



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament  
First Session**

**Tuesday, 15 October 2019**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Tuesday, 15 October 2019**

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

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

### *Visitors*

#### **MYANMAR DELEGATION**

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a very warm welcome to a delegation of 20 officials from the Government of Myanmar, whom I had the pleasure of meeting earlier this morning, led by the Deputy Minister, Mr Tin Myint. I thank the delegation for its very kind gift, which I have received as Speaker on behalf of the Parliament. They are guests here today particularly through the organisation of the member for Lismore. I credit her for her work in that regard and thank those who have assisted with the delegation's welcome to Parliament. I say in very bad Burmese: Mingalaba.

*[Notices of motions given.]*

### *Bills*

#### **ROAD TRANSPORT AMENDMENT (MOBILE PHONE DETECTION) BILL 2019**

##### **Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from 24 September 2019.**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (12:19):** On behalf of the Opposition I speak in debate on the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. From the outset I note that the Opposition will not oppose the bill but will move some amendments in the Legislative Council. The bill permanently continues the use of mobile phone detection equipment that passed through this House in 2018 as a trial under the Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Road Safety) Act 2018. The bill has two objects:

- (a) to amend the *Road Transport Act 2013* to establish a presumption that an object held by, or resting on, the driver of a vehicle in a photograph taken by a traffic enforcement device that is approved for mobile phone use offences is a mobile phone for the purposes of a mobile phone use offence, unless the driver satisfies the court that the object was not a mobile phone,
- (b) to amend the *Road Rules 2014* to provide that, for a mobile phone use offence, the driver of a vehicle is not committing the offence if the driver is complying with a requirement made by a police officer or other authorised officer to hand the phone to the officer.

The Opposition supports the bill in principle and notes that there was strong evidence during the trial period that the bill is very much needed. Anyone who drives on the road will be aware—often from looking out of their driver's side window—of people using mobile phones while they are driving, which is particularly dangerous. When the trial first started, it was noted that during the initial test on Sydney Harbour Bridge the new system detected 750 drivers in six hours. That contrasted with New South Wales police at the time having issued fewer than 100 infringement notices per week using their traditional methods. I fully concur that the new technology will improve detection of people doing the wrong thing.

As the Minister said in his second reading speech, the bill is about saving lives. It is designed specifically to deter people from using their mobile phones while they are driving. The stated rationale for the changes is to improve road safety. Labor supports the principle of regulating mobile phone use while driving but has some concerns about the implementation of the Government's approach. A pilot program testing the use of mobile phone detection cameras ran from January to June 2019. During the pilot over 8.5 million vehicles were checked and over 100,000 drivers were detected using their phones illegally. 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 program follows the NRMA recommendations, which sought new camera technology and stringent penalties for individuals who use phones in an illegal manner. However, Labor believes that the NRMA opposes the proposition that there be no advisory signage to alert motorists when they are approaching a phone detection camera. The NRMA notes that warning signs are a critical aspect of enforcement and education strategies and should be treated no differently than any other camera in the road network. The Opposition believes that signage

should be introduced and positioned before and after cameras to increase the effectiveness of the new measures. That will ensure the changes are about behaviour change and not revenue raising

I have read the Minister's second reading speech and I concur with him that every person driving on the roads should be mindful that using a mobile phone is illegal. In that sense, I recognise there is an argument that there should not be signage. However, part of educating people is showing a message in front of their face. It is not just a matter of receiving a fine after the fact, it is about reminding them constantly that using a mobile phone while driving is illegal. This is a recommendation that the NRMA put forward. Following a lengthy discussion the Opposition has decided to support the NRMA's proposition. I note the Minister said in his second reading speech—and Minister Pavey certainly mentioned it in her speech when the trial was introduced—that revenue received from people fined for using mobile phones whilst driving will go into a fund for driver education. We seek to make sure that is done and that all revenue raised from those fines goes into a fund.

If the Government's intention is that 100 per cent of that revenue is to support improving driver education, we certainly support that. One issue that stakeholders have expressed to us is that given the number of offences expected to be detected—given that the trial highlighted that 100,000 people were illegally using mobile phones while driving—we seek an assurance that the capacity to process fines is sufficient to manage the projected increase in workload. Both the initial trial on the Harbour Bridge and the further trial have shown us that, unfortunately, despite education campaigns people continue to use their mobile phones illegally while driving. We must take into account that once the use of cameras to detect illegal use of mobile phones is fully implemented there will be a massive increase in fines. The Minister might address in his reply that government departments have been given the capacity to cope with that increased workload to ensure that the issuing of those fines is timely and orderly.

Another issue we wish to raise is that during the pilot the Privacy Commissioner was involved in ongoing consultation regarding the privacy protection measures incorporated in the program. The Opposition raised this issue when the initial trial legislation was introduced through the then shadow Minister, Sophie Cotsis. Since the images are captured from above, individuals are concerned that parts of their bodies may be exposed and the Opposition would like to know how the Government intends to alleviate those concerns as well as how long images will be stored for and who will have access to them?

The Opposition is hypersensitive to this issue after people's private data was released for political purposes during the election campaign. There still has been no explanation as to how that occurred and people cannot have confidence in what will happen to potentially revealing photographs, how they will be controlled and who will have access to them. We would like an assurance from the Minister—more so from the then Minister responsible for privacy, who said it is at the heart of everything he does; however, the traffic fine information was still leaked—that these photographs will not make their way into the public domain.

Although Labor is currently drafting amendments, which it will move in the Legislative Council, it supports the intention of the bill. I have seen data that shows that from 2012-17 illegal mobile phone use was the cause of 184 crashes. Those crashes resulted in seven deaths and 105 injuries. So even if the use of this technology stopped those crashes alone, it certainly would be worthwhile. The public has to understand that driving a vehicle is a very important responsibility. My 18-year-old daughter just went through the process of getting her licence. Like most parents, I was involved in that process. It is a sharp reminder, when you are sitting in the passenger seat, of what you do naturally every single day to drive a vehicle without much thought at all. It is a reminder not just about the impact you can have on yourself but about the impact you can have on other road users.

As I said at the start of this contribution, I use the M1 motorway on a very regular basis. Just recently as I drove along I was astounded to see someone controlling the steering wheel with their knees whilst they flicked through their phone. I had set my cruise control and was travelling at a speed of 110 kilometres per hour but the other car cruised past me. I just shook my head and thought, "What on earth do these individuals think they are doing?" If it takes putting cameras into operation to catch these people and hitting them with fines then the Parliament has a responsibility to do that. Although we have some questions about some items in this bill, Opposition members support this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (12:31):** I speak in support of the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. As everyone in this House knows, mobile phone technology and the way in which people use mobile phones have evolved significantly over recent years. More importantly, the distraction associated with using a mobile phone while driving is an emerging and serious road safety problem. Driving is a complex task. Anything that takes your hands off the wheel, eyes off the road or mind off the driving task is dangerous. It is dangerous not just for the driver but also for everyone else on the road, including passengers. This was best illustrated to me recently when I made a visit to Kingsgrove North High School.

I had the pleasure of attending a presentation by the Blue Datto Foundation at Kingsgrove North High School. I commend Blue Datto for the work they are doing with our young people who are the future of our road users. I particularly commend the Vassallo family for turning their personal heartache into such a worthwhile and important cause for our community. One of the young instructors had a group of approximately 15 students. We were engaged in a conversation. As that conversation was occurring he introduced a single ball, which was passed between group members. We practised the exercise of passing the ball in a set pattern, remembering who we sent the ball to. Progressively a second and third ball were introduced into the exercise, then more, until 10 balls were being used in the exercise. Simultaneously we tried to remember who we received each ball from and who we threw each ball to.

