversed. The New South Wales Government also did nothing about the Murray Darling Basin Authority when it drained seven years' supply of drinking water from the Menindee Lakes. Now towns are running out of water or facing severe water restrictions. I also wonder why it is that only ordinary families face the toughest water restrictions. What about the State Government's departments—

Mr Kevin Anderson: Point of order—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Murray will resume her seat. The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Kevin Anderson: My point of order is under Standing Order 73. I ask that the member for Murray be brought back to the leave of the motion.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The member for Keira will come to order. The member for Murray will resume her seat.

Mr Andrew Constance: To the point of order: I seek a ruling. The amendment foreshadowed by the member for Murray was to the original question. There is already a question before the House that relates to an amendment. Therefore, the member's address and amendment is out of order and I seek a ruling to that effect.

Mr Ryan Park: To the point of order: The member for Murray has put forward a very reasonable and appropriate amendment. That is it what the public interest debate is about: It is about a major issue. I do not think anyone could say that water does not impact on the member for Murray. She has a right to reflect that in an appropriate amendment.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I thank the member for Keira for his advice. I will make a ruling on the amendment foreshadowed by the member for Murray when she has completed her contribution. The member for Murray has the call.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: What about the State Government departments, like the Office of Environment and Heritage, that are wasting billions of litres of water while farmers got to the wall during the drought? They are sending water down the Murray and letting it flow into creeks where it has no value. While government departments splash around vast quantities of water, families and communities are left with the dregs. Why are they not accountable for their water use? Why are families and farmers not compensated for their lack of water? We pay the costs, but we do not even get the water. One big corporate, Tandou, received \$78 million from the Government, double the market price those opposite paid for them, but not ordinary people like those in Menindee. They are forced to sign a waiver before they receive the limited amounts of water delivered to them. Imagine that! To protect the suppliers, people in a First World country have to sign a waiver about water quality just in case someone might get sick.

I question why this Government is not providing far more support to towns that have run out of water due to Government mismanagement. Last week in this House I praised Dale McCleary and his group of dedicated Griffith volunteers. Every weekend they transport water to different towns such as Menindee and Tilpa. They do not even get the cost of the fuel reimbursed by the Government. They have to pay it themselves. They are doing the Government's job. I acknowledge that councils are doing a lot to get water to their residents. They have to do all the heavy lifting due to the lack of State Government support. In some cases they have to sell water to manage their water supply. We are facing a water emergency across western New South Wales. Ordinary people are doing their best.

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

Mrs HELEN DALTON: Councils are doing what they can. I call on this Government to do more to help fix the mess it has created.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I rule the amendment of the member for Murray out of order because it does not relate to the current question before the House.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (17:34): I will be a little more subdued than speakers before me, but I will say some things about water because we really need to talk about it on a long-term basis and look at a long-term strategy for water. The Minister is quoted as saying that it is a really tough time to be a farmer and a water Minister. It is going to get a whole lot tougher because the Minister knows, I know and we all know that some of our farmers have hit rock bottom. Some businesses in rural towns have ceased to operate and our towns are running out of water. As was rightly stated today, Tenterfield in my electorate of Lismore has struck water with the bore operations. One can say hallelujah because of the serious situation facing the town: It will run out water within 200 days if more water is not forthcoming.

Some of the local farmers with operating bores are providing water to everyone they can, but their water licences and the amount they are permitted to remove mean they will need more to keep up supply. In addition, having to go through the Natural Resources Regulator means it takes too long for them to get the water they need to supply to others. I have put in a request to the Minister in that regard. I do not need to tell the Minister the facts and statistics, but on behalf of my constituents I must ask: What is the Government's long-term plan to tackle the water crisis engulfing New South Wales, especially in rural and regional areas?

I have listened carefully to the contributions of others and whilst it has been about the actions taken and often congratulatory statements about how good the Government is going, what I hear does not constitute a plan to address the water crisis on a longer-term basis. We all know it is not easy, but we need a long-term plan.

Opening up this Chamber to a managed water summit would be a useful way—not the debate we are having today—to engage and inform the entire community as we, the MPs, represent all people in New South Wales. We need to do that.

I turn now to the draft water sharing plan for the Barwon-Darling, which other members have spoken about. I will share some headlines and comments from a wide range of sources. I will start with Tenterfield in my electorate of Lismore—ravaged by fires, devastated by drought, running out of water, and surrounding towns and cities in a similar situation. We know that level 5 restrictions will be enforced in Tenterfield once the dam level drops to 15 per cent. Well, that is not that far off—it is not at 15 per cent, but it is not that far off.

Jennings, which is in the shire of Tenterfield but borders Queensland with Wallangarra, is now on critical water restrictions because that town's water comes in from the Southern Downs Regional Council, which is over the border. The restriction in that town is 100 litres per person per day. A long-term water plan is the talk on everybody's lips in the street. Even the NSW Business Chamber is calling for an urgent strategy on long-term water. My regional business chamber has called for it as well. In *The Northern Star* the business chamber stated:

People don't often appreciate that the drought has been made so much worse through widespread water mismanagement and waste ...

Water is our most precious commodity, and we cannot afford to waste a drop. Current mismanagement that has allowed for over extraction, meter tampering, and over-bank flows, is wasting precious and limited resources. This leaves regional communities in a much weaker position to deal with drought.

This was from the local regional business chamber, supported by the NSW Business Chamber. We know that the drought is a critical factor and that it has come on much more quickly through water mismanagement. I speak in support of the motion, I support the amendment and I supported the amendment that has been ruled out of order.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I acknowledge the Hon. Kayee Griffin, former member of the upper House and former mayor of Canterbury for many, many years.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (17:39): In reply: I acknowledge the very good and clever contributions by the member for Wollondilly and the member for Dubbo. In the context that this is the worst drought the State has faced, as I said in my opening remarks, for the past 31 months we have had the lowest ever rain period in the history of this State. Those opposite might like to blame the Government for the lack of rain; they may think that we are that powerful; they may think that we can click our fingers and get it to rain—

Mr David Harris: You're not rain dancing hard enough.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: Or even do a rain dance, as the member for Wyong suggested. I am sorry and very sad to say that is beyond our control and our ability, as much we would like it not to be.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Murray has made her contribution.

Mrs Helen Dalton: Not in the south it is not, Melinda.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I acknowledge the interjection from the foolish member for Murray, who just said that that is in our remit.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! The member's language is unparliamentary.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I never, ever thought I would hear in this Chamber someone purporting to represent the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party blame farmers for a drought. You are a disgrace to your community.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Oxley will resume her seat. What is the standing order?

Mr Clayton Barr: My point of order is Standing Order 74. I think that some of those words were disorderly and I ask the member to withdraw them.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I ask the member to withdraw.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I am sorry that I offend the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party, but the party just then offended those farmers in regional New South Wales who rely on trust in their ability to go on to farm and do their job properly. To join with the Labor Party and accuse farmers of bringing this drought on early is a disgrace; you are a disgrace. Go back to Murray and say that. You are not representing their best interests.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Oxley will resume her seat. If I have to, I definitely will kick people out. Members will come to order. We will not continue. The member for Rockdale will come to order. The member for Oxley has the call.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I acknowledge the very mature approach that the member for Lismore took in this debate, an appropriate response and tone. She appreciates the fact that it has not rained is the fault of no government or party.

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

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I agree with her that the more we discuss water, the more we do more about recycling, and the more conversations we have with our communities about lowering our daily use are very important things. We accept the amendment moved by the member for Cessnock and acknowledge the very good work that our communities across New South Wales have done, and we have been there beside them. There is one thing that does bear acknowledging: If not for the proper and good financial management of this State, we would not have been able to find an extra \$130 million to support our councils, support our towns and keep our town water supplies going for as long as possible until this damn drought breaks.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment of the member for Dubbo to the amendment of by the member for Cessnock be agreed to.

Amendment of the member for Dubbo to the amendment of the member for Cessnock agreed to.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment of the member for Cessnock as amended be agreed to.

Amendment of the member for Cessnock as amended agreed to.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that the motion moved by the member for Oxley as amended be agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Private Members' Statements

LIVERPOOL LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (17:45): Today I congratulate all participants who were recognised in this year's Liverpool Local Business Awards. The Local Business Awards aim to pay tribute to and reward the local community's best and most innovative businesses. They also aim to grow and strengthen the bonds between businesses and the community thereby improving the standards of our local businesses. The Local Business Awards are based within the local community with voting conducted by local area residents. The awards give local businesses the opportunity to promote their business and its strengths, display their range of products and services and provide in-store displays of their Local Business Awards success. The awards bring together businesses, the local community and awards sponsors to celebrate excellence and quality.

The Holsworthy electorate was proudly represented during the awards, with many different businesses winning in their respective categories. Some of the winners included XS Espresso in Prestons, the winner of the Cafe category; the Australian Dance & Drama Co. in Chipping Norton, winner of the Dance Studio category, and I am very proud to say that all the finalists for this category were also from the Holsworthy electorate; Atlas Jewellers in the Casula Mall, winner of the Jewellery Store category; BlueBeard Joinery in Prestons, winner of the Most Inclusive Employer category; Benchmark National in Moorebank, winner of the Real Estate Agency category; Enzo's Cucina in Casula Mall, winner of the Restaurant category; Tomkat Roofing in Prestons, winner of the Service & Trade category; KRGS Doors in Prestons, winner of the Specialised Business category; and Barbeques Galore in the Crossroads Homemaker Centre in Casula, which is slightly on the other side of the road from my electorate, was the winner of the Specialised Retail Business category.

This year has been a personal best for the Holsworthy electorate, winning nine categories in the 2019 Liverpool Local Business Awards. This just shows how small businesses within my electorate have thrived under a New South Wales Liberal Government. The winner of the Most Inclusive Employer category, BlueBeard Joinery in Prestons, has been actively helping those who wish to be employed and who receive disability benefits. They have been working closely with Nova Employment's campaign 100 Jobs in 100 Days. Nova Employment is also a sponsor of the Liverpool Local Business Awards. It has a supported employment program specialised for jobseeking and post-placement support.

Nova works exclusively with people who have a disability or who have significant barriers to obtaining work. Through Nova Employment's campaign, BlueBeard Joinery Prestons has taken on Matias Sanchez as an

employee. This is Matias' first job and he has learnt a lot under the leadership of director of BlueBeard Joinery in Prestons, Joseph Akerry. As the Parliamentary Secretary for Families, Disability and Emergency Services, it gives me absolute joy to see local businesses in my electorate taking the initiative to be more inclusive towards those living with a disability.

Since we are on the topic of small businesses in the Liverpool area, I thank and congratulate the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce & Industry who also have contributed to the success of businesses within my electorate. They have also sponsored the Liverpool business awards. The Liverpool Chamber of Commerce & Industry not only provides a strong voice for our business community but also provides the perfect environment for future growth by promoting local businesses and providing networking opportunities. One such opportunity will come up very soon when the Premier visits to have lunch with the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce & Industry on 31 October.

I congratulate Dimitri Karam, who is the president of the chamber, and his team for their stewardship of the organisation. The chamber currently is progressing in leaps and bounds and it is great to see the work that all of its members are engaged in. Dimitri Karam has been the President of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce & Industry since August 2018. He also has been pursuing his passion in the hospitality industry since 1999. He has been working at the Oscars group since 2013 as the group's general manager. I also congratulate Rhonda Osman, who is the Vice President of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce & Industry, on successfully leading with Dimitri Karam. Rhonda Osman is an expert in product development specialising in customer service and interactive voice response technology.

As we all know small businesses are the backbone of our economy. I am proud to be part of a political party and a government that supports them. The more successful our small businesses are, the more successful we all are. Therefore I believe it is vital that we commemorate the achievements of our local small businesses and congratulate them on their successes. Once again I congratulate the winners and finalists as well as everyone who was nominated and who has been recognised this year in the 2019 Liverpool Local Business Awards. I look forward to seeing all their signs and awards up all over the electorate, congratulating them on their achievements. They should all take pride in their achievements and I wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

I congratulate the Parliamentary Secretary on her good work, particularly with the disability sector. During her speech she mentioned her previous work at Technical Aid to the Disabled and I found it particularly exemplary that she brings that experience to her role as Parliamentary Secretary. To emphasise that Government members take a strong interest in small business I mention that small business people, who are often women in business and entrepreneurs, conduct small businesses that are the backbone of our economy. I salute my local chambers of commerce, the Bondi and Districts Chamber of Commerce and the Double Bay Networking Group. People put in extra effort beyond their business to contribute to chambers of commerce and business to encourage other people to take up their dreams, their own entrepreneurialism and their economic wellbeing through small business, which is a challenge. I welcome this opportunity to salute those people in my electorate today as well.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I also thank the member for Holsworthy for her contribution. On behalf of the member for Lismore and the member for Balmain, I welcome to the public gallery members of the Australian Western Sahara Association; Ambassador Kamal Fadel, who is the Polisario Front representative to Australia and New Zealand; and human rights advocate Ms Tecber Ahmen Saleh. I welcome you on behalf of the members for Lismore and Balmain.

WORLD MARITIME DAY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (17:52): Today I acknowledge World Maritime Day, which is being celebrated today in this city. The theme for the year is Empowering Women in the Maritime Community, which is a great opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of gender equality and to highlight the important yet underutilised contribution of women within the maritime sector. It is great to see a focus on breaking down barriers and empowering women in the maritime community. Shipping has always been a male-dominated industry and the same applies to many of the associated jobs and professions in the maritime community.

It is important to note the importance of shipping not just to New South Wales but also to the Newcastle region. This gives me the opportunity to boast that Newcastle has its first female harbourmaster, Jeanine Drummond. Newcastle Harbour is Australia's oldest export port and the largest bulk shipping port on the east coast. It is visited by more than 2,200 trade vessels each year and exports products such as grain, vegetable oils, alumina, fertiliser, ore concentrates and, of course, coal. The importance of the maritime industry to not just the economy of Newcastle but also to New South Wales should be noted.

In fact, international shipping transports more than 80 per cent of global trade to people and communities all over the world. Shipping is an essential aspect of our economy and it provides the most efficient cost-effective

method of international transport for many goods. The shipping industry has also played an important role in the history of Swansea, with the shipbuilding industry in Swansea dating back to the 1850s. James Lewis Boyd is an important figure in the maritime history of Swansea and operated his shipyards between 1920 and 1952. During World War II this shipyard built 24 vessels for the Allies. For his contribution to the community, a reserve has been named after Mr Boyd.

Members in this place know that I come from a merchant mariner family. For me World Maritime Day is a day to remember the importance of the maritime industry and to commend the great work of the Maritime Union of Australia, many of whose members I have the privilege of representing in the electorate of Swansea. Today the union and its members are remembering and honouring the thousands of merchant mariners who have died on the job at sea while providing integral support to Australian and Allied defence forces. Merchant navy ships and their crew have been responsible for transporting valuable cargo and personnel during wars and conflicts. Unlike other warships they did not have the same defensive capabilities, leaving them exposed to attack from the enemy.

The merchant seamen were not trained for war, resulting in a massive loss of life. Most were ordinary, everyday seamen, unprepared for what was about to come before them. In World War I alone, 14,661 officers and men of merchant ships were killed and 3,295 were taken prisoner. With one in eight seafarers killed during the war, the loss of life was enormous and on a scale that outstrips the service-to-death ratio of all other contributors to the war. The contribution of merchant seafarers during this time is sadly overlooked. My electorate is one that is rich with maritime history. While we unfortunately do not know exactly how many people from the electorate of Swansea served, I have no doubt that there would be many.

For over 100 years the Maritime Union of Australia and the labour movement have worked tirelessly to ensure that maritime workers can leave home and be confident that they will come home. In June this year I was honoured to attend the merchant mariners memorial service in Newcastle. I would like to congratulate the Maritime Union of Australia for hosting World Maritime Day today and for commemorating and honouring all those men who went to work and sadly did not return home. I thank all merchant mariners both past and present for their services at sea and for the legacy they have left us with today.

BATHURST ELECTORATE COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (17:57): I am pleased to talk today about a number of fantastic initiatives and projects that are happening in the Bathurst electorate at this point in time. They are projects that touch the lives of many different people in many different aspects. They are transforming communities but also supporting the wider community with what is on offer. I want to talk about one of those projects today. Sometimes we come to this place and we talk about investments that are being made by the Government but today I want to talk about the generosity that has been shown by the Bathurst Community Op Shop. The op shop in Bathurst has a food van that operates on a Tuesday and Thursday night between the hours of 5.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m.

The van opens up opportunities for those people in the community who may be less fortunate or vulnerable to come down to the van and have a chat with some of the locals, get a feed, have a coffee and know that there are people in the community who want to hear their stories directly. Only a couple of weeks ago I had the opportunity to go to the food van, where I was able to share in serving some of the food during the evening. I was also able to talk to some of the locals, who shared stories about fishing, campfires, travelling and their life experiences.

Experiences like this remind us that we are here to support those who sometimes slip through the cracks. It was a great opportunity to go down there and share with them some of the stories that are happening in the area. I also congratulate Councillor Bobby Bourke, who has now been elected as the new mayor for the Bathurst Regional Council. The van was one of his initiatives. He has said that the response from the community has already been overwhelming. He said that he has seen people from all walks of life go to the van to receive a feed and to have a yarn. It has been a really good response considering that it has only been operating for about five weeks.

The idea came about from Sister Michelle and Radwan Jubarah. They approached Councillor Bourke over 12 months ago about this idea. The meals themselves might be basic but they are very filling and they are provided free of charge to the wider community. Sister Michelle was also there on the evening that I attended. She made the comment that it is a safe place for those who are in need to fill their bellies. Not only are they providing free meals and warm beverages; it is also sometimes about providing wider support. Sponsoring somebody to go and get a haircut means that they can feel good about themselves and know that people in the wider community support them.

Recently the New South Wales Government announced just under \$330,000 for three important community projects in my electorate. One of them is known as the Cafe on Corporation at the Bathurst Generosity Church, which aims to create employment for people with a disability. This is such a great opportunity. They are building a cafe at which people in the community with a disability will be able to be employed. They will also be able to provide food to the trade centre in the town of Bathurst itself. I had the opportunity to catch up with Mitchell Smith, his mother Carol Smith and Caleb Dwyer. I can tell you that Mitchell Smith is absolutely looking forward to the opportunity to serve coffee from the cafe, knowing that it is going to create employment and opportunities for him into the future.

Two school projects were beneficiaries of the program as well. The Eglinton Public School received just over \$111,000 towards a garden gateway. That means that when visitors walk through the front gates of the school for various events that are held throughout the year not only is it a warm and welcoming place but it is also inviting. The third project to be funded was Bathurst Public School, which received just under \$200,000 for what is known as Educational App-etite. In conjunction with local company Skillset, the school will re-establish an outside interactive area with apps available for the children on which they can learn about the environment.

SAILABILITY CRONULLA

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (18:02): On 5 September I joined Sailability Cronulla at Cronulla Sailing Club on Gunnamatta Bay to help launch Sailability Cronulla's sixth boat. Sailability Cronulla was established in 1998 with a commitment to provide freedom on the water regardless of a participant's ability. Sailability provides a safe, secure and enjoyable environment for children and adults with disability to be part of our sailing community. Sailability Cronulla operates at Cronulla Sailing Club, which is completely wheelchair accessible right down to the water and equipped with personal hoist assistance to access the boats.

The boats are Hansa 303 models, which are specifically designed for sailors with disability, allowing them to sit alongside a crew member. The crew can either sail the boat or advise them with regards to the basics of sailing. A crew member sails the boat initially and gives advice. When disabled sailors are assessed as capable enough, they take the helm and progress further with the training. The new sixth boat gives the organisers the flexibility to increase the number of sailors and to extend their time on the water. The launch on 5 September was part of an open day designed to increase public awareness and to encourage more people to bring their family members to experience sailing. Thirty-seven special education students from Endeavour Sports High School and Port Hacking High School along with adults from Sylvanvale participated in the open day.

I acknowledge President Martin Tabone and all the volunteers for the great work they do with Sailability Cronulla. One such volunteer, John Kane, was named the 2017 Cronulla Local Senior of the Year. The Sailability volunteers help with a range of tasks, including setting up a marquee for shade, bringing the boats out of the shed, setting up the boats, putting the boats into water, sailing the boats, ensuring that everyone signs in, operating the radio, driving and observing the safety boat and, at the end of the day, doing all of that in reverse. I acknowledge the many donors and financial supporters of Sailability Cronulla, not least of which is the Cronulla Sailing Club.

The Sailability club also works closely with Cronulla RSL, which has supported Sailability Cronulla over the years with funding to purchase equipment and to ensure that it implements high safety standards. Rotary clubs of the Sutherland shire have also been great supporters of Sailability, and have provided sailing boats in the past. Most recently Caringbah Rotary directly donated funds needed for a sixth boat. I acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of the member for Heathcote, an active member of Caringbah Rotary.

Ms Liesl Tesch: We love Sailability!

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: Sailability provides enjoyment for children and adults with disability, trains future sailors who require an outlet, inspires sailors with disability to achieve independence, allows people to challenge themselves and gives sailors avenues to compete in sporting events. I acknowledge the remarks of the member for Gosford, who said, "We love Sailability!" If anyone is interested in giving it a try or knows someone who will benefit from the great work of Sailability, I encourage them to go down to the Cronulla Sailing Club on the first and third Thursdays and Sundays of each month between 9.00 a.m. and 1.00 p.m. A casual sail costs only \$5. Members can find information at www.sailabilitynsw.org.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (18:06): I, too, love Sailability. There is a Sailability group in Rushcutters Bay in my electorate of Vaucluse. The group sits alongside the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia [CYC], which is the proud place from which the Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race is run every year, and the Royal Australian Navy Sailing Association [RANSA]. That is because the group trains future quality sailors, creates a sense of independence for those who are otherwise challenged by their physical body and allows those people to feel proud, learn a new skill and build that skill in the company of people from the wonderful sailing clubs of the

CYC and RANSA. As the local member I have been proud to ensure that there have been contributions from the Community Building Partnership grants and the sailing and sports grants from the sports Minister. I add my commendations to Sailability. We strongly support and value what it does for members of our communities who otherwise might be further challenged.

SAILABILITY

GOSFORD ELECTORATE COMMUNITY GROUPS

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:07): I also thank everybody across New South Wales and Australia who volunteers to run the amazing Sailability clubs. I have had lots of fun with Sailability and it makes a difference to many people's lives. I thank the Attorney General and the member for Vaucluse for recognising the Sailability clubs in their electorates. Throughout the school term Sailability Gosford operates every Tuesday and Thursday, with lots of generous donations from our local Lions clubs, Rotary clubs, community members and sailing club members. I thank them all very much.

The Gosford electorate is the best electorate in New South Wales—with the best Sailability club—and is a part of the wonderful Central Coast community. Today I acknowledge and congratulate Central Coast Council Mayor Lisa Matthews and Deputy Mayor Jane Smith, who were elected last night. I thank every person who works for the Central Coast Council. They are all very passionate about making our community stronger and a more amazingly wonderful place to live. Today I also talk about National Volunteer Week and the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards held in Gosford. I pay tribute to some of the dedicated volunteer groups in Gosford who work so hard to improve our community. I acknowledge Greg Mawson from the Gosford RSL, who was named Senior Volunteer of the Year, and Matt Calbert, who was named Youth Volunteer of the Year.

I acknowledge also the Central Coast Local Health District volunteer team, who won the team award for the work they do in and around the hospital to look after people in our community. I acknowledge the many other volunteers who were recognised at the Volunteer of the Year Awards, including volunteers for Guide Dogs New South Wales/ACT, the Broken Bay Scouts, the Woy Woy Country Women's Association and many others. I acknowledge the Umina Community Group, an incredible team of people who continue to do so much for the community. All of us living on the peninsula know that that the Trafalgar Avenue Park revamp is an absolute success story of what a community group can do it involves people who put their minds and bodies to work. I thank them also for the amazing advocacy work the group has done on behalf of our community towards a Umina skate park upgrade.

Another great volunteer group in my area is the Pearl Beach Progress Association. In fact, I acknowledge all the Pearl Beach community groups who do so much for our community. There is a huge collection of people who live in Pearl Beach who continue to make it such a strong community. These volunteers keep the spirit of Bungaree alive; advocate for our disappearing koalas; celebrate community dogs; celebrate Australia Day and Anzac Day; and support the Soup, Sax and Sweets homeless support charity and Pearl Beach Arboretum. I wish the Pearl Beach Progress Association team a happy ninetieth birthday and congratulate them on the amazing work they continue to do.

I recognise also the Gosford electorate's wonderful community gardens. I congratulate Woy Woy Peninsula Community Garden on receiving a My Community Project grant to rebuild the garden's facilities after a horrible arson attempt earlier this year. The community has stood beside the group and felt their pain. We are excited about the work the community garden has done to clean up the garden and the rebuild that we will see in times ahead. I acknowledge the Kariong Eco Garden, which had a great open day on the weekend to celebrate solar power. I thank its members for their belief in the environment and environmental education and for bringing together a wonderful group of community activists. It was great to see the group out with the children at the Global Climate Strike last week.

I offer a salutation to volunteers at the East Gosford Community Garden, who do so much lovely work to improve their space in that corner of our community. I acknowledge all the staff and volunteers at the wonderful selection of community centres across the Gosford electorate. I thank the staff at the Narara Community Centre, the Kariong Neighbourhood Centre, Peninsula Community Centre and, just outside my electorate, the Wyong Community Centre, which does so much for so many people in the Gosford electorate. I also send a special shout-out to The Epicentre in San Remo, up the northern end of the coast. All those volunteers do such amazing work to support and care for our communities.

Unfortunately I do not have time to mention all the groups in my community, but I thank the many Rotary clubs; Lions clubs; P&Cs; St Vinnies branches; Rural Fire Service brigades; Central Coast, Gosford and Peninsula business chambers; church groups; residents associations; action groups; progress associations; RSLs; sporting groups; Country Women's Association branches; men's sheds; community gardens; and surf clubs. I wish the surf

club a happy fundraising event. I thank also the Orange Sky Laundry, Soul Soup, the Coast Shelter, Mary Mac's Place and all the other volunteer groups that make the Gosford electorate such a fantastic place to live.

REGIONAL YOUTH

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:12): Often the stories we hear and tell about youth in regional New South Wales are sad ones, whether we are talking about disproportionately high suicide rates, youth unemployment, drug use or the tendency of young people to flee the bush in search of more welcoming pastures to start their own families. Today I tell a different story. Moving around my electorate of Cootamundra, what I see in our small towns and villages is an overwhelming sense of optimism amongst our young people. I see great talent, strength through adversity and a willingness to have a go in our 12,500 12- to 25-year-olds. As the local representative, I am determined to do more for them.

Between 26 August and 12 September I held youth consultation sessions in 11 towns in my electorate and invited 12- to 24-year-olds to pitch me an idea for their community over a slice of pizza. Beginning in West Wyalong, I was joined by Kieran Duncan, Logan Pettit, Liam Duncan, Silas Wilson and Phoenix Grintell, students in years 6 to 8, whose ideas ranged from simple pleasures like a bubbler outside the stadium to more elaborate upgrades needed at the skate park. I am very grateful to these boys for their energy and enthusiasm at our first session and I cannot wait to get back in touch when we make some ground on some of their wonderful ideas.

Over the week that followed we munched through endless pizzas in Grenfell, Narrandera and Junee. At one of the smallest towns in the electorate, Junee, I had more than 30 young people show up and contribute after school. I was astounded at the compassion they displayed for others in their community with ideas including international translations of signage around town for multicultural citizens of the town from the seniors at Junee High School, and emergency transport vouchers for young people fleeing situations of violence from Allan Cameron.

The following week the tour visited Cowra, Harden and Cootamundra. Among the many inspirational attendees in Cowra was Marlee Langfield who would like to see a better connection between the current agricultural show society and the next generation. We spoke about the stigma young people experience in some committees and groups and discussed ways to move forward towards better integration and acceptance. The final week of this whirlwind youth roadshow took us to Young, Temora, Gundagai and Coolamon.

In Young, where some 40 young people showed up to have their say, we heard some very well thought out pitches by groups including the Young Amateur Swimming Club, who put together an amazing skit to highlight the benefits of an indoor heated swimming pool, and Reid Noyes, who has completed an amazing research assignment to support his call for a burnout pad and driver education centre. In Coolamon, which has the largest number of small villages of any of my local government areas, 10 young people made the effort to show up despite limited transport options. They shared with me some great ideas including improvements to the heritage Matong Hall and a "kindness day" to combat bullying.

At many of our sessions access to mental health services was raised, with kids feeling left behind by more centrally located providers and wanting more support. I am encouraged by how openly and honestly we were able to discuss help-seeking and think it paints a truly positive picture of old stigmas beginning to fade through generations. All of our towns and villages across the Cootamundra electorate are unique and incredibly special. Overwhelmingly, while the ideas discussed differ, our kids love living in these towns. Their requests are humble and achievable, and I will now make it my mission to show them that when you do contribute, when you put your hand up and get involved, you can make real change.

I extend my thanks to all of the venues, Bland Shire Council, the Grenfell Visitor Information Centre, Narrandera Bidgee Boxing, the Junee Community Centre, PCYC Cowra, the Hard Rock Gym in Harden, the Cootamundra Library, the Young Rugby Football Club—Young Yabbies—Platform Y in Temora, Gundagai Library and the Up-to-date Store in Coolamon for allowing us into your worlds to host these sessions and all of our wonderful local pizza makers, many of whom opened up their shops early to cater these events. Most importantly, I acknowledge the 150-plus kids who came along to contribute. You have the power to change the world and with the drive, the maturity and the enthusiasm I saw on display the last few weeks, I have no doubt that you will.

MICHAEL TYNAN MEMORIAL CHALLENGE

ENGADINE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (18:17): Recently I attended two events. One was the Michael Tynan Memorial Challenge. Michael Tynan was a mountain of a man and after he passed away in 2016 his family instigated a memorial challenge. The purpose of the memorial challenge is to raise money for local medical

research at the St George and Sutherland Medical Research Foundation and also support the University of Wollongong. This year the Michael Tynan Memorial Challenge held a race day luncheon at Kembla Grange Racecourse. The day started with a Drive & Scooter Challenge. Last year I went on the drive challenge but this year, because of medical issues with my wife and myself, we were "limousined" down to Kembla Grange in an S Class Mercedes-Benz—it was very nice—driven by Kieran Tynan.

Mr Matt Kean: Did you declare it?

Mr LEE EVANS: It was just transport, Minister. The fantastic event started at Kembla Grange and we had a lot of fun raising funds at the race day which was sponsored by the Michael Tynan Memorial Challenge. The day culminated in an auction and the Mayor of Sutherland Shire got the top bid on silks from Winks. Unfortunately he drove his vehicle down and could not fit the silks in the back of the car so they had to be transported separately. This year's challenge started at St George and meandered down to the Sutherland Shire and then to Wollongong and Kembla Grange. The final destination was the racecourse, where there was a celebration and fundraiser for the charity. This year there is also a one-day walking challenge.

Last year the Attorney General entered the challenge, which is a journey from Wollongong to Sutherland to help raise much-needed funds for medical research. The participants will walk from Wollongong to Sutherland through the spectacular coast walk within the Royal National Park. I do not know if the Attorney General is entering the challenge this year. Last year, again with the Mayor of Sutherland Shire, he injured his hip and has had a hip replacement since that epic walk.