The importance of the exercise was realised when we were told that each little ball represented a distraction—a distraction in the context of what happens to someone who is driving. It was really easy to receive and throw a single ball in the right order. When multiple things were happening and each person in the group was trying to concentrate on what they were about to receive, people unfortunately dropped the ball. Distractions for a driver might include mobile phones—as we are talking about in the debate on this bill—but would also include passengers talking, music being played in the car and signage that is being driven past.

But through that exercise I saw firsthand how much a young person understood that distractions in their immediate environment in the vehicle change the way they drive. That is what we are talking about today: Mobile phones as distractions. As I just outlined, being distracted while driving—such as by using the mobile phone—increases the risk of a crash. Simply taking your eyes off the road for longer than two seconds doubles the risk of a crash.

Research has found that mobile phone use while driving is associated with an at least fourfold increase in the risk of having a casualty crash and texting, for example, increases crash risk even further. A national survey found that, despite knowing the risk, 64 per cent of people used a mobile phone while driving or riding, much of which is not legal. Furthermore, the NRMA's 2017 report *Can't talk. Driving.* found that almost one-fifth of drivers read texts while driving and that 15 per cent believed they would not get caught. Significantly, the same survey found that over 70 per cent of members ranked illegal mobile phone use as their biggest road safety fear.

Technology in new cars is making it much easier to avoid the behaviour but what is better than simply making it a top priority for the Government and eradicating the behaviour altogether? Even though research tells us that around two-thirds of drivers agree that using a phone while driving is dangerous, we know that many people still do it. In 2018 the New South Wales police issued approximately 37,500 infringement notices for mobile phone use offences. Lives are being lost on New South Wales roads because of drivers illegally using their mobile phones—no-one in this place disputes that. From 2012 to 2018 at least 12 deaths and 212 injuries in New South Wales resulted from crashes where mobile phone use was a factor. We know the actual numbers will be higher than what is reported because it is often difficult for the police to obtain conclusive evidence at crash scenes.

Independent modelling has shown that mobile phone detection cameras could prevent over 100 fatal and serious injury crashes over five years and save our community more than \$120 million. That being said, I do not believe saving money is the overall objective we should be commending in the bill; rather we should commend the objectives of road safety and saving lives. Those are the objectives that members on both sides of this place are working towards. A concern raised by the member for Wyong was the perceived lack of signage around mobile phone detection devices and that the bill could be construed as a revenue raiser rather than being about road safety. I draw to his attention that generic "mobile phone detection device in use" signs will appear throughout the State for the purpose of educating the community and all road users about the change and ensuring that we go about our daily commute in the safest manner possible.

As I did with the Blue Datto story earlier, I update members on another important road safety initiative—bstreetsmart—conducted last month at the Qudos Bank Arena in Homebush over a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. It involved approximately 6,000 high school students around the age of 16. Over the past few years the New South Wales Government has backed the initiative heavily. Members all have constituents who participated in that forum and worked with our emergency responders including the police, fire brigade, State Emergency Service as well as paramedics and some doctors and nursing staff from Westmead Hospital to go through the impacts of unsafe road behaviour.

Just as this bill supports important initiatives, it is of vital importance that the Government and each of us as local members support road safety education projects which change driver behaviour and ensure that the next generation of road users is as safe as possible, for them and their families and friends, but also that all road users continue to be as safe as, if not safer than, they are presently. We all know there is a significant road safety issue. We are ready in this State with the best technology in the world. This legislation will simplify the rules and provide a clear message to drivers to "Get your hand off it"—to get their hands off their phones. This is a clear

opportunity for the Government to improve road safety as part of our journey towards zero road trauma by 2056. I am heartened to hear that the Opposition will be supporting this legislation as we work together "Towards Zero". I commend the bill to the House.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (12:40):** The Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019 amends the Road Transport Act 2013 and the Road Rules 2014 with respect to mobile phone use offences. The bill will help to ensure that mobile phone detection cameras are able to be effectively deployed to further support camera-based enforcement of offences involving mobile phone use while driving. It further amends the Road Rules 2014 to provide that, for a mobile phone use offence, the driver of the vehicle is not committing the offence if the driver complies with a requirement made by a NSW Police Force officer or other authorised officer to hand the phone to that officer. The amendment will allow New South Wales to be the first jurisdiction in Australia to deploy mobile phone detection technology on a permanent basis. This is world-leading technology developed by an Australian company. I am glad that this technology will be used in New South Wales to make our roads safer.

This program has followed NRMA recommendations that sought new camera technology and stringent penalties for individuals who use their phones in an illegal manner. However, the NRMA is opposed to the proposition that there will be no advisory signage to alert motorists when they are approaching a phone detection camera. It notes that warning signs are a critical aspect of enforcement and education strategies, and that these cameras should be treated no differently than any other camera in the road network. The Opposition will advocate for the introduction of signage positioned before and after these cameras in order to increase the effectiveness of these measures. This will ensure that this is about behavioural change, not revenue raising.

The Privacy Commissioner of New South Wales has also made comment and been involved in consultations during the pilot regarding the privacy protection measures incorporated into this program. Since the images are captured from above, there are concerns that individuals may have parts of their bodies exposed. Therefore, the Opposition would like to know how the Government intends to alleviate these concerns, as well as any information regarding how long the images will be stored and who will have access to them. It has been asked: Why do we need such legislation? Why do we need such cameras on our roads? It is very clear: Every road death is more than just a statistic. It is a tragedy, the effects of which ripple out throughout our communities.

The New South Wales road toll, which hit a low of 307 deaths in 2014, has trended higher over the past five years. In 2018 some 347 people were killed. So far this year 294 people have lost their lives on New South Wales roads and, as of 17 September 2019, another 10,770 have been hospitalised. This toll is far too high. Every person who dies on our roads leaves behind loved ones, friends, families, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters who grieve and who may never themselves fully recover from their losses. Those who are injured can face years of rehabilitation even if they are able to recover, possibly losing their independence, their jobs and causing their families further anguish.

Driver distraction by mobile phones has led to too many tragic accidents. Earlier this year Jakob Thornton was sentenced to two years jail for hitting two New South Wales police officers with his van in 2017 while using his phone. Mr Thornton admitted to using his phone to send text messages during the 20 seconds prior to crashing into the New South Wales police officers, which had caused him to stop looking at the road. The crash seriously injured the two officers—senior constables Jonathon Wright and Matthew Foley. Senior Constable Wright had to have the lower section of his right leg amputated and he has suffered from constant pain since the incident. Senior Constable Foley had a titanium rod inserted into his leg to fix some of the damage but he is still suffering from reduced mobility despite this treatment.

Beyond the physical impacts, both officers have spoken of the mental health issues that they have subsequently suffered, including depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. The effects of these accidents never leave the victims: For the rest of their lives they have to live with the consequences of the actions of another. The accident has not only affected the two senior constables; their families have also suffered. Both men have children and wives who were impacted by the crash and resultant health issues. They are just two of the thousands of people whose lives have been upturned by drivers distracted by mobile phones over the past decade. Between 2010 and 2014 seven fatalities and 116 crashes that caused injury were attributed to drivers using mobile phones. The real number of crashes where mobile phone use was a contributing factor is likely to be much higher, given the difficulty in detecting mobile phone use after an accident.

Driver distraction by mobile phones is a pervasive issue in New South Wales. During the trial of mobile phone detection cameras earlier this year over 100,000 drivers were found to be using their mobile phones in a six-month period. Every time a driver looks down at their phone to see a message or a caller ID they take their eyes off the road and, even if it is only for one or two seconds, the risk of a serious accident is increased. A driver travelling at 60 kilometres per hour will travel 16.7 metres in one second—a long distance. If another driver brakes or a child runs out onto the road, 16.7 metres could be the difference between stopping safely and crashing;

between life and death. Driver distraction by mobile phones can drastically increase the risk to road users. In Australia there have not been many comprehensive studies of the impact of driver distraction but in the United States the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute has conducted several studies on the risks associated with distracted drivers.