I also had the great honour to return to my alma mater at Engadine High School. In September 2019 the school celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of opening of its doors to the first students in 1969—one of those being my late brother. Principal Kerry Jones steered the celebration which incorporated a celebration dinner on the Friday night, prior to the school open day on 14 September. On display were historic photos and memorabilia and many past students visited and reminisced about their school days. At the open day many talented students were scattered around the school conducting small performances—some just with a guitar and others harmonising—showcasing the diverse talents of the students. Activities in the hospitality, library and open learning places were going on throughout the day. A number of students have gone on to achieve great success, including world-renowned authors, sports heroes and members of Parliament. Over the past 50 years Engadine High School has produced a plethora of well-balanced, successful students and adults.

I make special note of the school show band. On the Friday night the band was made up of ex-students, current students and teachers who had rehearsed just twice before blowing the crowd away with their show-stopping numbers, getting the crowd on their feet dancing the night away. The attendants had a positive reaction to the celebratory evening, with many reunions and exaggerated stories about the good times being discussed with old friends, and reconnections with new friends. Congratulations to the entire staff who went above and beyond their duties to ensure that the fiftieth celebration went off without a hitch. The staff worked tirelessly on the Saturday. They were working for free from 7.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. for the betterment of the school. Engadine High School is one of the high schools in my electorate and I am proud to say it is a State public school and it is hitting well above its weight.

OURIMBAH VILLAGE

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (18:22): The Ourimbah village is a very important community in the electorate of The Entrance and I want to talk about its heritage and council's master plan for the locality. I also impress upon the record the importance of Ourimbah to the heritage of the Central Coast region and the heritage of the State of New South Wales. Ourimbah is one of the oldest communities on the Central Coast. The Ourimbah village and the small precinct on either side of the Pacific Highway is remarkable because it records early human habitation—located within the boundaries of that precinct—which goes all the way back to the Aboriginal people and their imprint on the land. In a tributary of Bangalow Creek, along the sandstone floor of the creek, the Ourimbah Public School has carefully preserved grinding grooves used by the original inhabitants of the area to prepare their food and their meals.

In the hills around Ourimbah are caves that contain records of the earliest human habitation of the area. It is remarkable that this is within the precinct of our community, in the boundaries of the current township and so close to where we carry out our day-to-day activities today. There is a remarkable record of later human habitation: The record of European habitation in the area is quite something as well. Just in the Ourimbah village precinct there are 22 items located on the State Heritage Inventory. Of those, 15 are located either on or very close to the Pacific Highway, including Ourimbah Public School and the Ourimbah railway station—one of the oldest remaining timber railway station structures in the State, which dates back to the 1890s. It also includes the stationmaster's cottage, which the community saved from destruction by this Government and supported me in that work, and the Ourimbah post office.

As well as that, a number of timber structures that record the ordinary dwellings used by the earliest European inhabitants of the region are arrayed along the Pacific Highway at Ourimbah. As I said, 22 of those are listed on the inventory. I have done a quick reconciliation and at least six other dwellings retain the underlying timber framework and profile of the original dwellings. Later coverings and claddings added to those dwellings have diminished somewhat—but not entirely—their heritage significance. The picture I want to paint for members is that at Ourimbah there is a continuum of buildings and structures that reflect the heritage of the region. It is remarkable and it is unique on the Central Coast.

However, I am really surprised, and the community is surprised, that the council's master plan for the region does not give due regard to the preservation of the heritage. It does not give due regard to preserving the continuum of the heritage and the tourism opportunities that it could provide to the region. Instead, council's master plan promotes higher density for the area, including four-storey buildings throughout the Ourimbah village precinct where these heritage dwellings currently reside. I give a shout-out to the good work of the Ourimbah residents and ratepayers association. It has been following this and I am going to work with the association to make sure council has proper regard for the heritage of our region. Council needs to revisit the master plan for Ourimbah. There is an opportunity to preserve our heritage and do something good for the coast. I stand with the Ourimbah community in making sure that the heritage of Ourimbah and the Ourimbah village is preserved.

CONCORD HOSPITAL

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoynne—Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (18:27): I am delighted to provide an update on the construction works that are currently underway on the \$341 million transformation of Concord Hospital. I was at the hospital just a few weeks ago, when I joined the Premier and the health Minister to celebrate a milestone in the project. We were given the privilege to open two new surgical theatres. This \$1.3 million project has made those theatres fully digitally integrated and allows doctors to communicate between theatres. The significant upgrade of these two state-of-the-art theatres ensures medical teams will also save valuable time during emergency surgery and further improve patient care. The visit to the hospital also marked the completion of enabling works for the \$341 million upgrade. On completion of stage 1, the project will deliver 100 additional beds and will boost the hospital campus capacity to more than 650 beds.

Concord Hospital prides itself on its patient care and formidable team of medical professionals and staff. The works will ensure that the world-class staff will have a world-class hospital facility to match. Upon completion, the new clinical services building will comprise the Rusty Priest Centre for Rehabilitation and Aged Care, including ambulatory care clinics, therapy areas and rehabilitation gyms; Australia's first National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare to support the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families in an outpatient setting; a comprehensive cancer care centre with additional capacity for day and inpatient cancer services; and a new atrium linking the new building to the existing hospital, providing direct access to operating theatres, radiology and emergency care.

Last month I visited Concord Hospital once again to inspect and open the new temporary premises of the National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare. The service will operate in the temporary facility whilst the construction works for the upgrade are underway. The centre offers free specialist physical and mental healthcare services for veterans. It will also provide integrated care services from a range of medical and allied health specialities. Over the past two decades about 60,000 Australian service men and women have served in Rwanda, East Timor, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Solomon Islands.

This centre will prove to be an invaluable place for veterans struggling to transition to civilian life. In fact, the centre has already received over 15 referrals since opening just a few weeks ago. I am very proud that the New South Wales Government is leading the way in health care with the investment into and vision of the centre. It is incumbent on us to support our service men and women, particularly in terms of their physical and emotional wellbeing. Since I was elected in 2011, I have fought alongside the constituents of my electorate to ensure Concord Hospital received funding for a well-deserved upgrade. This visionary project ensures Concord Hospital continues its proud history of care for the community.

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY FAIRFIELD PARISH

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:31): Today I commend and congratulate Our Lady of the Rosary Fairfield parish for its ongoing contributions to our local community and for its ongoing outreach and support to those in need. Like most parishes, the doors of Our Lady of the Rosary [OLR] are always open to the community with a diverse array of services freely available to all. I am incredibly proud to inform the House of a recent venture incepted by a group of dedicated volunteers at OLR called the Soup 4 Soul project. The Soup 4 Soul project aimed to raise awareness of hunger and isolation within our community and ran over a four-week period between 24 July and 21 August 2019. Volunteers attended one night each week to cook and hand out free hot

soups, delicious bread and pastries to anyone in the community who was passing by or looking for a good feed. This was a fantastic initiative, which united the community over food and achieved its goals of raising awareness and inspiring others to do more for their fellow man.

The great thing about having such a culturally diverse community band together over initiatives involving food is the incredible food diversity you passively achieve as a result. I understand that throughout the four weeks there were a great variety of soups, including cream of broccoli soup, Middle Eastern-style chicken soup, pea and ham soup, classic pumpkin soup, Middle Eastern-style lentil soup, broccoli and vegetable soup, Vietnamese noodle soup—pho—and more. So you can see the cultural diversity at Our Lady of the Rosary. With approximately 30 local volunteers in attendance, the kitchen was churning out delicious soups to the community and engaging with all who attended.

What better way to raise awareness of the social, economic and spiritual needs of disadvantaged individuals in our community than through a heartfelt casual conversation over a delicious bowl of soup and some gourmet bread and pastries? Clearly the organising committee is sitting on a winning formula here, as this concept expanded during the Soup 4 Syrians night, at which more than 300 cups of soup, bread and desserts were disseminated. Children belonging to the local Syrian Catholic community gathered at OLR with their parents, many of whom were refugees, as part of this great new outreach program hosted by the parish.

With such a fantastic turnout, this served as a great opportunity for the parish to link in and connect with refugees who may be in need of any kind of support. Volunteers have commented on what a great experience it has been to work with the parish in feeding and reaching out to the community as it has allowed many of these volunteers to develop their interpersonal skills and put their faith into action while giving back to the community. On behalf of the Fairfield electorate, I would like to commend and congratulate the organising committee at Our Lady of the Rosary parish in Fairfield for their tremendous efforts organising such successful outreach programs. I would also like to extend our sincerest gratitude to Father Michael de Stoop, Father Josh Miechels and Father Bhaskar Mendam of Our Lady of the Rosary parish Fairfield for their continued support, guidance and dedication to the diverse cultural and religious needs of the greater Fairfield community.

ZIP WATER

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (18:35): Australia has a very proud history of developing inventions and ingenious solutions that help make every day work, life and play easier and more efficient. From humble hills hoists, the stump-jump plough, utility vehicles and mechanical refrigeration to more recent inventions such as polymer banknotes, the bionic ear, spray-on skin for burns victims, black-box flight recorders and wi-fi technology, Australia has well and truly punched above its weight in developing innovative products and day-to-day conveniences that not only have been export success stories but have positively impacted the whole world. Many members in this place will have first-hand awareness of Zip Water, an Australian company based at Condell Park in my electorate of East Hills. Zip Water is a world-leading designer and manufacturer of instant boiling, chilled and sparkling, filtered water solutions.

Zip Water was founded in 1947, by Michael Crouch, operating initially in Marrickville but later relocating to Condell Park. Zip Water has been recognised as a global innovator, with its products being sought out and installed in over 75 countries worldwide. It is a source of great pride for everyone associated with Zip Water that no matter where in the world you are, you are likely to find a Zip Water tap. From here at the New South Wales Parliament House to Buckingham Palace in London and the top floor of the world's tallest building in Dubai you will find taps that were engineered and manufactured in Condell Park, New South Wales. There is nothing quite like the company's Zip Hydro Tap, which provides instant filtered boiling, chilled still and sparkling water, all from the one faucet.

I recently visited the Condell Park factory with the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney, Stuart Ayres. It was exciting to view, first hand, the result of a recent \$6 million investment in a new manufacturing line that will enable the company to triple its manufacturing capacity and help ensure that manufacturing remains in Condell Park for decades to come, providing local jobs. The president of the company, John Doumani, advised that this new manufacturing equipment was a critical investment to ensure that the company keeps pace with the growing international demand for its products from existing and new markets, including the United States. The expansion of production will also increase demand for many local businesses that supply Zip Water's operations, including sheet metal fabricators and packaging suppliers as well as many local service providers.

This expansion has also seen state-of-the art technology installed, and training is being provided to equip employees with the know-how to use some of the world's best production and quality assurance technology. This investment means the skills and expertise of many local people will be further developed, building on staff expertise that is already among the world's best. Zip Water employs over 700 people worldwide, with 450 located

in Australia. There are 357 employees in New South Wales. Of those, 310 are based in Condell Park in my electorate. The remaining 47 employees are Sydney field-based service and sales employees.

It is also worth noting that more than one-third of Zip Water's factory and warehouse team live within eight kilometres of the factory. It is fantastic that such a great local, innovative company exists in the East Hills electorate, providing jobs for residents near where they live. Zip Water President, John Doumani, Stuart Ayres and I had big smiles whilst cutting the ribbon on this new manufacturing equipment in the presence of the many staff at the factory that day. Zip Water is proof that Australian home-grown innovation and manufacturing can compete strongly in the global economy.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (18:39): I acknowledge the students in the Lismore electorate who organised and attended the climate strike last Friday. The demonstration occurred mainly in Lismore and was attended by a huge number of students. They had organised beforehand to make sure that the street was secure and the strike went off really well. I acknowledge the concerns of the students and what they were talking about during the strike. Some people have asked me, "Why can't they strike on the weekend?" and I replied that that is not the point of a strike. You strike when you are meant to be somewhere—at work or at school. Some people had different views and said that students should not strike. I said that if we—the adults, the grownups—had taken the right action the students would not need to demonstrate on the streets. Governments have a primary duty to protect citizens—and that means to protect them from the impacts of climate change.

When there is a crisis people pull out all stops to respond. This has occurred during recent crises, when volunteers all over New South Wales and Australia have responded. Governments also respond. We are in the vortex of a climate crisis but the New South Wales Government and the Federal Government are not responding to the situation as though it is a crisis. Climate change is a threat and a risk and I ask: Where is the roadmap to tell us how our fossil-fuel-dependent economy will be transitioned? Do we have a jobs authority? Where are the targets and where do those targets sit on a timeline? The targets are aspirational.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Order! The member for Lismore will be heard in silence.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN: I am talking about you, Minister Kean. You should be paying attention. I am talking about climate change. I am asking about the roadmap and the targets. Where is the timeline? There is a climate crisis. Members acknowledge that. Some members have gone from outright climate change denial to accepting that there is climate change, but there has not been any action. I have read that the Minister has said there will be zero net emissions by 2050, but people need to know how and when that is going to happen. There will be a transition and it would be really nice if there could be some legislation so that the ideas go beyond aspiration. That is what the community, including the young people, is looking for. The students feel that members have let them down.

I can beat the Minister up all I like but I am not here to do that tonight. I am here to put forward the views expressed by the young people in my electorate. That is what they are asking for. Southern Cross University recently issued a statement that there is a climate crisis. I understand that Lismore City Council and Tweed Shire Council have also done that. I will finish with a comment by—not a student or someone one would call a radical greenie—Admiral Chris Barrie, retired. Admiral Chris Barrie is honorary professor, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, Australian National University. He is a member of the Global Military Advisory Council on Climate Change and was chief of the Australian Defence Force. Responding to a report from a policy paper *Existential climate-related security risk: A scenario approach*, he said:

In 2017-18, the Australian Senate inquired into the implications of climate change for Australia's national security.

The inquiry found that climate change is "a current and existential national security risk", one that "threatens the premature extinction of Earth-originating intelligent life or the permanent and drastic destruction of its potential for desirable future development".

I told the inquiry that, after nuclear war, human-induced global warming is the greatest threat to human life on the planet.

Admiral Barrie finished by saying:

In particular, our intelligence and security services have a vital role to play, and a fiduciary responsibility, in accepting this existential climate threat, and the need for a fundamentally different approach to its risk management, as central to their considerations and their advice to government.

The implications far outweigh conventional geopolitical threats. I think the House should take notice of Admiral Barrie, retired.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (18:44): I thank the member for Lismore for her excellent private member's statement. I acknowledge her commitment to protecting our environment and the concern she has for dealing with climate change. Let me be clear for the member's benefit:

Climate change is real. This is not a matter of ideology; this is a matter of science. We need to take responsible and decisive action to deal with it. The Government has made it clear, and the Premier made it clear in her budget estimates testimony, that we have a zero net emissions target. This Government will pursue a zero net emissions target by 2050. Obviously we need to have an interim plan—we will not achieve that target overnight. We need to have a concrete plan, which is exactly what I am working on. That plan will prioritise growth, jobs and protecting our environment. We can tackle climate change without blowing up our economy and that is exactly what I intend to do. I look forward to working with the member to achieve that objective and deliver a better environment for our kids.

GWYDIR AND HORTON RIVERS NATIVE FISH RELOCATION

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (18:45): This week marked the start of a collaborative effort to capture and relocate native fish from the Gwydir and Horton rivers near Bingara in the geographic heart of the Northern Tablelands electorate. For those unfamiliar with the area, Bingara is at the epicentre of this devastating drought—in the highest drought category in the State, as is almost all of the north and north-west of New South Wales.

Ms Janelle Saffin: John Wearne's territory, Bingara.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: Thanks for that interjection. For those who have not been to Bingara, the land around Bingara is no longer brown, it is red. There is almost no ground cover whatsoever and what is left has been blown away with recent strong winds carrying thousands of cubic metres of topsoil away to the east. The rivers which run west from Bingara, the Horton and the Gwydir, are dwindling by the day. In many areas of the Horton all that is left are shrinking pools of water. Even the Gwydir, beyond Pallamallawa, is beginning to pool as well. This is a great tragedy for the town of Bingara, which has labelled itself "the inland fishing capital of Australia". As the local member I have never really minced my words, particularly when it comes to the horrific situation that is going to confront us this summer in relation to local fish populations and those right across the State. We are literally facing a fish Armageddon.

This summer we will have hotter than average temperatures. There will be virtually no significant rainfall between now and summer and during summer, which means we will continue to have zero inflows into our river systems and dams. Almost all of our storage dams, including Copeton Dam, which is at 8.6 per cent, has very little water left to release for environmental flows from the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder. This means that the process of our rivers drying and pooling will only continue to be exacerbated. In response the State Government has announced a \$10 million program to create a modern-day native fish species Noah's Ark, for want of a better term, of which the Bingara rescue being undertaken this week is a big part. It is our chance to save native fish species and their specific genetics in the north of the State while the fish remain.

It follows a successful rescue operation at Menindee, in the State's far west, over the last fortnight. Almost 800 fish—including cod, golden and silver perch, and other native fish species—were successfully relocated to the Narrandera fish hatchery, in the south and other parts of the lower Darling, which are not at risk of fish kill this summer. In this next effort, happening this week, NSW Department of Primary Industries [DPI]—Fisheries staff are working closely with volunteers from the Bingara Anglers Club, relying on its local members for a bit of local knowledge and a bit of local horsepower as well behind the nets and the other operations. This will utilise the local native fish hatchery, built in the 1980s, to support the health of the Gwydir and Horton rivers and their native fish species. I thank the Bingara Anglers Club president Stewart Lanagan and committee member Donna Walton for their professionalism and support during this process to get the rescue off the ground.

Between now and Christmas, volunteers like them, plus Mick and Peter Walton and Stan Fletcher, will travel to known pools along the Horton and Gwydir rivers, using nets, lures and other devices to trawl these pools in the hope of catching what native fish remain. I am happy to report to the House that they rescued seven beautiful, healthy large cod yesterday. Just before I started to make my speech Stan reported that they captured another 10 today. They have all been successfully relocated to the local hatchery. From what I see of the Horton River as I drive through the region, and again yesterday, that task is getting harder by the day. Stewart told me he has never seen the Horton as dry as it is now. He has been mapping those pools along the Horton River via quad bike, almost riding the entire riverbed with only flood fences getting in his way.

I thank the club for the work it is doing. It is playing an important role as part of a statewide operation. I also thank Gwydir Shire Council and its general manager, Max Eastcott, who has given all the staff of Gwydir Shire Council who are members of the anglers club a week's leave on full pay so that they can help with this operation—a magnificent gesture from the council in supporting the operation. It is such an important issue for that community. I wish the club all the best working with the DPI and hope that they will capture over 200 fish in the week and will replenish them later on.

KU-RING-GAI NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:50): Last Thursday I joined with many community leaders and locals from the Davidson electorate and elsewhere at Pymble Golf Club to celebrate 40 years of the Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre. It was a great honour to be among so many people who care so much about vulnerable or needy people in our community. The Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre does an outstanding job in connecting people with local services that help meet a wide range of needs. The centre also creates community by connecting the people who use the service with each other. At times just a familiar face or somebody to share a cuppa with can mean a lot to somebody. Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre chairman Peter Lenehan and CEO Michele Bell continue to demonstrate strong dedication to the centre, leading a wonderful team.

The support and knowledge Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre provides to local people, families and carers is invaluable. It helps them navigate our health and social systems and consequently helps them to live independently for as long as possible. Since 1979 Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre has instructed many people about the extensive services provided or funded by government, not-for-profits and the private sector to help them maximise available opportunities. These important support services enable people to continue living meaningful and purposeful lives in their own home, and include transport for medical appointments, shopping buses and assistance, companionship, cultural outings, home care packages, social groups and wellness activities.

The New South Wales Government remains committed to assisting organisations such as Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre to expand their services and broaden their functions for the benefit of local communities. Over the past five years the Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre has received grants from the New South Wales Government, including for the Community Visitors Scheme which has had a positive effect on many people living alone among us. It has also received money to improve the internal infrastructure of the centre through the NSW Community Building Partnership program. However, there is no doubt that volunteers are the lifeblood of these services and Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre could not operate without them. I acknowledge the fantastic staff and more than 700 volunteers at Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre for the wonderful work they do in our community. I wish Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre all the best for the future and, as its newly appointed patron, I particularly commemorate its 40 years of caring for and connecting people. May there be many more years to come.

AUBURN ELECTORATE TRAIN SERVICES

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (18:54): I will talk about the T3 Sydney Metro proposals by the State Government, which affect my electorate. There have been ongoing issues regarding the T3, which is one of the main lines. The Lidcombe to Bankstown connections on that train line are fundamentally important because they pick up not only a lot of our primary school students and workers but also students of two of our biggest high schools, the Birrong Girls High School and Birrong Boys High School. There has been no clear message from the Government about what will happen when the metro starts, particularly with Birrong and Yagoona.

I did the rather sensible thing of asking a question on notice about whether we would keep the express services. As usual, the Government's response was hardly overwhelming: It said it would keep the customers informed as the planning progresses. I am not sure that is much of an answer to an electorate that is about to have its train lines ripped up. The Government has put a document on the Sydney Metro website that talks about travel time savings. I will use a few examples from the document to show the misinformation and, quite frankly, outright lies that the Government tells the electorate about the new metro system.

I talk about the Bankstown to Central stretch of the metro. It is worth remembering that Bankstown is where the metro starts; it is not where the trains start. According to the Government, it takes up to 34 minutes from Bankstown to Central but it will be 28 minutes on the Sydney Metro. That is remarkable because the train that leaves from Bankstown at 7.11 a.m. takes 27 minutes to get to Central. It is quicker to get to Central on the existing train than it will be under the proposed metro because the train is an express service. The Government will ensure that when it puts the metro in, the Bankstown-to-Canterbury line will lose all its express services. It will be alright on the North Shore because there the Government is keeping the heavy rail alongside the metro but in western Sydney the Government will rip up the train line.

According to the Government, going from Bankstown to Pitt Street takes up to 45 minutes and yet it will take only 30 minutes on the Sydney Metro. That is remarkable because at the moment the train line does not go to Pitt Street. Nor does it go to Barangaroo, for which the Government says it takes up to 59 minutes whereas it would take 34 minutes on the Sydney Metro, except that is not where the workers from the electorate go—they go to Wynyard. Currently the 6.57 a.m. train service takes 33 minutes to get to Wynyard. That is a minute less than the metro. It is 34 minutes on the 7.15 a.m. service. Compared with every single train line, the proposed metro will take longer for workers to get to work.

Currently the train from Villawood to Town Hall takes 45 minutes; under the Government's new proposal it will be 52 minutes. Currently the journey from Birrong to Wynyard is 43 minutes; under the Government's metro proposal it will be 50 minutes. Currently the train takes 39 minutes to go from Berala to St Peters; under the Government's new metro system it will be 43 minutes. Currently the train takes 35 minutes to go from Chester Hill to Redfern; under the Government's proposal it will be 47 minutes.

The Government has put forward the most ridiculous proposals about travel time savings on the metro. It says that currently it takes up to 79 minutes to go from Bankstown to Macquarie University, yet, on the Sydney Metro it will take 54 minutes. That is really good because everyone will go past University of Sydney and University of Western Sydney, which are the universities they go to. The Government has selected the farthest university rather than showing the travel times for the universities that people living in Birrong, Yagoona, Regents Park and Berala go to.

This Government constantly erodes the train systems in the electorates of Auburn and Bankstown to the detriment of the local community. The Government sells it as a good-news story; quite frankly, the electorate is not buying it. It is wonderful that the Government says that there will be 15 trains an hour from Bankstown station but it does not say that people from Chester Hill, Regents Park and Berala will have to catch two or three trains before they can get onto that metro service. The reality is that previously nine stations had direct service to the city but now they have absolutely no direct rail services. That means people are missing out on jobs.

TRIBUTE TO JARROD EMENY

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (18:59): I speak about an amazing and inspirational young man from Mudgee—18-year-old Jarrod Emeny. Just over a year ago his life, and that of his family and wider circle of friends, was turned upside down when he was left a paraplegic following a car accident. Recently I read a great article on Jarrod in the *Mudgee Guardian* and I want to share some of that story to show that while sometimes we get dealt a pretty ordinary hand in the card game of life, there is no reason that it needs to hold you back. The article talks about a joke that Jarrod told at a newbies comedy night in Mudgee. He said:

I'm your sit-down comedian for the night. I would do stand-up but I can't really do that.

That lighthearted quip shows the amazing attitude that Jarrod has to life but that is just a small part of a pretty amazing tale. As with a lot of young men in country New South Wales, Jarrod was a keen sportsman who played mixed netball, soccer, rugby and touch footy among other things. While he enjoyed sport, it was rugby that became his main focus. He was quite a promising prop or hooker in the junior age groups. It was while Jarrod was on his way to a game on 7 July last year that his life-changing accident occurred. The previous night Jarrod had finished work at McDonald's in Mudgee and driven himself home before rising early to get himself to Orange for rugby. Just a few kilometres down the road from his home, the ute he was driving left the road and crashed into a tree. Jarrod suffered three broken ribs, three broken vertebrae and his T9 vertebra had dislocated. His spinal cord was cut instantly but thankfully he survived.

This was not the first time that Jarrod had been involved in a serious incident. A few years back he was injured in a tackle while playing rugby and spent several hours in a neck brace. Unbelievably, he also survived being accidentally shot in the leg the night before a scheduled 10-day rugby trip to New Zealand. To say he has had a few scrapes is a bit of an understatement but each time Jarrod has been down on his luck, he has bounced back thanks to his positive attitude to life. The newspaper article quotes him as saying:

Once I was over in hospital I sort of realised, it's going to be my life now, there is no point dwelling on it.

It is a pretty amazing attitude to have, isn't it? You do not really know exactly how you would react until you are in that position. With a loving family unit at his side, led by parents Michael and Carolyn, Jarrod endured more than two months of rehabilitation. His motivation came from his experiences with friends who have been able to live fulfilling lives despite being in wheelchairs. Not surprisingly, sport loomed large in the back of his mind as well. While he was doing his rehab he was approached by Wheelchair Sports NSW to consider picking up a new hobby. Through an association with Australian wheelchair basketballer Grant Mizens, Jarrod turned his attention to that sport and recently he was part of the Blues Wheelchair Basketball Club side, also known as the Blues Academy, that finished second in the 2019 Wheelchair Basketball Country Cup at Narrabeen.

After a slow start in its first competition, the Blues Academy finally gelled and it was only the strong Illawarra side that stopped it from taking the title. Jarrod is now juggling his time between working out in the gym, studying for his HSC and improving his skills on the basketball court. He hopes to go to university and play basketball at higher levels. His is an amazing tale of courage and the power of positive thinking and one I think we can all take a lesson from. Earlier I mentioned that Jarrod's appearance at the comedy night at the Mudgee wine bar was a great success. I will conclude with his final comment from that night as the buzzer was sounding and his performance was wrapping up. "If Led Zeppelin was right, and there was a stairway to heaven, I'm stuffed

anyway," he joked as he finished his beer and wheeled his way off stage. Jarrod, good luck for the future, mate. You are a real inspiration.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (19:03): I thank the member for Dubbo for bringing the wonderful and heartfelt story of Jarrod Emeny from Mudgee. It was incredible to listen to the contribution of the member for Dubbo and to think about the philosophical, stoic and mature outlook of a young man who is only 18. At the moment he is about to complete his last official day of year 12 and embark upon his HSC exams. What an inspiration he is, given the adversity that he has faced in his life to have his life remarkably changed before he became an adult. Yet, he has not lost that enthusiasm for sport—he has taken up a new sport of wheelchair basketball and has already become successful at it. He has also taken up comedy. On behalf of the Government, I wish Jarrod and his family all the very best. I congratulate him on his enthusiasm and resilience and wish him every success as he charts his new course in life.

WINDSOR & DISTRICT RSL SUB-BRANCH

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (19:04): I pay tribute to the Windsor & District RSL Sub-Branch for the importance it places on commemorative services in the Hawkesbury area. This year I attended a number of services and the sub-branch's dedication to acknowledging our veterans is second to none. Veterans were vital to the creation of the Windsor & District RSL Sub-Branch and play a large part in its history. Established in March 1931, the main purpose of the Windsor & District RSL Sub-Branch was to commemorate significant military events and assist with the employment of its members. The sub-branch now maintains an office in the Windsor RSL Club. One memorable service arranged by Windsor & District RSL Sub-Branch was on 15 August 2019 and I was pleased to attend. It commemorated the "Victory in the Pacific". Nearly one million Australians assisted with the war in the Pacific and 500,000 served overseas. Tragically, 40,000 Australians were killed—a huge loss for such a young nation at that time.

Like others who attended the service, I was proud to see that respect for our servicemen has not diminished over time and that their sacrifice is forever remembered. This is largely in part to organisations such as the Windsor & District RSL Sub-Branch who organise such respectful events. Other commemorative services held by the Windsor & District RSL Sub-Branch involve Anzac Day, the Boer War, Korean Veterans Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, the Battle for Australia Day and Remembrance Day. As a mark of respect from the RSL and its members, the sub-branch, on request from the family of a deceased returned, ex or serving member of the armed forces, conducts RSL funeral services at the graveside or crematorium in conjunction with any other service. There is no limit to the respect the sub-branch members show our veterans and it is fitting that they be recognised for their commitment and support.

The sub-branch is also to be commended for other honourable work that it does for both veterans and non-veterans. It shows great concern for the wellbeing of our pensioners by providing three highly trained members to assist eligible members with pension entitlements. It also provides hospital visitations whereby a hospital visitation officer visits people who are ill in hospital or at home. It is great to have such honourable people in the community and it is those acts of kindness that have earned them the greatest respect amongst the community. I thank Windsor & District RSL Sub-Branch President Mr Geoffrey Brand, Windsor RSL President Mr David Ingram, and their respective committees, directors, staff, volunteers and anyone else who plays a part in helping the club and sub-branch serve the community and veterans in the manner they do. Their efforts and dedication are widely appreciated by the community and I look forward to attending further events and commemorations.

LINKER SERVICE

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (19:08): As a former police officer of 22 years I witnessed daily the devastation caused to victims and families by domestic violence. I have prosecuted countless matters brought before the court, where—in most cases—a woman has been the victim of violence or other forms of abuse by her partner. In many instances victims remain in the family home because they have nowhere to go and nobody to help or support them, empowering the offender to continue their violence and abuse, and strengthen their emotional control over the victim. On the occasions where the victim has fled the family home for her safety and the safety of her children, often, and to great frustration of police, victims return to the family home as their fear of displacement, following violence and abuse, would render them homeless, helpless, isolated and without access to support services.

Domestic violence in western New South Wales is 1.8 times the State average. In the case of Orange, the reported incidence is twice the State average. Compared to metropolitan centres, rural and regional communities in New South Wales are challenged, with far fewer support services that are a lot further away from each other. Victims in rural and regional areas, who are already overrepresented statistically in domestic violence,

are vulnerable to ongoing violence and abuse without services available day and night to support them. Those services include access and relocation to the sanctuary of safe housing and a lifeline connecting them to other services to adapt to sudden changes in their lives and assist in navigating the pathway to a safe future. In rural and regional communities domestic and family violence is one of the leading reasons for seeking assistance for specialist housing services. Barriers to accessing housing and support services include not only geographical isolation and limited availability of resources, but also shame, stigma, privacy and anonymity concerns.

The success of support services has been rather inconsistent, largely because those services operate in silos, which negatively impacts the collaboration and information sharing necessary to holistically and seamlessly support victims of domestic violence and their dependent children. The failure of information sharing between support services places an unnecessary and avoidable onus on victims to repeat their story, reliving their trauma every time they engage another support service. This does nothing to quell a victim's anxiety or embarrassment.