A 2016 study by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute found that drivers using a mobile phone are 3.6 times more likely to be involved in an accident. If they are texting or reading emails, the risk increases further. However, the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety - Queensland found that drivers, particularly young drivers, underestimate the increased risk caused by answering mobile phones when driving. The lack of understanding in some sections of the community about the risk posed by mobile phone use, points to the need for strong deterrent measures aimed at reducing the upsurge in accidents caused by drivers distracted by their mobile phones and reducing the risk to all motorists to ensure public safety.

As highlighted by the incident involving senior constables Wright and Foley, distracted drivers are particularly dangerous to New South Wales police officers, who have to stand on or near roads in unusual positions following traffic accidents and other incidents. For the safety of our emergency service workers and car recovery workers, the New South Wales Parliament implemented the "Slow Down, Move Over and Give Space" rule. That is an important safety initiative, which I think all members in this Chamber support, but we also need to ensure that drivers are paying enough attention to the road to comply with the law. [*Extension of time*]

During the first three months of operation these cameras will not be used to issue fines. Instead, drivers will receive warning letters. I hope the Government intends to use these cameras widely during this period to ensure that as many drivers as possible are warned about the dangers of using their phones and the increased risk of being caught. It is important that motorists are given the opportunity to change their behaviour and act in a responsible manner before they start to receive fines. This should be a safety measure, not a revenue-raising measure. After the initial three-month grace period drivers will receive fines of \$337 and lose five demerit points. As this is a serious offence which has the ability to ruin lives, five demerit points is an appropriate penalty.

The Opposition will be pursuing a number of recommendations regarding the bill. NSW Labor does not oppose the bill in the Legislative Assembly but will seek to refer the bill to Portfolio Committee No. 6—Transport and Customer Service when it is passed in the Legislative Council. Labor also will move amendments to deal with the concerns, which I listed previously, from the NRMA and the Privacy Commissioner. It is important that we continue to work towards solutions to reduce the New South Wales road toll. This new technology has the potential to reduce the number of distracted drivers on our roads and save lives. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (12:50):** It is an honour to speak in support of the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. Coming from a policing background, road safety is something that runs strong in my heart. Many years ago as a young police officer I attended motor vehicle accidents, mortuaries and hospitals and on many occasions in the early morning hours on a weekend I had the unfortunate experience of knocking on the front door of premises to inform particularly parents of the tragic and horrific circumstances that had impacted their family. As Madam Deputy Speaker would be aware, the New South Wales Government has a strong and proud history in relation to road safety, such as the introduction of seat belts and random breath testing, various speed-reducing initiatives, seat belts on buses and design improvements to the Pacific Highway. The aim of these awareness, education and enforcement programs is to reduce our road toll.

It is a pleasure to speak in support of the bill introduced to the House on 18 September 2019 by the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Mr Andrew Constance. As the Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Justice I am particularly pleased to speak in support of the bill, given that it reflects reforms relating to road safety and driving offences and therefore represents the intersection between the enforcement of the law and the use of our roads. The bill makes amendments to the Road Transport Act 2013 and the Road Rules 2014. These amendments relating to road safety have two core objectives.

Firstly, the bill introduces a deeming provision, which means that where a device is detected by cameras it is deemed to be a mobile phone unless the driver can prove otherwise. This will bring the mobile phone detection camera program into line with other road safety programs where a deeming provision is in place—for example, the speed camera program where the registered owner is deemed to be the driver unless it can be proved otherwise. Secondly, the bill will clarify that an individual is not committing an offence if the driver is complying with a requirement made by a police officer or another authorised officer to hand the mobile phone over to that officer. Importantly, these amendments do not introduce a new offence or ban the use of mobile phones whilst driving. The bill increases the fine for illegal mobile phone usage from the current five demerit points and a \$332 fine, or a \$457 fine if in a school zone, to 10 demerit points during the double demerit period. Full licence holders will still be permitted to use a mobile phone for audio calls, music and navigational functions, provided the phone is secured in a cradle and can be operated without touching the phone, for example, via a car's Bluetooth system.

The bill is not intended to stop drivers from doing anything they might otherwise have done with passengers in the car, such as having a conversation, listening to music on the radio or hearing or seeing directions on a map or street directory. The intent of the bill is to keep drivers off of their devices. The technology used in the mobile phone detection program does not in any way interfere with or monitor any mobile phone signal coming from the vehicle or from the driver's hand. There are some situations where a police officer may request a driver to handle a mobile phone whilst sitting behind the steering wheel. This will be permitted by the Road Rules in acknowledgement of the information that can be and is stored on phones nowadays, such as the new digital driver licences that are being phased in.

Retrieving a digital driver licence and increasing a mobile phone's brightness to ensure that a police officer can read the details will be permitted. This is the only situation where provisional and learner drivers will be permitted to use a mobile phone. This is as an exception to the general rule that they cannot under any circumstances use a mobile phone when driving. Personal information and data relating to drivers and passengers is captured for law enforcement and road safety purposes only. That is an important safeguard to citizens' privacy. The mobile phone detection program has been designed to ensure only the minimum amount of data required to detect and enforce offences is retained. Images captured by the camera that do not contain evidence of an offence will be permanently deleted within one hour.

The jury is well and truly in on mobile phone use when driving, as has been proved by the public response to these amendments when they were published in recent media reports. Holding a mobile phone in your hand to make or receive a phone call while driving is associated with at least a fourfold increase in the risk of a crash. Texting and accessing social media while driving increases the risk further, as this is an even greater distraction from the task of driving. During the pilot period over 100,000 drivers out of 8.5 million surveyed were identified illegally using a mobile phone. This represents a noncompliance rate of around 1.2 per cent and is clearly unacceptable to the community at large. The program received huge community support during the trial. The program aims to send a strong message to the community that illegal mobile phone usage is unsafe and cannot be tolerated and that perpetrators can be caught out anytime and anywhere.

Governments are often told it is time to get back to basics on policy and politics. Nothing is more basic or fundamental than ensuring that are our roads are as safe as possible. From the time we first learn to walk we are told about road safety, as roads are often the most dangerous environment we encounter in our daily lives. Road safety education continues through various programs and initiatives during our schooling years and then road safety advertisements aimed at adults and drivers reinforce the importance of road safety. This bill shows that the Government is committed to improving safety on our roads. I congratulate the Minister for Transport and Roads and the Government for their work on these amendments. I wholeheartedly commend the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019, as introduced by the transport Minister. I encourage all members to support this bill so that we can assist in reducing the tragic and unfortunate circumstances that occur on the roads of this great State.

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (12:58):** I too speak on the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. I acknowledge the member for Seven Hills and all the other members of this House who have served on the front lines and have firsthand experience of the tragic circumstances and trauma associated with motor vehicle accidents. I also acknowledge the members who have worked in caring services, such as nursing and other medical professions, and who also have firsthand experience of motor vehicle accidents. I, too, will be supporting the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019.

I note some of the views put forward by members in this House on behalf of others who are concerned about intrusion into people's privacy and the need to make this an educative process with associated signage on the camera systems and a cultural change. I believe that the Government has the balance right in this case. I fully support the Minister and his staff in the way in which they have drafted the bill. To be frank, I do not know what it will take for many of these car drivers to realise that touching a mobile phone or being distracted in any at all while driving a motor vehicle is high-risk behaviour.

Between 2012 and 2016, 21 people were killed and 307 were seriously injured in road accidents in Lake Macquarie, and between 2017 and 2018 a further 18 were killed. That is the fatality rate in the local area command [LAC], but largely in my electorate, which is 1½ times higher than the New South Wales average. Last June I believe it was, I produced a video about the impact of those road accidents on the local area and I recorded each of the roadside memorials. We released it and talked about the need for people, particularly young people who are overrepresented unfortunately, to be mindful of the impact of road accidents. I know in the moment that will not necessarily happen. But if they know, the moment they hop in the car, they can be detected by one of these amazing artificially intelligent camera systems, which could lead to the loss of money, points and perhaps their licence, it will have a much more significant impact. I am sad that it has come to this, as I am sure we all are.