In October 2014 the LINKER Service was collaboratively developed after extensive research and a consultation process into the needs of women and children in western New South Wales, who are either direct or indirect victims of domestic violence, to address concerns, some of which I have outlined. In 2016 a consortium of specialist homelessness services was formed, including Barnardos Australia, Mission Australia, Orana Support Service, CentaCare—Wilcannia Forbes, Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council and Housing Plus, to provide governance support and area coverage to deliver the LINKER Service as part of the New South Wales Government's Domestic Violence Response Enhancement.

The LINKER Service support model, led by Barnardos Australia as lead agency, has provided a flexible out-of-hours support service, which incorporates 24-hour, seven-days-a-week, 365-days-a-year service to women and children in need of housing and assistance. In addition to temporary or crisis accommodation, the LINKER Service provides emotional support; early referral to trauma counselling; coordination of mobile telephones and telephone credit; food, hygiene and comfort packages; and constant and consistent telephone support services. LINKER workers take proactive steps to initiate contact with their clients by telephone and to then manage and coordinate the network within the consortium to meet the needs of their clients.

Demand on the service provided by LINKER has increased beyond initial estimations and between September 2016 and June 2018 the service provided assistance to 208 clients. The LINKER service has maintained client connection through discussing and assisting future steps and providing ongoing access to housing, which results in a certainty of support. Clients departing and returning to the potential danger of domestic violence in the family home is therefore lessened.

Earlier this month I had the honour of officially launching *LINKER: A Journey to Safety—Evaluation Report* by the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health. In a video played to the gathering audience at the launch, two brave women who benefited from assistance of the LINKER Service told their stories of escaping domestic and family violence. Through the services and assistance provided around the clock by the LINKER Service, they emerged to lead safe and happy lives, without fear of domestic violence. I congratulate all the agencies and their many support workers who are involved in assisting women and children through the LINKER program—assisting and facilitating services to the women and children escaping violence to salvage lives and futures free of fear.

GOULBURN ELECTORATE FACILITIES

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (19:13): On Saturday 21 September I attended the official opening of three amazing facilities within the new Health and Wellbeing Precinct in Goulburn. They include the Ken Robson Pavilion, a multipurpose "rage cage" and the newly upgraded skate park—all of which are located within Goulburn's iconic Victoria Park. The completion of those projects is a testament to three levels of government working together to make a special place for the Goulburn community. We began with the Ken Robson Pavilion, a multipurpose building named after a local cricketer and valuable member of the Goulburn community, Mr Ken Robson. I thank Josh Stapleton and local construction company ARW Multigroup for a great build that came together so quickly.

A special mention also goes to Martin Gleeson from Cricket NSW for his contribution to the project. The new Rage Cage is a sports court that gives children of all ages the opportunity to play any sport that is normally played on a court surface. It has basketball hoops, goals and targets so sports such as netball, soccer and handball can all be played. The Rage Cage was made possible due to a partnership between Goulburn Mulwaree Council and the New South Wales Government through the Stronger Country Communities Fund. The New South Wales Government contributed \$202,000 to this project. According to the project's inventor, Leon Purdy, it is "built like the sixties" and certainly here to stay.

The third opening was for our newly upgraded skate park that had outgrown its original purpose. The advanced nature of the facility made it difficult for younger or less experienced persons wanting to have a go. Thanks to the New South Wales Government's \$284,000 from round two of Stronger Country Communities and \$20,000 from the Community Building Partnerships program, the newly upgraded skate park is now more user friendly for all skill levels, including novices and beginners. The Goulburn youth council played a large part in the project and its new design. I thank them for their efforts and community representation.

I am proud to be part of a government that is encouraging active outdoor play for such a diverse range of people. Goulburn really loves its sport. With facilities such as those just mentioned I think it is fair to say that the youth of Goulburn are very lucky. The State Government's support to local infrastructure certainly does not stop there. One of my election commitments included a further \$10 million towards the redevelopment of the Goulburn Aquatic Centre—yet another project I cannot wait to see come to fruition. I commend Goulburn Mulwaree Council for its efforts to support the residents of Goulburn and surrounds by providing such wonderful facilities that will last well into the future—especially those that encourage youth participation and fitness.

The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government understands the importance of keeping our kids active. With the announcement in July that the Active Kids voucher has now doubled to \$200 per child, the Government is assisting our local families with cost-of-living pressures. At last count a total of \$234,857 had been saved across the electorate of Goulburn through Service NSW cost of living appointments. This includes our fantastic Active Kids vouchers. I am so proud that the New South Wales Government is investing in our children and their regional communities. I look forward to seeing the next round of successful applications under round three of the Stronger Country Communities program.

GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY GIANTS

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney)
(19:16): In this week before the Australian Football League [AFL] grand final takes place at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, I stand as the very proud member for Penrith and even prouder western Sydney Minister—because this year western Sydney has its own team in the grand final. The Greater Western Sydney [GWS] Giants will be representing not just western Sydney but all of New South Wales in the grand final of this national competition. This is a truly outstanding achievement by a young club that is young only in the number of years it has been formally arranged. The amount of people that have contributed to Australian football in western Sydney goes back 160 years. In fact, we can go back to the formation of Australian football by Tom Wills, a New South Wales-born person who formalised the game and created what is now the biggest code of sport in this country.

As someone who played a lot of Aussie rules football as a kid and then played for Penrith in the Sydney competition, alongside other people playing Australian football across western Sydney, I have an immense amount of pride in seeing a team representing all those clubs that have been across western Sydney for many years. Over the past eight years we have seen the extraordinary transformation of a group of young men often coming straight out of school into the newly formed club. The criticism from those south of the Murray is that it is somehow a "plastic" club, a contrived club, a club without history or values. I can tell members there is nothing further from the truth when we are talking about the GWS Giants.

The things that drive the club are the same things that drive people across western Sydney. It is about work ethic, respect and family. It is about making sure that you give yourself to the team. These are the same values that drive people across western Sydney every single day. They are the same values that drive this team every single week when it takes to the field. It is no coincidence that the club also formed the first women's AFL team to represent New South Wales in a national competition. The club understands the value of inclusivity right across western Sydney. From the very day it started it understood the diversity that existed right across the community that it represents.

I have no doubt that regardless of the result—and we all will be riding every single minute of the game looking for a win—this group of men will not let us down. They will not let us down because they are good people with good values and their resolve is immense. I mentioned earlier that one of the values that drives the club is the concept of family. The moment you walk into the building and listen to people talk about the club, the moment you talk to the coaching staff and administrators there is an amazing sense of family. When you think about how this club evolved—with young people, administrators and coaches coming from all over the country—it is no coincidence that they made a conscious decision to create a family club. Whilst the club plays in the biggest competition in the country it feels so much like a local club from Penrith or Hawkesbury or Goulburn or Wagga—anywhere across regional New South Wales or western Sydney. The same values that we see every single day in those community sporting clubs are represented in the GWS Giants.

It has been a remarkable season. Jeremy Cameron won the Coleman Medal for kicking the most goals. Last night we saw Stephen Coniglio awarded the Jim Stynes medal for community service—another clear indication of how much the value proposition of this club is so focused on the community. This group of people—led by Tony Shepherd, by CEO Dave Matthews, by Leon Cameron from the coaching staff and by Callan Ward and Phil Davis as the on-field captains—epitomises all of the things that people in western Sydney believe in. On Saturday they will walk out onto the biggest stage in Australian sport. We wish them every success throughout the course of the game. We know that they will do us proud no matter the result, even though every ounce of their being will be focused on a win. There's a big, big sound from the west of the town—and not a single person in orange will ever surrender on Saturday. Go the Giants!

YOUTH SOLUTIONS

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (19:22): Recently I attended the Youth Solutions annual charity ball. Youth Solutions is a youth drug and alcohol prevention and health promotion charity working with young people aged 12 to 25 years in the Macarthur and Wingecarribee regions. The core work of Youth Solutions includes implementing health promotion and educational programs that make a positive difference in the lives of young people and improve their health and social outcomes. Its programs focus on equipping young people with the skills, knowledge, resilience and support they need to make safer choices and prevent drug- and alcohol-related harm. Its programs are delivered free of charge at schools, Juvenile Justice centres, sporting clubs and other youth and community organisations. Reaching out to our younger people before they fall into the wrong crowd is vital. Youth Solutions fills that void.

On the night of the charity ball we were made aware of a case of a 12-year-old boy who innocently went to a friend's house for a sleepover. At the sleepover the boy drank alcohol due to peer pressure. By the time he was 14 he was trying ice. At such a young age he was already on the spiral of addiction. He did not attend his eighteenth birthday party and began losing friends due to his drug addiction. At the age of 21 he was homeless, alone and as low as anyone can get. The aim of Youth Solutions is to make sure, through education and support, that our youth do not reach the point of no return. The staff at the organisation are to be commended for their ongoing work.

I thank President Rebecca Whitford, Vice-President Tony Ross, Treasurer Peter Campbell and all their support staff. Of course, no fundraiser is possible without the hard work of a dedicated committee. I thank Tristan Betts, Vayshali Chandra, Rebekah Gates, Natalie Herd, Louise Sparkes-Howarth, Sue-Lei Hunt-Mingay, Sharon Moyle, Lyn Nonnenmacher, Kate Scott, Geraldine Dean and Amanda Dillon. I also acknowledge the major sponsors of the event. The diamond sponsors were the Rotary Club of Narellan, AGL and Macarthur Square.

The quartz sponsors were Absolutely Fabulous, Bella Arts, C91.3, Macarthur Chronicle, Campbelltown Catholic Club, Country Comfort Liverpool, artist Danielle Mate Sullivan, Grimes Finance, FAB Industrial, Family Focus Legal, Event Cinemas, Edgecliff Homes, Hillross, Kelly & Partners Accountants, Marsdens Law Group, McDonald's, Pineapple Marketing, Parto's Plumbing, Snap Printing, Townsend Signs, the Greater Narellan Chamber of Commerce, TLD Logistics and Wests Group Macarthur. The support throughout the community with donations for the fundraiser was overwhelming. I wish Youth Solutions all the best for the coming year. I thank the staff for the work they do.

Announcements

MEMBER FOR OATLEY WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Gosford, I wish my wife a very happy wedding anniversary. We have been married for 14 years. Many members know my better half. Of course we are doing something romantic: She is at home and I am here in the Speaker's chair.

Community Recognition Statements

CHARLES "PETER" MOSCATT

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (19:25): I pay my respects to the great Charles "Peter" Moscatt, who passed away on 23 August 2019. A Bondi local, Moscatt made his rugby league first grade debut for Eastern Suburbs in 1969 as the club's hooker. During his playing career Moscatt was a beach inspector and then worked in Sydney's rag trade as a men's fashion sales representative. Post playing, he worked as a butcher and a meat wholesaler. Moscatt was politically active. He served as President of the Rugby League Players Association in the early 1990s, had a long association with the organisation and was awarded a life membership in 2005. In the 1990s he was a Waverley councillor and he was the Mayor of Waverley in 2004 when the council became one of the first in Australia to introduce a smoking ban on its beaches. Moscatt married Margaret Peard, a schoolteacher

and the sister of his Roosters teammate John Peard. I thank Peter for the great contribution he made to the local area, on and off the field. He will be missed. May he rest in peace.

SAILABILITY PORT MACQUARIE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (19:26): I recognise the wonderful volunteers of Sailability Port Macquarie. Each year incredible volunteers like Wayne Evans, Bob Walsh, Julie Constable, Sue Hunt and Moira McGrath help people with a disability experience the joy of sailing. This month Sailability volunteers have been cleaning the decks and testing their sails to ensure that their boats are shipshape and ready for the start of the summer season. I recently had the opportunity to meet with volunteers of Sailability at the annual conference that was hosted in Port Macquarie. I was incredibly proud of the Port Macquarie volunteers as they showcased their work to others from across the State and the country. I thank the members of the executive committee and the dozens of volunteers for giving up their time to help to take people out on the water and experience the wonderful world of sailing, an experience they would never have had if not for Sailability. I congratulate all involved and I wish them smooth sailing ahead.

CENTRAL NEWCASTLE BUTCHER BIRDS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (19:27): On Sunday I attended the grand final of the Ladies League Tag and cheered on the Butcher Birds from Central Newcastle Rugby League. The Butcher Birds home ground is St Johns Oval, which is in my electorate of Charlestown. The girls took on their arch rivals, the South Newcastle Lionesses, but the Lionesses were no match for the mighty Butcher Birds on the day. The girls ran out winners 10-nil in what was a very exciting game. Try scorers were winger Kate Davis and centre Taylah Gray, with Taylah also being named player of the match. It has been a great season for the Butcher Birds. They have been undefeated throughout after going down to Souths in last year's grand final. I congratulate both teams on a most entertaining game of football. I look forward to cheering the central girls on in 2020.

PAM SMITH AND MARIE GOW

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (19:28): I inform the House of knitting group members Pam Smith and Marie Gow, who are the driving force behind 200 red crochet poppies that have been handcrafted by four residents at Ingenia Gardens. Pam and Marie were inspired by a similar project in the United Kingdom where people had knitted poppies to mark the 100-year anniversary of World War I. They wanted to be able to replicate that in our community. It was a great project to bring knitters together and strengthen the community; it took 40 minutes to knit one poppy alone. On Anzac Day the Taree community was invited to join the Ingenia Gardens residents at a memorial service to pay their respects to those who have fought and died for this country. To add a special touch to the ceremony, 200 red crochet poppies, which were handcrafted by the knitting group, were on display during the Anzac Day service. I congratulate the knitting group, and Pam and Marie.

NIMBIN SHOW

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (19:29): On Saturday I attended the Nimbin Show. It was a joyous occasion, as it always is, but even more so because it was the centenary. Local resident Jean Stevens, who turned 104 this year, officially opened the show, which was very appropriate. *The Northern Star* has a great photograph of her, which of course I cannot show here, but I was on hand when she opened the show. Jean cut a beautiful cake celebrating 100 years and reflected back on life in Nimbin. I congratulate the Nimbin A&I Society, the life members, office bearers, committee members, honorary office bearers, President Phillip Williams, the secretary and everyone who made it such a great show, which was free.

BANKSTOWN GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (19:30): Yesterday it was my great pleasure to attend a morning tea at Bankstown Girls High School, the high school that my mother attended. The event was held to thank the supporters of a group of students who competed in the Universal Robotics Challenge in Osaka, Japan. The goal of the Universal Robotics Challenge is to inspire students to develop programming and coding skills, creativity, innovation, critical thinking, communication and problem-solving skills. They accomplish this by building and programming robots. Bankstown Girls High School students Michelle Le, Chi Nguyen and Zaynab Peerally not only collected the Innovation Award for Robotics in Australia but also later represented Australia and New Zealand in Japan with their mathematics teacher, Julianne Doal, who managed the project, and their principal, Suada Bilali. The girls' robot, Susan, was a hit amongst the other teams. Whilst she did not win on the day, her creators, Michelle, Chi and Zayneb, were the big winners. From this international experience they gained confidence, reflected upon where science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects can take them and had the chance to build a robot like Susan. Omedetou gozaimasu girls on a job well done!

MARGARET GARNER

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (19:31): I pay tribute to my great friend Margaret Garner, who was awarded the Penrith District Junior Rugby League Club's Volunteer of the Year award. She is Londonderry Greys Junior Rugby League Club secretary, named of course after the Richmond greyhound track on Londonderry Road. Margaret and her great friend the legendary Buck Rogers started the club many years ago and it has done wonders for the local community. As the local member I am very proud to have had a strong association with the club since its inception, including the provision of a Community Building Partnership grant to improve its oval. Margaret, along with Buck, is the beating heart of the club. She is a legend and all the players worship her. I am proud to know her and she certainly deserves this prestigious honour. I congratulate Margaret Garner. We are very proud of her.