I am not always in favour of increasing regulation. We have done so much to improve our roads, with better cars and systems, yet we often say we have to reduce the speed limit and so on. Sometimes I think a little bit of nanny stateism comes into it and that has been discussed in the public arena, but that is not the case here. We have to deal here with a very serious problem, an emerging problem that nobody saw coming 10 or 15 years ago, or certainly not enough people saw coming. Lake Macquarie LAC Commander Danny Sullivan, who appeared in the video with me—I was very pleased to work with Danny on this as he understands these issues—tells me that the vast majority of crashes are the result of four things: drink-driving, speeding, not wearing a seatbelt and people using mobile phones.

To personalise this a little, I have been riding motorcycles pretty well all of my life, certainly since I first got my licence when I was 17. I still ride motorcycles. Motorcyclists are more exposed to road trauma than other road users. Motorcyclists are very well aware of car drivers using mobile phones or being distracted in some way. It is just one of the things that we tend to note. Mature riders broaden their vision as to what is happening. One of the things that always pops into my line of vision when drivers are coming towards me is where their eyes are. Way too often I see that their eyes are not on the road. Where are they? They might be looking down or they might be looking to the side. They may also be going around a corner with a mobile phone to their ear. Nothing makes me angrier than to see that because it is just unnecessary.

This is not just an issue for us; it is a big issue in the United States of America. I travel to the United States quite a bit. I have ridden many miles over there and I know it is a really big issue. There has been a massive attempt across our jurisdictions in New South Wales and around Australia, with the "Get your hand off it" and other campaigns, to make people realise how dangerous it is to use a mobile phone while they are driving, but these campaigns just have not worked. Therefore, we have to go to the next stage and make the impost on those people who break the law that much more significant.

I take this opportunity to put in a plug for the Motorcycle Council of NSW. This is Motorcycle Awareness Month and there is a ride on this Thursday. The council has been a big advocate for improved laws in this space, but I say to the Minister that I do not think any of its advocacy foresaw the opportunity to deploy this sort of technology. I think this is great legislation. I do not believe we should be tipping off people. I do not object to having camera detection warning signs, but they should not be mandatory; it should be part of the educative process. If people are doing the wrong thing they should not be given a second chance.

A traffic infringement on the roads that can easily happen is speed creep. If a road has an 80-kilometre-an-hour speed limit it is sometimes very easy to be driving at 85, 87 or 88 kilometres an hour, depending on the circumstances. Sometimes you check your speed because you see a sign at the side of the road warning motorists that a speed camera is ahead, and that is appropriate. But using a mobile phone while driving is a conscious decision that puts the driver, their occupants and other road users including cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians, at increased risk. It is not inadvertent and it cannot be tolerated. I believe this legislation is a very strong step to take—I do not know what else we can do. I acknowledge the Minister and his staff, and I fully support the legislation.

**Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (13:06):** I make a contribution to debate on the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. Consistent with our Future Transport Strategy vision of a trauma-free transport network by 2056, the Government is committed to responding to and supporting technological advances that can play a role in delivering safer travel for the community. We know that illegal mobile phone use is a road safety problem and we also know that some drivers choose to continue to put themselves and others at risk: They simply do not get the message and think they can get away with it.

Transport for NSW has tested the global market to find the best available camera technology. As part of that testing, shortlisted companies were given the opportunity to demonstrate their solution against a range of criteria including clarity of image, clear evidence of offences and ability to ensure privacy protection. This process identified the best-performing solution for further consideration. During the first half of 2019 Transport for NSW worked with the camera provider to pilot the technology in real-world conditions. The pilot involved deploying cameras in two modes: fixed and transportable or trailer mounted.

The technology proved to be reliable and effective in all light and weather conditions, and was able to detect over 100,000 drivers using their phones illegally. This will not surprise the many frustrated motorists who witness this dangerous behaviour daily. The system incorporates a number of cameras and an infra-red flash to detect different illegal mobile phone use behaviours including holding a phone to an ear to talk or texting at waist level. The system uses artificial intelligence software to analyse images and identify likely offenders for review by a trained officer. The images produced are high definition and clearly show the illegal mobile phone use. Like other camera enforcement programs in New South Wales, the public can be assured that all data will be subject to rigorous security measures and processes. The mobile phone detection camera program is the next key step in

delivering on New South Wales' leadership to address driver distraction and road trauma. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (13:09):** I contribute to debate on the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. It is a very sobering thought that there were 353 deaths last year on New South Wales roads. But the figure that is often not spoken about is the number of serious injuries—over 10,000. That tells us there is obviously a problem, and it is important we try to ensure that road safety becomes an absolute priority. A previous speaker said that cars have come a long way. Indeed, you can now buy a car—I was lucky enough to buy one four years ago that was fairly new—with more safety features than you can imagine. On the first car I bought I used to have to pump up the tyres a little extra so it felt like it had power steering. It is very different now.

Nowadays cars have two cameras to make sure that drivers stay in their lane, a number of airbags, automatic braking—everything is designed to try to make the car as safe as possible. It is great that technology has taken us to the point where cars can do that. It is also great that this technology is becoming more and more affordable. Once upon a time those features existed only in expensive, luxury vehicles. Now standard vehicles pretty much come with all those features—whether it is airbags, electronic braking or other safety features. Notwithstanding that, the biggest issue we have is the driver. Car makers can make vehicles as safe as possible but, until vehicles become autonomous and self-driving, somebody must control them. No matter how safe the car is, if the driver is behaving in an unsafe manner they might have an accident. Maybe they will not hurt or kill themselves or somebody else, but we need to change driver behaviour.

That is the crux of this legislation and, in that context, it is good legislation. How do we change the behaviour of drivers? If we are sincere—and I believe the Government is—about trying to reduce the road toll from 350-odd towards zero, we need some important structures. There have been lots of discussions in that regard. In this case, the focus is on mobile phones and driver distractions—such as social media, a text message or a call. Again, vehicles today have technology and devices to assist the driver—whether it is Siri or bluetooth and so on—that make a bit of a difference. However, I worry a great deal when I see too many people in my local area stopping at traffic lights and pulling out their phones to have a bit of a look at what is happening on Facebook, Instagram or whatever it might be—and it is not just young people; I have seen older people do it as well.

Ultimately, we are talking about distractions. How do we stop drivers being distracted? Speakers before me in this debate have cited statistics that show any distraction causes a problem. The member for Lake Macquarie spoke about speed and the difference that one second can make. It takes one second to look down at a phone, one second to be distracted momentarily and one second not to see what is happening on the road. City drivers often travel at very low speeds on Sydney streets and may not travel long distances. However, I recently took a trip with my family to Broken Hill and we drove at 110 kilometres per hour—the speed limit—the entire way. At that speed it would not take much to veer off the road if a driver is distracted—and you can imagine how many metres they are travelling per second.

We are concerned about two issues. The first is the driver. We talk about impact and say we do not want drivers distracted because we do not want them to hurt or kill themselves. But, secondly, we cannot forget about the innocent victims: the people crossing the road, riding a bike or driving properly in oncoming traffic. They are also potential victims. They are innocent victims because they are simply going about their daily business, doing whatever they need to do. We must make sure that we acknowledge them.

I think we have to couch everything we do in the context of road safety. Members on both sides of the House, and I believe the community at large, will agree that road safety is an absolute imperative. Nobody would argue against that. Therefore, we put our argument in the context of road safety, which some of my colleagues have spoken about. We heard earlier from the member for Seven Hills. I thank him for his work as a police officer before coming to this place. He spoke about his difficulty knocking on doors and delivering sad news. Imagine being the person who has to deliver news to a family that they have lost a loved one or that their loved one has lost a limb. I cannot even imagine what that would be like. If we can take away some driver distractions, I think it will help. That is very important.

We are working "Towards Zero". There has to be education and we want to change behaviour. We can change behaviour in two ways: We can change it through consequences and we can change it through education. It will not happen simply by saying that we expect everyone to change their behaviour, full stop. So what processes should we put in place? We must look at ways of changing behaviour. I support the foreshadowed amendments that deal with the privacy commission and also signage. I think erecting signage before and after camera locations, as we have done with mobile speed cameras, will change behaviour. We will also get away from the idea that this is a way to raise revenue, which I know it is not. I strongly urge that we put up some signage and change the way that people behave. Finally, I urge the Minister to consider introducing another education program about the use

of mobile phones in cars, because there is some confusion around drivers pulling over to the side of the road and turning off the car ignition.

**Debate interrupted.**

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

*Members*

#### **MEMBER FOR HEATHCOTE**

**The SPEAKER:** I wish the member for Heathcote all the best for his birthday earlier this week.

*Visitors*

#### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a warm welcome to the Chamber to the year 12 students, parents and teachers of Epping Boys High School from the Ryde school leadership program, guests of the Minister for Customer Service and member for Ryde. I welcome Hugh and Anne Marie Finn, guests of the Government Whip and member for Terrigal. I acknowledge Maryanne Humphries in the public gallery, guest of the member for Wallsend. I also acknowledge and welcome to the gallery today my former colleague Troy Grant, former Minister and former Deputy Premier.

*Announcements*

#### **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPH**

**The SPEAKER:** I inform the House that, as previously advised, an official photograph has been taken. I was thinking of asking for the photograph to be taken at the end of question time, so that everyone behaved, but thank you for behaving at the beginning of question time.

#### **THE MACE**

**The SPEAKER:** I draw members' attention to the mace at the end of the table, which was presented to the Legislative Assembly by the Jewish Board of Deputies on this day 45 years ago.

#### **DEATH OF BRYCE JAMES GAUDRY, FORMER MEMBER FOR NEWCASTLE**

**The SPEAKER:** It is with regret that I inform the House of the death on 4 October 2019 of Bryce James Gaudry, a former member of the Legislative Assembly, who served as the member for Newcastle from 25 May 1991 to 2 March 2007. On behalf of the House, I extend to his family the deep sympathy of the Legislative Assembly on the loss sustained. The death of Bryce James Gaudry will be the subject of a motion of sympathy on a future day.

*Members and officers of the House stood in their places as a mark of respect.*

*Bills*

#### **REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL**

#### **JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2019**

#### **Assent**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of messages from Her Excellency the Governor and His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor assenting to the bills.

*Governor*

#### **ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT**

**The SPEAKER:** I report a message from Her Excellency the Governor regarding the administration of the Government of the State.

*Bills*

#### **PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS (PROHIBITION ON SUPPLY BY RETAILERS) BILL 2019**

#### **First Reading**

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

**The SPEAKER:** I advise the House that I have received a written authority from the Hon. Penny Sharpe, MLC, advising that the member for Port Stephens will have carriage of the bill in this House. I set down the second reading of the bill as an order of the day for tomorrow.

*Question Time*

**WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:25):** My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. The Deputy Premier promised to resign if he did not get a dam built. Given that his Government has not built a single new dam in almost a decade, why is he not handing in his resignation today?

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:26):** I am a religious man, but I now know that there is a God. I was not expecting to get a question today until question number three, but I have got one first up on an issue that this side of the House has a track record on that is worth talking about. I will try to get through it in the very short time we have. I know why those opposite would love for me to resign. They know that Mike Kelly is endorsing me for the Federal seat of Eden-Monaro. They want me to take the seat. He has had enough of Labor, and we know why. You just have to watch Sussex Street to see why he has had enough of Labor. The truth is that when you look at the infrastructure around water in this State over the past eight years—and specifically over the past four years—there have been 175 water infrastructure projects, with \$810 million delivered by this side of the House.

We cannot forget the pipeline to Broken Hill, which the Opposition opposed. During the election they opposed that significant investment by the Government, which included almost half a billion dollars and 270 kilometres of pipeline from Wentworth to Broken Hill to ensure water security for that community. The Opposition opposed it right until the end. Their candidate, who is the mayor of Broken Hill, opposed the pipeline. Without that pipeline Broken Hill would not have any water. Industry was on its knees, the community was on its knees and farmers were on their knees. The Opposition has tried to stop any investment in infrastructure. There is not a water project that it would support.

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** The test will come. On the weekend we announced two significant water projects and a third project. The Opposition will be tested when legislation comes through this House—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129—

**The SPEAKER:** The Deputy Premier is being highly relevant. The member will resume her seat.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** You haven't built a dam in 10 years. You haven't even lodged a DA. You've done nothing.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** That was what I was waiting for. I was waiting for an interjection. In 2011 a \$3 million dam was promised in the small town of Nimmitabel in my electorate of Monaro.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Why didn't you build it?

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** Just hang on—respect this community. The promise was made to support that community, where 150 people had been on stage 6 water restrictions for a decade.

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** It was on our watch that the Lake Wallace Dam in Nimmitabel was delivered. But because of the green and red tape that I am concerned about—which I have spoken about—it was delivered above budget. When you have to spend \$2.5 million to do environmental impact studies at three levels of government you know you have a problem. But the reality is that we delivered a dam that the Opposition said we could not fill, and within three months it was full. Since then that community has never had to be on water restrictions. We built that dam in 2012-13. To say that we have not built any dams is incorrect. The Opposition members are lazy. They read the media but they are not around the detail. And it is not just about dams; it is also about weirs. What about the 60-plus bores that have gone into the ground to support regional communities' water security? What about the 14 pipelines we have built—not only in Broken Hill—such as the one at Malpas Dam?

We put a pipeline into Malpas Dam to connect it to Guyra, which ran out of water. For two months we were trucking water into that community. But there is a great story there. There was a trucking company that delivered milk, but like many others in the dairy industry, it was on its knees because of the drought. We were able to contract that trucking company, which was about to sell its trucks, to deliver water, instead of milk, to Guyra. That contract was worth in excess of \$800,000. We supported a business and made sure Guyra did not run

out of water. However, last week I had the opportunity to go to Malpas Dam, where we officially switched on the new pipeline. Now that community has water security. To double down and ensure that Armidale is protected we also announced \$5.7 million for Puddledock Dam, the dam before Malpas Dam at Armidale. There will be a new pipeline from Puddledock Dam to Armidale to make sure that we can extend the water supply to Armidale for a further six months.

Dams are only one part of the solution. There are pipelines, weirs, bores and underground dams. We need to be recharging aquifers so we do not lose water to evaporation. We need to look at other technology. There is piping. We know that, for example, the loss of water through transmission and evaporation in the Albert Priest Channel is more than 50 per cent of what the channel delivers. We have an opportunity to build a pipeline that will ensure that 100 per cent of that water end ups with communities and irrigators. We have a plan for this State. I noticed that the shadow Minister for the environment criticised the Government's weekend announcement about dams. The main obstacle to building dams in this State will be the Labor Party, backed up by The Greens. They will be tested. Their colours will be seen. We will see what happens in the next few days.

### WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (14:31):** My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on her recent visit to the fires and the Government's announcement of new dams?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:31):** I thank the member for Clarence for his question. I will have more to say about his contribution to his community. But I did want to start by talking about the major water infrastructure announcement the Deputy Premier, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and I made on the weekend. Before I go into the detail on that I want to make a couple of very important points. I am grateful for the courageous decisions this Government made about three or four years ago to invest massively in water infrastructure. At the time we made those announcements those opposite pilloried us. They attacked us for building a pipeline to Broken Hill, as the Deputy Premier mentioned. Had we not invested nearly half a billion dollars into that pipeline—which at the time those opposite said was a waste of money—tens of thousands of people in Broken Hill would not have water today.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Yeah, because you emptied the Menindee Lakes.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** If you listen to the Opposition's interjections you can hear that they still oppose that pipeline. In addition to that, in the past 2½ years alone we have invested in and built approximately 14 pipelines. Not all of them are the size of the one at Broken Hill but, significantly, they are all providing vital water to communities throughout rural and regional New South Wales. In the past few years alone we have approved and sunk 60 bores. Communities that are on level 5 and level 6 restrictions—or even lower level restrictions than that—are relying on the bores that we sunk some years ago. In fact, recently when the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and I were in Tenterfield—notwithstanding the fire that was ripping through that town—the mayor thanked us for the new bore in his community. Members opposite get up and ask questions that demonstrate that they do not understand rural and regional New South Wales and that they do not plan ahead.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I make this important point: In the past few years alone, 60 bores, 14 pipelines, weirs, blockchains and a number of improvements have been made to our water infrastructure. But we know that for 30 years there has not been significant investment in our dams. We know that to secure water now and, more importantly, into the future we need to consider this major water infrastructure. That is why we stood shoulder to shoulder with the Federal Government to announce the expedition of the Wyangala Dam, the Dungowan Dam near Tamworth—which is where we made the announcement—and also feasibility and consideration for the Mole dam on the Queensland border. I say to communities in rural and regional New South Wales: You elected us because we get things done. You elected us because we stand firm. Also, as the Deputy Premier alluded to in his response to the previous question, we look forward to the Labor Party supporting legislation that we will bring to this House in order to support these projects into the future.

Given the deep drought, we know how tough communities are doing it. When you are facing the stress of not having rain, worrying about water but also having natural disasters such as fires come through your communities, we cannot overemphasise how tough some communities are doing it. The Department of Primary Industries and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services are often on the ground in these places, speaking to people who often are at breaking point. It was no different when we went to visit Casino and Rappville just a few days ago. I commend the member for Clarence, Mr Chris Gulaptis. What I witnessed on the weekend, through Mr Gulaptis' good work, was his close connection to his community and how quickly he had supported the efforts

of emergency service workers and volunteers in providing support to a community that was already doing it tough. I pay tribute to Richmond Valley Council and Mayor Rob Mustow for backing in what the State Government is doing. It was very uplifting, when we went to Rappville, to see that a number of State government agencies had already set up shop and made those centres available. [*Extension of time*]

It was heartening to see a number of government agencies were already on the ground working together, whether it is the RFS, the SES, the ambulance service, police, the Department of Primary Industries, mental health workers, Family and Community Services or even volunteers through organisations such as the Red Cross and the chaplaincy service. Unfortunately, the last time I saw a lot of those people was when the Northern Rivers was facing its floods. Here we have a community hit by floods just over a year ago and now suffering the consequences of devastating fires. We extend our condolences to family members for their loss. We met the son of one of the people who had lost their lives and tried to provide him with our support on behalf of this Parliament and the people of the State.

We appreciate the ferocity that we expect this summer to have in relation to emergencies and natural disasters. I want to let every member of the community know that no matter where they live and no matter what their circumstances, we will be there to support them—not just until the fires go out, but also as they rebuild their community. We know from the devastating impact of the fires in Tathra on the South Coast last year that it takes some time to rebuild. But we will be with those communities every step of the way. I take this opportunity to thank every volunteer and every worker who is on the ground supporting those communities.

I also thank the local residents, who were very honest and direct with us. They told us what we needed to hear and we will be responding accordingly. I pay tribute to the community around Rappville and Casino. In relation to coordination, if anybody raises an issue about our emergency services workers not working together and being coordinated I will ask them to come with me next time we go on one of these trips. People should actually experience and learn what they are talking about before they cast judgement. I thank the member for Clarence and his community for their support as well.

#### WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:38):** My question is directed to the Treasurer. Last week the Prime Minister said, "It is State governments that decide when and where dams are built".

**Ms Gladys Berejiklian:** Oh!

**Ms JODI McKAY:** He did say that, Premier. Weren't you listening? Why has the Treasurer failed to allocate a single dollar to a major new dam in any of his budgets?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (14:39):** Last time I checked, that great Snowy transaction backed by The Nationals is investing billions of dollars in infrastructure into regional New South Wales. But most importantly, whilst we went down—

**Mr Ryan Park:** How's Restart NSW going down there?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We will go there, because it is a transaction opposed by the Labor Party. Importantly, when we conducted that transaction, what did the Labor Party do? They were always there for the proceeds but they wanted to spread it all around, pork-barrelling electorates around regional New South Wales. What did we do as part of the billions of dollars of that transaction?

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We invested it into major infrastructure projects to drive productivity and economic growth in regional New South Wales.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** What was one of the key focuses of that transaction? Water security. When you have a Labor Party who comes in here and first off the bat asks that ridiculous question to the Deputy Premier about investing in dams, as in, "Why has this not happened?"—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Building infrastructure—which you have never, ever worked out—takes time.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Exactly, which is why you are not going to build a dam any time soon.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. She will not stand at the table and make a comment.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** My point of order is Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** You have forfeited your right to take a point of order.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Not only that, but when it comes to a track record of building infrastructure in this State—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** I am entitled to take a point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** I am entitled to decline. You may wait a minute or ask another member to take a point of order.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** —\$93 billion over the next four years. I will tell you who you are going to rely on to build infrastructure and dams: It is the Liberal Party and The Nationals.

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order: It is Standing Order 129. The Treasurer was asked about budgeted moneys for dams.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will resume his seat.

**Ms Kate Washington:** He is not answering the question.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will resume his seat. As a matter of form, I ask the Treasurer to resume his seat. There is no point of order; the Treasurer was being highly relevant.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Not only do they oppose dams, but they also have a track record of cancelling dams. If they were in Government, which they never will be—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: It is Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer is being relevant.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** It was a question to the Treasurer—

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. She has a habit of continuing to argue after she has been asked to resume her seat. I have given her leeway, but that is enough. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time. The Treasurer will continue his answer.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** I love the red; obviously the Parliamentary Friends of Trump is still going well in the Parliament. Anyway, we have allocated significant funding. When you build infrastructure, when you build dams, you need to allocate funding. That is exactly what we can do because on this side of the House we manage money well. I will tell you who you do not want out there building dams or any infrastructure of that kind: the Labor Party. I was reading that the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union [CFMMEU]—that very respectable union, the cocaine union—

**Mr Clayton Barr:** Point of order—

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

**Mr Clayton Barr:** I was waiting for the Treasurer to resume his seat. My point of order is Standing Order 129: relevance. This cannot possibly be relevant.

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

**Mr Clayton Barr:** Respectfully, the question was about the budget.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will continue his answer.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We are not only going to fund this infrastructure; we are also going to build it. We will not have the unions involved in that, because the CFMMEU has just come out with a new initiative saying that they will stop work when the temperature hits 28 degrees and the humidity reaches 75. The poor diddums!

**Ms Prue Car:** Point of order—

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We have got a drought. We are certainly not going to bring in the CFMMEU—

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will resume his seat.

**Ms Prue Car:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The member's comments are clearly irrelevant to the question that was asked.

**The SPEAKER:** The Treasurer has made his comments relevant.

**Ms Prue Car:** The question was about budget allocation for dams not about unions.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** We are building these dams in western New South Wales. It is going to be a union no-go zone because we are going to get these projects built. Those opposite are not going to jeopardise the dam-building effort just like they jeopardised the war effort, because those on this side of the House are completely committed to building dams. Those opposite tried to stop the war effort; they are going to try to stop the dam-building effort.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The Liberals and The Nationals are getting on with the job, standing up for regional New South Wales and taking our State forward.