COFFS HARBOUR REGIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (19:33): Landcare volunteers put their heart and soul into caring for our natural assets. Their work was highlighted at the 2019 Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare Awards with two very impressive trophies. The Dee Wallace Perpetual Award for Excellence by a Landcare Group went to Bakker Drive Landcare. Their volunteers have worked for more than 11 years to restore a section of Burgess Creek on the western side of Bakker Reserve. This is an important koala corridor and habitat. The winner of the Eileen Moody Memorial Award is Narelle Swanson. For almost 50 years she has championed the ongoing health and survival of Coffs Harbour's iconic mutton birds, or wedge-tailed shearwaters. Narelle has collated thousands of records about the population fluctuations, health and other data, and has introduced many hundreds of school students and community members to our wonderful mutton birds. I know Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare President Barry Powells and Landcare Coordinator Melanie Craig are extremely proud of the enthusiastic volunteers they lead. I thank them for all the great work they do.

ISABELLE HANNA

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (19:34): I congratulate Isabelle Hanna on being selected in the Australian under-19s softball team. The team will be contesting the Women's Softball World Cup in Irvine, California. Isabelle Hanna has been playing with the Central Coast Softball Association since the age of five and has played 12 consecutive seasons with the association. Isabelle Hanna was selected in the New South Wales under-17s State team, winning the national title. In 2018 she was a member of the national title-winning New South Wales under-19s team, competing in every State championship since 2010 and involving herself in NSW Primary Schools Sports Association's girls softball team and Combined High Schools girls softball team. I congratulate Isabelle Hanna on representing our country with pride. I wish her and the team the best of luck at the Women's Softball World Cup.

WATERSHED LANDCARE

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (19:34): I congratulate Watershed Landcare on its recent Green Day. For more than a decade Green Day has attracted school students from across the Mudgee region to learn more about their natural environment, from river ways to arable land and what communities can do to keep those environments flourishing. This year more than 700 students attended the day, which was another amazing turnout. Conserving our local environment is an issue close to my heart and as Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Landcare, I was proud to attend Green Day and check out some of the different presentations and activities. Making sculptures out of branches was certainly one of the highlights. Those sculptures will be on display at Rosby Wines' Sculptures in the Garden next month. Our young people obviously are our future and it will be up to them to look after the environment and to teach future generations to care for the land. I congratulate Watershed Landcare Coordinator Claudia Wythes and all of the organisers on a fantastic day out and say well done to all of the schools and students for engaging with such an important message.

GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY GIANTS

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (19:35): I congratulate the Greater Western Sydney [GWS] Giants on making the Australian Football League grand final this weekend and wish them the best of success. The spiritual home of the Giants is at Blacktown International Sports Park where it all began. Today we host the GWS women's home games, as well as its development squads, and the reserve grade team plays many of its home games in Blacktown. I wish all the best to Leon Cameron, who has been the head coach since 2014, and his predecessor, Kevin Sheedy. I congratulate the chief executive officer, David Matthews, the board chair, Tony Shepherd, and everyone associated with the Giants on their efforts over the years. I am proud of the co-captains, Phil Davis and Callan Ward, who both are foundation players, and the whole team for their efforts. Jeremy Cameron is my favourite player. He had his debut with the Giants in 2012 and has played 150 games,

scored 394 goals and 227 behinds—a staggering 2,591 points. We are proud of the team's achievements. Go the Giants. Bring the premiership back to New South Wales!

CHERTSEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:37): On Saturday I had great pleasure in attending the fiftieth anniversary of Chertsey Primary School and was very proud to unveil the plaque celebrating the school's fiftieth year. The celebrations included horse riding, a petting zoo, giant slides, rides, face painting and many more great activities. Chertsey is the centre of the Springfield community. I am proud to say that the second language at Chertsey is Auslan. Every single student at Chertsey is taught sign language, which makes the school even more wonderful. I thank Principal Karen Auinger and the incredible Naomi Gay, who was instrumental in making the fiftieth anniversary celebrations such a success. I acknowledge the ongoing contribution to the school of Nada Potter. Nada is a trained psychologist who works at Chertseydale Cottage, which is attached to the school. I congratulate all the staff who have worked so tirelessly over the past 50 years and wish them every success over the next 50 years at Chertsey Primary School.

PORT STEPHENS WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (19:38): I pay tribute to an impressive local organisation, Port Stephens Women in Business, which recently celebrated 10 years of association. In small business, the opportunity to learn from others, network and discuss ideas is invaluable, and Port Stephens Women in Business regularly provides a welcoming and warm environment for this to occur. I thank and commend founding President Leah Anderson, as well as past President Kylie Smiley and current President Emily Perry for all their initiative and hard work in ensuring that this important group flourishes.

I thank also current committee members—Vice-President Fiona Brown, Treasurer Debbie Innes, Secretary Holly Harvey, Events Coordinator Kerri Rodley and Tanya Beaumont from communications. Courtesy of this awesome team, the decade was celebrated in style last weekend at the stunning Shoal Bay Country Club. As testament to the heart and spirit of Port Stephens Women in Business, it was not only a fun evening but also a fundraiser for the impressive Tomaree Breast Cancer Support Group. I thank Port Stephens Women in Business for its 10 years of inspiring and supporting women in business because when women support women, incredible things really do happen.

PAULINE HATHERLY

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:39): I congratulate Mrs Pauline Hatherly on her tireless work in the Narrandera branch of the United Hospital Auxiliary. Pauline has spent 20 years volunteering to raise money to purchase equipment for Narrandera District Hospital, which includes five terms as president, a position she currently holds, working with a team dedicated to making hospital visits a better experience for the community. This year the fundraising total has reached \$20,000, which will be used to provide rehabilitation equipment, bedding or education programs that go over and above what is provided by the New South Wales Government. Pauline worked with the 16 members of the Narrandera branch committee, among them Secretary Irene Whillans, Treasurer Suesen Harrison, Vice-President Christine Duncan, Assistant Secretary Sue Coates, Assistant Treasurer Pat Mulholland, publicity and raffle coordinator Julie Payne and patron Jacqueline Adams.

MAYFIELD UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (19:40): I congratulate Mayfield United Football Club on its success in the 2019 season. The club is almost 100 years old and is going from strength to strength. Building on last year's excellent results, which included first and third grade major premierships in the Men's Zone Premier League and major premierships in Women's A and B grades and Zone Women's Community League first and reserve grades, the club has had another outstanding season. The fantastic 2019 results saw the club win three major premierships and three minor premierships, while nine teams reached semifinals and five teams reached grand finals. Among those results were the Men's Zone Premier League minor premiership in first grade, while the Zone Women's Community League reserve grade team were also minor premiers. The first grade team made the grand final, and the Women's A grade team took out both the major and minor premierships. The Men's Zone Premier League reserve grade team also took out the major premiership, with goals scored by Matt Gourley, Matt Jenkins and Joel Parraga. These are phenomenal achievements for a 13-team club. I say congratulations to all.

IMOGEN UPTON

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (19:41): I congratulate Imogen Upton on being crowned the inaugural recipient of the Sarah Ryan Award by Camden Swimming Club. I note the award is presented to an outstanding athlete who commits to his or her club, fellow swimmers and the greater community. I commend

Imogen for her swimming results during the year, as well as her club and community spirit. I wish Imogen continued success with her swimming.

CYCLE WEEK

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:41): To all who cycle to work I say congratulations and happy Cycle Week—for transport, for fun, for health, for friendship and for the environment. This week is a celebration of all things bicycle. I wish for more cycling facilities in the Gosford electorate and across the Central Coast. Cyclists love the peninsula; it is easy to cycle to work and it is dotted with varying bike paths. Our dream is to get people out of their cars and onto their bikes to go to the beach and to local leisure activities on the weekend too. In the Gosford area, things are trickier, with increased pressure on roads at peak hour leaving little space for cyclists. Hats off to those who endure it.

Today in the New South Wales Parliament I acknowledge the Central Coast Bicycle Users Group, which continues to work with the Central Coast Council, Roads and Maritime Services, other government bodies and Bicycle NSW to help improve the environment for people who ride bicycles on the Central Coast. I congratulate Central Coast Council on all the work behind the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan and our cycleway plans, especially that signature bike track along the train line between Brian McGowan's Bridge and Point Clare. Now let us work with the Government to fund and deliver an improved quality of life for the citizens of the Central Coast. Happy bike week; get on your bike!

VICKI LIUBINSKAS

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne—Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (19:43): I acknowledge my constituent and the Drummoyne 2019 Local Woman of the Year, Mrs Vicki Liubinskas. A few years ago Vicki established the Let's Get Going program, which is a not-for-profit mentor and experience program. Its main mission is to promote the health and wellbeing of adults from the age of 18 years with an intellectual or physical disability. Let's Get Going provides an inclusive fitness program in a safe environment that is fun and supportive and builds social relationships amongst participants. Through Vicki's work developing and coordinating the Let's Get Going program, she has made a remarkable difference to the lives of participants. The award recognises her contribution to our community and I thank Vicki for the work she has done.

MIKE BAKER

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (19:43): I speak about Mike Baker, who commenced volunteering for Meals on Wheels Central Coast in 2003. Over the past 16 years he has been a board member as well as performed general and financial administration duties—all of which are volunteer positions. Mike has been a mentor in a lunch program for men, the Plates and Mates Program, participated in fundraising barbecues, performed Santa duties at community restaurants and is always willing to go above and beyond, taking on extra tasks to ease the burden. Mike currently delivers meals two to three days per week out of the Tuggerah delivery centre in my electorate and is always promoting Meals on Wheels Central Coast and its work. He has been actively involved in training and upskilling, and is always available and happy to help out wherever needed. Mike personifies the act of volunteering, brightening the lives of many Central Coast residents on a weekly basis. On behalf of my community, I thank him.

DR TIMOTHY WRIGHT

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:44): I acknowledge the outstanding service of Dr Timothy Wright, the Headmaster of Shore School, who is retiring this year. Having joined the school in 2003 as its seventh headmaster, Dr Wright has over 16 years of distinguished service as an educator at Shore School. Teaching our children is one of the most important and influential pathways one can take to shape our future society. Dr Wright's commitment to fostering intelligent, resilient and responsible young men undoubtedly has made an enormous impact on the students, parents and families he has come into contact with as headmaster. Throughout his distinguished career, Dr Wright has shown an inspiring commitment to promoting community service and the ideals of selflessness. Having devoted over 34 years of his life to shaping young minds through education, it is impossible to measure how many lives Dr Wright would have impacted. However, I am sure that the legacy of Dr Timothy Wright will not be easily forgotten. I know he will be sorely missed at Shore School.

NEWCASTLE PRIDE COMMITTEE

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (19:45): I acknowledge the hard work and enthusiasm of the Newcastle Pride committee following a highly successful Pride Fair Day last month. At the end of August more than 10,000 people gathered in Foreshore Park to celebrate diversity and belonging, with the fair including a variety of market and information stalls, fantastic entertainment from drag performers including Timberlina and

Amy Orale, and the fabulous Doggywood Pooch Parade. This is only the second year of Pride Fair Day, which experienced mass growth from its inaugural event. This is testament to the spectacular atmosphere created by the organisers and the high spirits of all the attendees. The entire Pride Fair lasted for four days and attracted people from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra and the Central Coast, with other events also proving very successful including the Drag Queen Story Time at the Newcastle Library and the Twisted Cabaret at the Newcastle Town Hall. I thank the entire Newcastle Pride committee for their efforts, including my constituents Lee-Anne McDougall and Hellen Richards, as well as all the other volunteers who made sure the day ran smoothly.

ENDEAVOUR MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY CLUBHOUSE COMMITTEE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (19:46): I give thanks for the ongoing work of Rob Moorehead and the Endeavour Mental Health Recovery Clubhouse Committee in Port Macquarie for their commitment to support people with mental health issues. For a number of years the Endeavour Mental Health Recovery Clubhouse has provided a range of successful mental health recovery programs to our local community. Run on a very tight financial budget, Endeavour has been generously supported by many community organisations across Port Macquarie-Hastings and most recently by the Port Macquarie Country Women's Association Branch with a \$5,000 donation. A few weeks ago I was pleased to introduce our new Federal member for Cowper to the clubhouse; I know he was impressed by the model of care and support provided to members. Congratulations to Rob Moorehead, Bob Boss-Walker and all the team at Endeavour on the amazing and life-changing work you do. You can be assured that you will continue to have my backing and that of the community because what you do matters!

CHARLIE'S RUN 4 KIDS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (19:47): Last Sunday I joined hundreds of people at Lyon Oval at the village of Dudley to welcome home the runners from this year's Charlie's Run 4 Kids charity event, which was followed by a fun day out with food, drinks, bands, kids' rides, a raffle and auction enjoyed by hundreds of families celebrating another successful run. The group began their run from Seal Rocks last Wednesday, finishing the 150 kilometres at Dudley. Money raised will help numerous families with kids fighting serious illnesses. The first run was held in 2013 when my constituents, Cheyne and Kylie Waddingham, organised the fundraising event to assist their friends, Brett and Mel Carr, who had a beautiful four-month-old daughter, Charlie, suffering with cancer. Unfortunately Charlie Carr lost her battle with neuroblastoma in April 2015. In the very first year with six runners out on the road, the event raised around \$20,000. It has all been onwards and upwards since then with over \$450,000 being raised for the John Hunter hospital's oncology unit. This year, money will also be donated to help three-year-old Frankie Unger and his family with his treatment of neuroblastoma.

NORTHAVEN DISABILITY SERVICE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (19:48): I recognise and commend general manager, Wendy Hardman; NDIS manager, Kelly Dines; Desie Kearsey; chairman of the board, Pete Kearsey, and the wonderful team at the Northaven Disability Service in Inverell on being awarded first place for the Most Outstanding Regional Disability Services Provider in Australasia in 2019. The awards were held in Melbourne in August this year. Northaven Disability Service has been providing employment support and opportunities to people living with a disability in the Inverell and surrounding areas since 1969. Northaven's mission is to improve their quality of life in a work environment focused on building confidence and dignity, developing personal skills and earning respect within the community. The Northaven Disability Service is incredibly deserving of this award, which recognises the team effort of the board members, staff and clients who are all working together to make meaningful and life-changing contributions to the lives of people living with disabilities. Congratulations Northaven.

GRAHAMSTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (19:49): Some birthdays are really worth celebrating, as was the case recently in Raymond Terrace when the Grahamstown Public School turned 25. I was delighted to attend the school's twenty-fifth anniversary assembly where principal Michele Winn addressed the crowd, which included the school's founding principal Kevin Colman, the founding P&C president Ellen Gordon, and inaugural school captain Emma Spink. Michele spoke proudly about the school and what Grahamstown Public School means to the community of Raymond Terrace, and how the school's motto of growth, pride and success remains as relevant today as it was 25 years ago.

The founding principal, Kevin Colman, OAM, who worked at the school until his retirement some 15 years later, spoke of the challenges of establishing a whole new school from its concrete foundations up, with buildings designed to address the impact of sitting under the flight path of jets from the RAAF Base at

Williamstown. As I sat in the audience, the sense of pride among past and present students, families and staff was palpable. This is a great school in a great community, which is kicking goals in every possible way. I thank the many teachers, staff, students and families who have contributed over the past 25 years to making this terrific school a very special place.

QUEDESHA GOLLEDGE

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (19:50): I inform the House that Taree's Quedesha Golledge went to the United States of America in July to play in three tournaments following her win in the Australian Junior 13-14 year girls golf championship at Royal Pines on the Gold Coast. Now she has had her first tilt at international competition in the US. This is the first time she has been on a plane, jetting to tournaments in San Diego and California. Quedesha is having a big year. She won the girls 14-15 years title at Wagga Wagga Masters in February, earning a place in the Champion of Champions to be held at Bonville in November. She has been working with her coach Wayne Dodd, a former Taree professional, for more than seven years. Mr Dodd organised to fit her out with a new set of clubs at the start of the year. Quedesha credits this as a major factor in her run of form. I congratulate Quedesha Golledge on her recent win and wish her well. I also congratulate her on attending tournaments in the USA. I wish her all the best for the future. Go, Quedesha!

CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL ACADEMY OF SPORT

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:51): It was great to meet the Central Coast regional Academy of Sport's crew in Parliament House last week. Congratulations to the staff team on the amazing work it does, and a huge shout-out to community leading superstar, Moose Robilliard, for continuing to kick goals both on the coast and beyond for regional academies. I thank all of our regional academies of sport across New South Wales for delivering so many opportunities for our emerging stars. I love the way you support our regional sports organisations to top up the local sport information and prowess for those youngsters stepping up to the next level.

Congratulations to Waves representative players Ronan Grattan, and also Jack Petrie and Travis Lewandowski on being selected for the Central Coast Academy of Sport's basketball program for 2019. A big hello to Lexi from the Soldiers Beach Surf Life Saving Club—another emerging local star who joined us in Parliament House last week—as well as all the other Central Coast sporting superstars in the 2019 program. To all of them I say: Learn all you can, plan for a fabulous future, and always play smart! Thanks so much to our regional Academies of Sport.

CURVES PANANIA

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (19:52): Curves Panania has been supporting women in our community with their health and fitness for over 13 years. Most of its 200-plus members are from the fabulous 50 and above age bracket with its oldest member being 87 years young. It just goes to show that you are never too old and it is never too late to improve upon physical health and wellbeing. I thank Melanie McKibbin, who is the owner of Curves Panania, for inviting me to a morning tea at the gym in the first week of September to celebrate Women's Health Week. The two biggest barriers for women not maintaining a healthy lifestyle are a lack of time and family commitments, and their health is not a priority. Women's Health Week is a great time to focus on health and start making positive changes that can last a lifetime. It was great to meet and chat with its members and show my support for the health and wellbeing of the women in my local area. The curves motto is "Live stronger together." The ladies I met that day are a great example of that!

BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA COMMEMORATION

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (19:53): On 4 September 2019 I was honoured to represent the State Opposition Leader at the annual Battle for Australia Commemoration at the Cenotaph in Martin Place, Sydney. The term "Battle for Australia" was first used by Prime Minister John Curtin in 1942 in an appeal to the nation to commemorate and honour the sacrifice and service of those who served in the defence of Australia on land and sea between 1942 and 1945. I acknowledge all dignitaries, service men and women, groups and civilians who were involved in the commemoration. I particularly acknowledge Central Coast resident and President of Battle for Australia Association NSW, Group Captain Doug Roser, retired, who organised the service. Along with his spouse, who was heavily involved in the organisation of the event, I thank him for his continued involvement and acknowledge his important contribution to our community.

BAILEY GLASSPOOL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:54): Congratulations to 13-year-old Bailey Glasspool who recently received a NSW Ambulance Star Award. Bailey was on his way to school when he noticed an elderly lady lying in her driveway. He instructed his mother to stop because he realised straightaway that something was wrong. The elderly lady had fallen and fractured her leg the night before. Unable to move, she spent the night

alone in agony and, on being found, was unable to communicate. Bailey's quick thinking enabled Ms Barnett to get the treatment she needed. I thank Bailey for his mature and intuitive reaction. The world is in safe hands when we have young men like him.

BRISBANE WATER LEGACY CLUB

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:55): Last Saturday I was honoured to attend the Brisbane Water Legacy Club changeover luncheon held at Legacy Village in Point Frederick. I was delighted to be present to witness the installation of John George as the new president. John is a resident of Terrigal. Before his retirement he proudly served our nation as a member of the Special Air Service. John is indeed a formidable person. He has achieved much in his life and he continues to contribute so much to public discourse in the Terrigal community. He regularly writes letters to the editor and is very vocal on important local projects, including the Terrigal boardwalk. I thank outgoing president Max Davis for his service to the Brisbane Water Legacy Club. I offer my heartfelt congratulations to incoming president John George and his lovely wife Suzanne.

OURIMBAH RESIDENTS AND RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (19:56): I acknowledge and thank the Ourimbah Residents and Ratepayers Association, an important community group in my electorate. I acknowledge its executive: chairperson Di Willard, vice chairman Adam Rogers, treasurer Greg McGill and joint secretaries Barbara Rodgers, Julie Lawrance and Kerel Cook. Nothing important happens in Ourimbah without the Ourimbah Residents and Ratepayers Association being closely involved and shaping the turn of events to the advantage of the community. I look to their counsel and guidance every time an issue arises in Ourimbah. I thank them for their assistance in protecting the heritage of the area by helping me to stop the Government from demolishing the Ourimbah stationmaster's cottage. I acknowledge their work on the Ourimbah master plan. They do a great job for the region.

RIVENDELL FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne—Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (19:57): This weekend my electorate will host the third annual Rivendell Flower and Garden Show at Thomas Walker Estate. This event is Sydney's newest annual flower and garden show. It provides an opportunity for local flower artists and community groups to showcase their talent and to create and display unique designs. I encourage as many people as possible to attend the event this Saturday and Sunday. I congratulate the Sydney Local Health District on its vision and work in organising this fundraising event for Concord Hospital.

BEROWRA WOODCHOP FESTIVAL

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)—I would like to congratulate Berowra Apex on celebrating the 25th year of the Annual Woodchop Festival. The men behind Berowra Apex are phenomenal and this event gets bigger and better every year. This year, despite the cold and windy conditions they have raised over \$10,000 and hundreds of locals in Berowra enjoy the festivities. All the money raised at the festival will go back into local community projects and organisations. You can always count on the volunteers from Berowra Apex for being there to help out whenever there is a BBQ that needs to be cooked or just to lend a hand. These dedicated volunteers are an asset to our community.

OBIECO INDUSTRIES

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation)—I recognise Tamworth-based vehicle body building manufacturer Obieco Industries, which has taken out the Medium Employer of the Year award at the 2019 NSW Training Awards. I'm so proud to say a business from my home town is recognised as a leader in the state for upskilling their workforce. This company has been operating in Tamworth since 2000 and is dedicated to improving the skills of its workforce. It currently employs 61 staff including 10 apprentices across the disciplines of Metal Fabrication, Mechanical Engineering and Auto Electrical. Anthony Steel and his company is committed to training apprentices and upskilling existing staff and it currently has more than 26 per cent of staff engaged in some form of training. Well done Obieco Industries and its management team.

ROSELEA FC WOMENS FOOTBALL GALA DAY

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer)—Recently I attended the Gala Day for Roselea Football Club. Roselea Football Club began in 1967 with a vision to give all players, regardless of age or ability, the opportunity to play football, and to encourage them in their efforts. Roselea proudly calls itself a family club, and they mean it literally - all members of the family can play if they wish. For example, Vice President of Women's Football, Rohan Primrose told me that walking soccer was really taking off amongst the over-45s.

But as the father of now five daughters, I was especially pleased to see so many young girls playing soccer for Roselea, and I understand the club had been a source of talent for our national side, the Matildas. One of my highlights as Member for Epping is getting around to local sporting groups. Clubs like Roselea FC provide a great environment for social inclusion and harmony, as well as providing young athletes the ability to play in and for their local area. I would like to congratulate the club on a great season, and I especially acknowledge Jeff Saul and Rohan Primrose for their work in managing women's soccer.

JUSTINE MILNE & SARA DREBBER – PENRITH LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—I would like to congratulate Glenmore Park businesswomen, Justine Milne and Sara Drebber for their recent success at the Penrith Local Business Awards. Justine was awarded Outstanding Sole Trader for her business 'Justine Milne Marriage Celebrant' and has been in business for five years. A few months ago, she was named the #1 Sydney Celebrant from the Bride's Choice Awards and was also a finalist in the Local Business Awards in 2018 before taking home the top prize this year.

Sara was given the Outstanding Education Service award for her business 'edUcatered' after only being in business for two years. She was also a finalist in the 2018 Local Business Awards and a finalist in the 2019 Altitude Awards only a few months ago. Both of these outstanding women, along with running a business, both run a household and share a passion for people and the community. I wish Justine and Sara the best for their business and look forward to hearing of their next great achievement. Congratulations!

NSW PREMIER'S READING CHALLENGE

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—In modern times reading is often overlooked, but it remains an important activity in a child's development. So I am delighted to note that many students in my electorate of Davidson partook in the 2019 NSW Premier's Reading Challenge. This year's challenge opened for students from kindergarten to year 9 and offered 640 new titles. The initiative started on 4 March and closed on 30 August, with students having to complete 20 to 30 books to finish the challenge. By way of example, 550 students from year 7 to 9 at St Ives High School took part this year.

The challenge encourages young people to develop a love of reading and quality literature. As a result of the initiative, library borrowing frequency has improved and students who were non-readers have discovered a newfound interest in reading. This is especially important as it improves their reading and comprehension skills. I commend my local schools like St Ives High for encouraging young people to read, and congratulate all the relevant students for immersing themselves in the challenge.

HUMANITY MATTERS INC. FOOD TRUCK

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I recently had the honour of officially launching the Humanity Matters Inc. youth outreach Food Truck, which recently underwent refurbishments funded as part of the Community Building Partnership (CBP) grants program. In 2018 Humanity Matters successfully obtained a CBP grant of \$11,000 for new equipment and upgrades to expand the capabilities of the youth outreach food truck, which included a new fridge, hotplate with grill, hand wash station, flooring and service bench, as well as upgrades to locks and security and a new mural wrapped around the entire truck to increase visibility.

The food truck provides a monthly outreach service in Bankstown and is utilised all over South West Sydney to connect with disenfranchised young people aged 12 to 18 who are vulnerable and at risk of falling into anti-social behaviour and crime. In addition, the Humanity Matters "Street Outreach Youth Bus" project was recently selected by the community to receive \$81,490 in funding as part of the 2019 My Community Project grants program. I acknowledge and commend Humanity Matters Street Youth Services Manager Mr Sarkis Achmar, CEO Ms Mary Malak and the entire management committee for their valuable contribution towards helping our local youth.

NO MONEY, NO TIME

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—I congratulate Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute Clare Collins and nutrition researcher Dr Lee Ashton who have led the way in launching the No Money, No Time website, to help time and cash-poor young adults personalised advice on diet. The site will provide credible advice in a familiar format, and address money and time issues with the aim of improving overall health and reduce the risk of preventable chronic diseases later in life.

Visitors to the free site would complete a quiz and then be provided with a score and personalised goals to help improve specific areas of their diet. 'It's really important to provide advice that fits in with their needs and lifestyle,' Professor Collins has said, and I couldn't agree more: not all lifestyle solutions fit all lifestyles, but

coming across specific information can be very difficult. I applaud Professor Collins and Doctor Ashton. This is yet another example of the Newcastle's innovative spirit and community-mindedness.

GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I recognise the most remarkable event that took place in Sydney on Friday – the Global Climate Strike. Young people understand climate change is no longer up for debate and around 80,000 of them turned up last week to call for action from decision-makers. I want to acknowledge the fantastic effort of every student who attended the Global Climate March from my electorate including students from Annandale North Public School, Annandale Public School, Balmain Public School, Birchgrove Public School, Father John Therry, Forest Lodge Public School, Glebe Public School, Inner Sydney Montessori School, International Grammar School, Italian Bilingual School, Kegworth Public School, Leichhardt Public School, Nicholson Street Public School, Orange Grove Public School, Rozelle Public School, St Bendan's Catholic, St Columba's Primary School, St Fiacres Catholic, St James Catholic, St Scholastica College, Sydney Secondary College and Ultimo Public School. The site of so many local faces out on Friday gives me hope. These students have shown immense leadership and they should be commended. Congratulations to every student who went on strike, your actions made all governments take notice!

TRIBUTE TO DAVID AND TARA HOWES

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I pay tribute to David and Tara Howes of Como for being foster carers and providing the safety, care and stability to many young children that we often take for granted. Already having three children of their own, David and Tara have selflessly cared for an additional seven children since becoming temporary carers. When reflecting on the family's experience, Tara says "we're actually really lucky to have them because they just give us so much." It is this humble and compassionate approach that has encouraged local families to likewise open up their hearts and homes, knowing that sadly New South Wales needs another 350 new carer households to meet demand. From September 8 to 14, Foster and Kinship Care Week served as an opportunity to recognise more than 18,000 authorised carers across NSW. Every day foster and kinship carers like David and Tara do an exceptional job parenting some of our most vulnerable children. I commend David and Tara for so generously opening their home to those that need it most, and sharing their family's love to make a positive difference in many young lives.

ROSEMEADOW SENIORS GROUP

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—There aren't many more enjoyable things to do than have a chat with some of Campbelltown's elderly residents. Their life experiences and stories are always so interesting and they are never short of helpful advice. Recently I attended the Rosemeadow Seniors Group's annual Father's Day barbecue. As usual, conversations weren't hard to come by. The group does a magnificent job ensuring local elderly people get out and about and socialise with each other. Social interaction is so beneficial to our older generations and the number of those who attended the Father's Day barbecue was truly heart-warming. I always welcome attending Rosemeadow Seniors Group events as the members always welcome me with open arms. The hospitality and topics of discussion are always nothing short of impeccable. As a father of two teenage boys, I really consider Father's Day a special day. It's a special occasion each year that I never take for granted. I could see on the faces of those at the Rosemeadow Seniors Group barbecue that they also felt the same way. Congratulations again on a wonderful event.

FRIENDS OF INDIA

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—I am delighted to recognise the organisation Friends of India, Australia. As the name suggests this is a group comprised of people originally from India who are now based in this country and many of whom live in South West Sydney. The group has been established for well over two decades and I'm pleased to say I've been able to attend many of the events they've held from the time of their formation. They have a prime focus on celebrating Indian culture. They also have a great commitment to community involvement, from charity events and fund-raising to participating in Clean Up Australia Day.

Their premier event each year is Ganeshotsava, a celebration of Lord Ganesha, a Hindu deity. This year the event was held on the weekend of 7th and 8th of September and was, as always, a great success. This event is now usually held at the Whitlam Leisure Centre at Liverpool and over a weekend attracts 7-8,000 people. It's a great opportunity for younger numbers of the community to display traditional Indian cultural skills and it's a great and significant contribution to Liverpool's multiculturalism.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARDS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—I rise today to inform Parliament of what an honour it was to attend the 60th Anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh International Award Foundation, attended by His Royal

Highness, Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a leading non-formal education youth development program, empowering all young Australians aged 14 to 24 to explore their full potential regardless of their location or circumstance.

To earn an Award, each young person must learn a skill, improve their physical well being, volunteer in their community and experience a team adventure in a new environment. The Award is a fully inclusive program and has no social, political, or religious affiliations. I commend the award winners achievements and contribution to youth leadership and development in Australia. I take this moment to acknowledge the great work of the duke of Edinburgh board including the Hon. Gary Nairn AO, the Hon. Sandra Nori, Tom Mould AO, Cameron Smart, Stephen Hauville, Elizabeth Gilchrist AM, Elizabeth Gilchrist AM, Nathan Godfrey, Bob Rutherford, David Sanders, the Hon. Daryl Manzie am, the Hon. Joseph Francis and Sue Lloyd-Williams AO.

DEFENCE SHED WAGGA WAGGA

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Sadly, many of our younger defence personnel face difficulties when they return to civilian life. National Suicide Rates between 2014 and 2016 showed ex-serving men aged under 30 had a suicide rate more than twice that of Australian men the same age. That is why I wish to congratulate Jason Frost who has established Defence Shed Wagga Wagga (DSWW), a not for profit organisation to support serving and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families throughout the Riverina.