### REGIONAL DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (14:44):** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the Government is working to safeguard regional New South Wales against more drought?

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:45:0):** I think the Leader of the Opposition owes the member for Dubbo an apology; she took his question. I thank the member for Dubbo. I had the opportunity to be in Dubbo last week. It is an area that is growing at an unbelievable rate, organically. It is going to be one of those cities of New South Wales. "Dub Vegas" is the capital of the Central West and the local member is doing a wonderful job, especially after the previous member, the former Deputy Premier, when we saw investment in the Dubbo electorate.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! This is a serious issue.

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** It has been well done by the member for Dubbo; it was nice to be out there. Water was on the minds of many people out there. The trip to Dubbo was part of a broader trip for me right across regional and rural New South Wales. We are doing it tough. Members in this place can yell and scream and carry on. In this place, members are all at fault but when they get out to western New South Wales and they see the pain, anguish, anxiety and hurt they realise that our communities are doing it tough. This issue of dams should be a bipartisan issue. Sometimes members have to put ideology aside, because people in regional and rural New South Wales right now want hope. All they want is hope, that those in Macquarie Street and in Canberra are listening and delivering hope.

That is what these dams stand for. We have identified three dams. The first is a brand-new dam at Dungowan, with 22.5 gigalitres of water, 3½ kilometres down from the existing dam. It is so important for the people of Tamworth and that region. For Mole River the Government has announced \$24 million to begin and fast-track the business case and the scoping studies so we can make a commitment to building an important dam. It has been spoken about and it is time to get on with it. The raising of Wyangala Dam by 10 metres and the improvement to the spillway was an election commitment made by this Government. The Government is now honouring that important election commitment. The time for talk is over. This is a new era of building dams and infrastructure in this State.

Today I am pleading with those opposite to put ideology aside and listen to the people of regional and rural New South Wales. They want to share in the prosperity of this State, but that prosperity cannot be just for those in Sydney; it has to be shared to all corners of this State. Nationals members know what we have in regional and rural New South Wales because we live it each and every day. We live with those communities. Our kids go to the same schools and we drink at the same pubs. We holiday in our regions and I encourage those opposite to come and holiday in our regions.

I acknowledge that there are some members—shadow Ministers on the other side—who are doing the trek out to the bush. I thank them for that because the more of us who get out of Parliament on Macquarie Street and who turn up, listen and engage, the better will be our ability to respond in the way that regional families want us to. They want us to build dams for the future. They want us to learn something from this drought. We do not

seem, ever, to learn from drought. What did we do after the millennium drought? We did not say, "Let's futureproof regional and rural New South Wales by building water infrastructure."

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** Why did those opposite oppose the pipeline to Broken Hill? Why do they oppose infrastructure—the other 14 pipelines?

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** Why do those opposite oppose bores?

**Ms Jodi McKay:** What about the business case?

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** There was a business case. The summary was released to the community, but that community does not care about a business case because they want water. Without that pipeline they would be out of water. Once again, I have called for bipartisanship but we are not getting it today, and we will not get it in the next few days when I know the Minister for Water, Property and Housing will introduce legislation so that we can fast-track this investment. On the weekend the Federal Government came to the table. The Federal Government was not part of the Wyangala Dam investment initiative but it has come to the table and is backing us at Dungowan and Mole River. I commend the Federal Government, Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the Deputy Prime Minister and I commend the Premier and the Treasurer for allowing us, at a time when the budget is under stress because GST and stamp duty is in decline, to prioritise this investment for the bush.

In Macquarie Street we have to give hope to those families that are doing it tough. I was on a property about an hour outside of Cobar. There was a broken farmer there. He put on a brave face but his wife told me the home truths. He was doing it tough and his kids were doing it tough. With the Regional Youth Task Force, kids—not the shiny kids in the regions but the kids who are doing it tough—are representing the regions under the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women. These kids were telling me their stories—the anguish in their families, where they are wagging school to help dad on the farm. These kids are seeing the pain in their parents. But in this House we have to endure the interjections from those opposite, who do not want to have a conversation. [*Extension of time*]

Those opposite ask, "What have you done?" The Government has done 175 projects worth \$810 million over the last four years to make sure that we are able to protect communities from running out of water. The Government is able to do that. The Government has made a \$15 million investment in Cobar—an immediate investment in the Albert Priest Channel so that water is not lost through seepage. That is the kind of investment that this Government is making. This drought has dragged on for more than two years. We are going into years three, four and five in parts of the State. That is why the drought has to be treated as an emergency and why dams have to be built—for the future and to give hope.

This Government wants to build infrastructure to protect our communities so that they do not run out of water today, and it needs the Opposition's support. I am asking for the Opposition's support. If members of the Opposition want it, I will plead for their support. The problem is that those opposite will always put politics in front of the needs of people. The Government will get on with building dams. Why? Because it is so bloody important that we give the people of regional and rural New South Wales the hope that we are listening. The Government will deliver the infrastructure that gives them an opportunity to share in prosperity. The Government has always said that if you want to see prosperity in regional and rural New South Wales just add water. That is what we are doing.

Members on this side of the Chamber know it is going to rain because we are optimists. Generations have endured droughts in regional and rural New South Wales before our time. We know it will rain but when it rains we must capture more, store more and hold more so that we can endure the longer dry periods. That is the lesson of this drought, and we will continue to see the investment in water and to mitigate the effects of drought—around \$3 billion—supporting farmers and regional and rural communities. Can we do more? Yes, we can. That is going to take bipartisanship from the Federal Government, local governments, communities and those opposite. I am today pleading with those opposite to put ideology aside. Those opposite should look at the people of rural and regional New South Wales and say that they will back this Government's plan to bring prosperity to the bush.

#### WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (14:52):** My question is directed to Minister for Water, Property and Housing. New dams take at least five years to build and likely 10 years to fill. How does this provide any hope for the more than 40 towns running out of water right now?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Wyong to order for the second time. Members on both sides of the House will come to order.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (14:52):** What the Deputy Premier and the Premier have said is that communities in regional New South Wales are hurting. They want a bipartisan approach, as we go forward, to ensure that we get water to our communities during this drought. The communities out there also want hope for the future. They want, when the next drought inevitably comes, to have more water security and more capacity to keep communities and enterprises alive. For the past 31 months we have never seen such low inflows into the northern basin of New South Wales, putting Tamworth and Dubbo, followed by Bathurst and Orange, into serious water shortages.

I noticed during the Deputy Premier's speech—I am going to agree with the member for Port Stephens, Kate Washington. She said, "They want water." Yes, they do. They want water. We are investing and over the past four years we have invested \$831 million in projects to ensure they do have water. We come to this House with a plan to keep giving those emergency water pipelines capacity, whether it is bores, whether it is pipelines. We are in a really critical situation, but we need to get through this drought and we must ensure we have plans so that in the next drought many of these communities are not facing these challenges. That is why we need the Opposition's support. We need their support to ensure that we can condense those time frames. If they are serious, they will support us. They will support the people of regional New South Wales. Members opposite cancelled Tillegra Dam.

*[Opposition members interjected.]*

Don't you talk to us! You cancelled Tillegra Dam. Don't you talk to us about projects! Look at that face. You cancelled that dam. You are shameful.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 74. There are charges and allegations going across the Chamber. If the Minister could just concentrate on answering the question, that would be appreciated.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough. The Minister will continue. There is no point of order. The Deputy Premier and the member for Cessnock will cease calling out across the Chamber.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** I acknowledge the interjection by the member for Kogarah during that interlude. He said, "You really want bipartisanship." I am not supposed to call out hypocritical behaviour in the process of this debate today. I support building dams in a much better time frame than what we have had to deal with in the past, because our communities need it and the communities deserve it. If members opposite were a fair dinkum Labor Party, like they need to be, to ensure our communities in regional New South Wales—

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

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** If members opposite were a fair dinkum Labor Party, they would support the workers, the farmers, the labourers and the communities in regional New South Wales.