DSWW is in its early stages, but with no public advertising, currently has upwards of 20 active ex ADF members. With support from the local ADF bases as well as the Men's Sheds at Wagga and Uranquinty, the Defence Shed intends to partner with TAFE NSW to run local courses for members. Located in temporary accommodation thanks to the Salvation Army, planning is underway with the local Council to find more permanent accommodation. The Defence Shed will provide a safe haven: a place to talk, work, train, meet and find support. Clearly there is a way to go, but this is a great start.

AUSTRALIA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE NETHERLANDS

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—On Thursday 12th September it was a pleasure to join the Mayor of Wingecarribee Duncan Gair in welcoming the Australian Ambassador to the Netherlands Mathew Neuhaus. Ambassador Mathew Neuhaus inspected preparations for our Tulip time celebrations to be held later this month. The Netherlands and Wingecarribee shire share a connection in that of our annual floral festival. The 59th annual Tulip time celebrations will be held from September 24th through to October 7th in Corbett Gardens and across the Highlands. A very special thanks to the Bowral CWA for an outstanding morning tea inclusive of their famous scones in their rooms overlooking the Tulip Time Gardens.

TEEJ

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields)—I had the honour of attending Teej celebrations in Ingleburn—another fabulous showcase of our vibrant and diverse community. The celebration has special significance for Hindu women, particularly those of Nepali and North Indian origin. Teej recognises women's various roles—as mothers, daughters, sisters, wives and members of our community whose many contributions we respect and value. The festivities also honour the sacred union between husband and wife. A monsoon holiday dedicated to Goddess Parvati and Lord Shiva, Teej is marked by a period of fasting by women and culminates in a joyous celebration with dancing, singing and food. Women dress in their finest traditional clothes, their hands decorated with henna.

Stepped in tradition, ritual and spirituality, Teej is also an opportunity to renew family bonds and seek blessings for marital bliss. I would like to acknowledge the event organisers and congratulate the Macarthur Region Nepalese Community for its contribution to our multicultural community. I am proud and privileged to represent people of many different faiths and cultures in my electorate, and Teej celebrations are yet another wonderful example of our community's rich diversity.

WOONONA PUBLIC SCHOOL NEW PLAYGROUND

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira)—Earlier this month I was pleased to be able to visit Woonona Public School to officially open their brand new playground. I was pleased to be able to secure more than \$14,000 for the P&C to be able to help build this playground. The first students to experience the new playground were the SRC representatives and they thoroughly enjoyed it. I would like to recognise the ongoing efforts of the hard working and dedicated Woonona Public School P&C and congratulate them on this wonderful project.

The school community is very lucky to be led by Principal Mr Tim Fisher who is dedicated to education and encourages all of his student to achieve their full potential. Woonona Public School has a long history in my electorate, established in 1882 they are certainly a centre of education excellence. The School's motto "learning

and working together" is something the students and staff certainly work towards. I congratulate the school on completing this wonderful project and I hope all students enjoy this new play space.

PENRITH MENS O40'S TEAM OF THE YEAR AWARD

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney)—Congratulations to the Penrith Men's O40's team who were recently named as Team Of The Year at the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation Awards Evening. The team won the NSW State Championships last December in Port Macquarie, playing 10 games of 30 minutes each over the weekend they took the win of the State Championships undefeated. They also won the 2016 State Titles and in 2017 were runners-up. In over 30 games at the State titles from 2016-2018 this team has won 29 games.

Following the State championships, 10 of the team were involved in the Touch football World Cup held in Malaysia. Four players were in the Australian O40's team (silver medallists), 4 others were in the Over45's (World Champions), 1 coached the England Men's 40's team and another was the Assistant Coach of the Australian O45's team. The officials and players include: Head Coach: David Collins, Manager: Tony Doyle, Players: Paul Krahe, Alan Woods, Darren Reynoldson, Wayne McKenzie, Simon Webster, Andrew Braden, Chris Benfield, Jason Cawthorne, Darren Roden, Darren Swain, Phil Jarrett, Jarrod Reardon, Michel Hume, Richard Halvorson.

PORT MACQUARIE ADVENTIST SCHOOL

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I rise to recognise year 5/6 students from Port Macquarie Adventist School who have undertaken a mammoth task. The students organised the school's Inaugural Spring Fair to raise money for a new Pre-Kindy playground. The students made bath bombs, dish washing tablets, and toilet fizzers to sell on stalls at the Fair. There were also a number of other stall holders, children's activities/rides, art show and garage sale. Students coordinated all of the marketing and advertising for the Fair by learning how to write a media release. They appeared on local radio during Krysti & Bodge's Hit FM Breakfast show to promote the event, as well as appearing in the Port Express. Congratulations to students and teachers for working hard for a fantastic cause. By all accounts I understand the day was a huge success and hope they had a fun day.

GRACE'S PLACE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—The Homicide Victims Support Group held a sod turning ceremony on the 7th of September 2019 to mark the start of construction of Grace's Place, a world first residential trauma centre for children affected by homicide. Grace's Place, named after Anita Cobby's mother, will provide support and counselling to children who have been traumatised by homicide. Specialised staff will help guide children as they rebuild their lives. I would like to thank Executive Director Martha Jabour, the committee members and all the families involved in making this day a reality. The dedication of the Homicide Victims Support Group is the reason that Grace's Place is moving ahead and will be able to provide support to children during the most harrowing times. The Western Sydney community has rallied behind this project helping to raise funds to ensure that it can come to fruition. I would also like to acknowledge Blacktown City Council for donating the land for this facility and the NSW Police Force members, both serving and retired, who have supported this initiative for many years.

AUSTRALIAN CHINESE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (ACCA) VOLUNTEERS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney Electorate, I acknowledge the volunteers who support the inner city Chinese-Australian community through the Australian Chinese Community Association (ACCA). Earlier this year, I spoke at the annual ACCA Volunteers' Appreciation Luncheon where we gave certificates of appreciation to 100 people for Volunteer Week. The volunteer board must be congratulated for their commitment, skills and time to govern this non-profit community based organisation including President Eric Wu, past President Shirley Chan and Councillor Benjamin Chow.

ACCA volunteers support elderly Chinese-speaking residents particularly those living in Surry Hills, Haymarket and Chinatown, who need help to live independently at home. They play a vital role when they speak the same language as those they help with delivered meals and social support. I'm proud to work with ACCA and recognise the amazing work they do with a small staff and many volunteers, reinforcing that the Sydney electorate is powered by volunteers from all walks of life and backgrounds.

STARTTS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—On Friday 20th September, STARTTS hosted their 30th Anniversary celebrations at the Imperial Paradiso in the heart of Fairfield. STARTTS is the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors. They have provided specialist, culturally relevant treatment

and support to those in need over the past 30 years. The ongoing psychological and physical consequences of such trauma can be debilitating and adversely affect the quality of day-to-day life for those who are affected.

Thankfully, we have STARTTS to engage and work with these individuals, to provide them the best opportunity to heal the scars of torture and trauma to enable them to renew and rebuild their lives peacefully here in Australia. STARTTS have been invaluable pillar of our community over the years and their contributions will continue to inspire, motivate and guide others at the forefront of specialised support services right here in Fairfield. On behalf of the Fairfield Electorate, I would like to congratulate STARTTS on 30 tremendous years of dedicated support to those in need and we are truly grateful for everything you do throughout the broader community.

PAUL GALLEN

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)—I acknowledge the retirement of Cronulla Sharks legend Paul Gallen. Arguably the Sharks' greatest player of all times, Paul made 348 appearances in the black, white and blue, with 201 of those as captain and scoring 63 tries. Paul made his NRL debut in 2001. He represented his one and only NRL club in 15 final matches and played in one grand final, leading the Sharks to the NRL title in 2016. Paul played 32 tests for Australia and 24 Origins for NSW, to become one of the most iconic players in the game. Paul will be greatly missed and I wish him all the best in his retirement and future plans.

COBAR HERITAGE CENTRES' 50TH BIRTHDAY

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—The nationally known Cobar Heritage Centre has just celebrated its 50th Birthday. The Cobar Heritage Centre has been the pillar of the tourist industry in Cobar for many decades. In the early nineties more than 3,000 visitors' wandered through the many exhibits ranging from living in the early settler period to mining and farming equipment and the amazing photographic history of Cobar and surrounding areas. Move to present day where more than 25,000 visitors have explored the open cut mine and the Heritage Centre. The Heritage Centre is now getting an upgrade to ensure the Heritage centre is there for another 100 years, as part of the upgrade the exhibitions will be reconfigured and new displays built. It is an exciting time for the Heritage centre and I look forward to the unveiling of the finished project and celebrate with the Cobar community.

PETER BRUS

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to recognise Mr Peter Brus of Orange who represented Australia at the 2019 WA1500 World Championships, held from 11th to 14th September at the Southern Highlands Regional Shooting Complex, Hill Top. This was the fourth occasion Peter had competed for his country, and at this event he successfully claimed the WA1500 Revolver and WA48 Revolver world titles. Peter is the first Australian to ever win the WA1500 title and the first person ever to have won two individual titles.

Peter also competed alongside his father and coach, Dean Brus, claiming the Club Teams Pistol title, and narrowly missed the title for Club Teams Revolver by just one point to claim second place. Peter competed alongside Chris Banfield for the World Teams Pistol event, claiming the world title. Peter Brus' 2019 WA1500 World Championship results are;

WA48 Revolver 4: 1st

WA1500 World Teams Revolver: 3rd

WA1500 World Teams Pistol: 1st

WA50 Open: 3rd

WA1500 Club Teams Pistol: 1st

WA1500 Club Teams Revolver: 2nd

WA1500 Pistol: 4th

WA1500 Revolver: 1st

Congratulations to Peter for his outstanding success and representing Australia in this international shooting event.

MUDGEES PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to congratulate Mudgee Public School and the Mudgee Public P&C for attracting the highest number of votes in the Dubbo electorate under the Government's My Community Project grant. Their application for a multi-use sport court expansion was awarded \$140,000 after receiving 1075 points – more than 200 points clear of their nearest rival! The upgrade will provide a second multi-

use court, doubling the space available for PE and playtime. Twice as many children can get involved in basketball, netball handball or free play. Resurfacing the current court will take tree roots out of the game.

The Mudgee Public sport court expansion will allow more children to enjoy the benefits of being active, meaning better physical health, improved mental wellbeing, social skills and teamwork. Healthy, active kids make for better learners! The wider community will also be able to use the courts and enjoy the benefits. Congratulations to all of the staff and students at Mudgee Public, and the P&C Committee: president Robyn Chase, vice-president Belinda Steele, secretary Jemma Williams, treasurer Simone Hurrell, and general members Anna McDonald, Lucy Pye, Stacey Pound, Marni Cross and Jen Clayton.

RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN KEVIN RYAN AFSM

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—I would like to acknowledge the outstanding commitment by Captain Kevin Ryan to his local community. Captain Ryan has served Fire and Rescue NSW, formerly NSW Fire Brigade, at the Bathurst Station for the last 50 years. Captain Ryan joined the Bathurst brigade as a retained (on-call) firefighter on 15/9/69 and was appointed captain in 1986. He retired from the brigade on 15/9/19, serving exactly 50 years to the day. In 2012 Captain Ryan received one of the highest honours an Australian firefighter could receive when he was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours.

Captain Ryan has been a driving force within the Firefighter Championships Association and has attended every state championship since 1970 and held the position of Executive Councillor since 1990. He has played a significant role in developing the skills of thousands of firefighters from across NSW and interstate. Over the last 50 years he has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to his local brigade, Bathurst and the wider community and to Fire and Rescue NSW.

HORNSBY SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai)—In what was once an old drill hall used as a training base for Hornsby's soldiers, resides the headquarters of the Hornsby Shire Historical Society. Formed in 1966, the society aim's to encourage the study, foster an interest and preserve and exhibit the history of the local area. President Patricia Dewey, along with her fellow members hold monthly meetings, open the museum for mid-week visits and produce their own magazine, 'Local Colour'.

Their work with the younger generation proves to be most rewarding. Held at Joseph Collingridge Hall in Kenley Park, Normanhurst, primary students, scouts and guides participate in a number of activities and obtain a glimpse of how things used to be by cooking meals without modern appliances, using double wooden desks with china inkwells and shopping without trolleys, self-service stations and plastic bags. I recently visited the members of the Society. Thank you to all the hardworking volunteers, who are committed to keeping the knowledge of our local area alive.

MAKE IT TENTERFIELD - MAKE IT BALE OUT PROJECT

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I congratulate Make It Tenterfield Inc. for its commitment and initiative to support local struggling farmers through its Make It Bale Out project. Through raffle ticket sales and donations, Make It Tenterfield has raised more than \$5,200. The money is used to buy Sugar Cane tops for famers who have lost their livestock feed through drought and fire. The members of Make It Tenterfield Inc. have worked tirelessly to get as many support as possible from visitors, attending the recent Peter Allen Festival and the Haddington Bike Show and Fete. I applaud their incredible commitment to raise funds for this worthy cause.

The Sugar Cane Tops will be supplied by Damian McRae from Casino. Damian has kindly offered to provide a free bale for every bale bought by Make It Tenterfield. Thank you, Damian. I acknowledge the local Salvation Army for their support in overseeing the distribution of the bales. I also acknowledge the Tenterfield Shire Council and the Mayor Cr. Peter Petty for providing a low-loader to collect the bales from Casino. I congratulate and thank Carmel Higgins, Ruth Rutherford and committee members for their extraordinary initiative supporting farmers in need.

CHILDREN'S MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education)—Founded in 1958, Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI) is an independent organisation based in the Parramatta area committed to finding treatments and cures for children's genetic diseases. CMRI was Australia's first paediatric medical research facility and has helped save the lives of thousands of children – dedicating themselves to advancing the treatment and prevention of childhood diseases, with the goal of ensuring every child has the opportunity to start a healthy life.

CMRI collaborates with scientists all over the world to push research forward. They have been at the forefront in pioneering advances in medical research and development such as microsurgery, immunisations against lethal childhood illnesses, and methods to incubate and care for premature babies – effectively improving, as well as saving, the lives of countless Australian children since its inception. I'd like to extend my thanks to the Children's Medical Research Institute and their volunteers for their efforts including Professor Frank Martin, Mrs Carolyn Forster and all the board members and also Roger Reddel, Patrick Tam and all the department heads. I would also like to thank all the lead researchers in continuously pushing forward the capabilities of medical science and saving countless lives.

JOSHUA ROSS, RIVER RESCUE HERO

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I applaud the courage and quick-thinking of Ballina resident Joshua Ross, who noticed a young woman in difficulty in the town's North Creek and jumped into the cold waters to bring her to safety. In doing so Joshua almost certainly saved the life of the young woman, who lives with a disability and who had waded out in to the water despite not being able to swim. When Joshua noticed her, the water was up to her shoulders and coming in fast. Joshua leapt off the wall, walked across the oyster beds and guided her back to shore against a strong current that would have quickly swept her out to sea.

R U OK DAY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—This R U OK Day I joined the students and staff of Wenona School to support their efforts to dismantle social stigma and empower people to seek help for mental health issues. At Wenona's "R U OK – hot chocolate and chat" for students from years 7-12, driven by the Student Representative Council, I took the opportunity to talk with students about mental wellbeing. This is a great example of a simple yet powerful initiative to promote positive mental health in our schools. Congratulations to the students who led this initiative, particularly the year 9 Pastoral Care Group and SRC Co-Captain Georgia Bearbow.

Through the simple act of asking "Are you okay?" we can support people with mental health issues to get help and create environments where no one feels like need to suffer alone. We know that youth mental health issues can be especially destructive. That's why I am so proud to see students at Wenona starting conversations about mental health and supporting their peers. Thank you to Janine Edwards for her facilitation of this event and I commend all the students at Wenona who cared enough to ask each other "Are you okay?"

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:58 until
Wednesday 25 September 2019 at 9:30.**