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

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** That is a very, very simple proposition.

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

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** We do ask for bipartisan support for legislation that we will be bringing to this Chamber—

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

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** —to ensure that we can do both emergency works and plan for dams in the immediate future—

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

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** —so we can put shovels in the ground next year. We want to put shovels in the ground next year for two dam projects in New South Wales.

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

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** If members opposite are fair dinkum, they will support us and not play the penny-ante politics that they are today.

**The SPEAKER:** I remind members for the electorates of Swansea, Keira and Port Stephens that they are on three calls to order. They will be removed from the Chamber if they continue to interject.

#### POLITICAL DONATIONS

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (14:57):** My question is addressed to the Leader of the House and the Minister for Transport and Roads. Will he update the House on the need for electoral funding reform to come before this House and the public interest in supporting these important changes?

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: Standing Order 126 allows questions to be asked of Ministers, not of the Leader of the House. The question insofar as it was addressed to the Leader of the House is out of order.

**The SPEAKER:** I do not need the help of the health Minister.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Insofar as it was addressed to the Leader of the House it is out of order. If the question remains and it is addressed to the Minister it is then out of order because it does not relate to public affairs in any way related to his portfolio.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** There is a plethora of Speakers' rulings—largely conservative Speakers—upholding it.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Liverpool did foreshadow this matter in a letter, which I have responded to. Having spoken with the Clerk, I make this clear: Questions can be asked of the Leader of the House, in his capacity as Leader of the House, about matters that are coming before the House or that are before the House. The second part of the ruling is that I made it clear to the Leader of the House that some of the previous questions, if objected to, may well have been ruled out of order on the basis that this question has now been objected to. However, this question relates specifically to electoral funding reform to come before this House and is therefore within the purview of the Leader of the House. I will allow the question.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (14:59):** I thank the member for Ku-ring-gai for his question. I note the member for Liverpool made a fantastic contribution to the standing and sessional orders committee. I did not quite understand why he left that committee. We might revisit that in another hour.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. That has nothing to do with the question that was asked.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the House will continue. It is very early to take a point of order.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I believe the Premier has shown great leadership in bringing important reforms before the Parliament to ensure the integrity of the State's electoral processes. It is what we all want to see, I would have thought. No-one would want to see someone cheat their way into this place with illegal donations that might have to be repaid. Nobody would want to see that. In showing this leadership the Premier quite rightly said, "Let's put a cap on cash. Let's put a cap on cash donations at \$100". That makes sense. It absolutely makes 100 per cent sense. I want to point out that we are the first Australian State or Territory to go down this path. Here we are leading the nation again—number one. In terms of what we are seeing in other forums beyond the Parliament relating to accountability there is no doubt that there is a need for this action to be introduced by the Premier.

In order to stamp out some of these kinds of practices it is important to reflect on what might be a type of function we might have. I could refer to a function in 2014, 2015 or 2016, but I came across a function that was held on 4 December 2018. We are in October now. Doing the maths, it was about 10 months ago. It is always important to cite examples so that members can understand and contextualise the legislation before Parliament. If a member has a track record of receiving donations under the reportable limit at functions, there is no doubt they will need to consider their position. If I was to pick a particular function—maybe 4 December 2018—that function might have raised about \$8,540 in cash, with no-one making a declaration for those funds. That is just an example that I wanted to flag. Sometimes, given the way in which a member's party might structure their accounts, one might have to make a declaration oneself. I was intrigued to learn about that function and I have just outlined the amount of money that was raised with no reportable donors. We heard about this in 2015, not 2018.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the House is being relevant.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** The question is about ICAC issues that are going to come before the House.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you. The Leader of the House will continue. Please sit down.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** What is not going to come before the House is individual campaign events.

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

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The point I was making was that last December, in recent times—and everyone knows there was an election in March this year.

**Mr David Elliott:** Yep, I was there.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** You were there. I was quite intrigued about this function. The function was titled on the declaration, "Chris Minns - An evening with Jason Yat-sen Li and Jodi McKay".

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. Members will come to order.

**Mr Ryan Park:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. We are happy to have this issue debated. We have no problem with it. They have a litany of people who have ended up at the ICAC. We are happy to have it.

**The SPEAKER:** Standing Order 73 has not been breached at this stage. I will listen very carefully.

**Mr Ryan Park:** Let's bring it on.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Obviously there is going to be a debate. Certainly there will be a debate publicly and there will be a debate here in terms of this important reform. I am glad that the member opposite mentioned the ICAC. How many times do you reckon the member for—

**The SPEAKER:** Members will come to order. I cannot hear the answer. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the second time. I call the member for Auburn to order for the first time. [*Extension of time*]

I will listen to the extra two minutes very carefully. I understand the concern about Standing Order 73. If members are quiet I can listen and I will rule proactively. I am asking members to be quiet.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** The point I was making is that if a member has a track record of donations below the reportable limit involving a lot of cash, then this is what this legislation is designed to stamp out. There is a lot of noise coming from those opposite. We know why, because we are now talking about functions not held in 2015, but functions that were held in the past 12 months. There is no doubt that—

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

**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 130. Clearly the member wants to debate this matter. I know you have ruled on Standing Order 73 as called by the member for Keira.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. You get points for being innovative, but please take your seat.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** If we had a certain member of this Parliament, who might have been mentioned at the corruption watchdog 78 times—

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. This had better be good. If it is not you will be placed on a call to order.

**Mr Greg Warren:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 73.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. I am listening intently.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** My favourite number this week is 78. For a member to be mentioned not five, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 times, but 78 times, they cannot continue to run the "I know nothing" defence like this bloke. That is all we have heard from the member for Kogarah for the past three months.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** Point of order—

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** Of course the declarations are coming in for the last election.

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister will resume his seat.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** My point of order might relate to two standing orders. It relates to Standing Order 73, because the Minister has transgressed there now. Also, according to Standing Order 74 he is inviting some quarrelsome behaviour.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the House has completed his contribution.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** I suggest the Leader of the House move the motion if he wants to keep talking about it.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the House has completed his response.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (15:08):** My question is directed to the Minister for Energy and Environment. Given he has been rolled by Cabinet on Essential Energy, wild horses, river red gums and single-use plastic bags, has he now caved in on environmental protections for dams so that The Nationals can distract from a decade of doing nothing?

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will be heard in silence.

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (15:09):** I thank the shadow Minister for Environment and Heritage for her question. I do not think anyone has told her that we ask the Dixers. Let me say for the benefit of the shadow Minister that any dam proposals will go through a thorough environmental and planning assessment process. I only wish the same could be said with the Australian Labor Party's [ALP] fundraising. The Leader of the Opposition—

**Mr Jihad Dib:** Point of order—

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

**Mr Jihad Dib:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about dams and he has made it about fundraising.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. I am satisfied the Minister is being relevant. Within the first minute of answering there is greater scope to make preliminary comments. The Minister will continue.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** I have answered the question. Any new dam proposal will go through a thorough assessment process. I only wish the ALP's fundraising would do the same. Opposition members talk about cleaning up the environment but the Leader of the Opposition cannot even clean up the ALP. They talk about banning the bag but they cannot even kick out Kaila. The reality is, what does it take to sack a general secretary?

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Minister has strayed entirely from the question. It is about the many times he has been rolled by his own Cabinet.

**The SPEAKER:** I have given the Minister discretion, but he will return to the leave of the question.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** We are committed to ensuring we have a thorough assessment process of any new dam proposals. That is what this Government is about. We are committed to ensuring that our regional and rural communities have access to water when they need it. That is why a thorough process is absolutely necessary, so we can ensure that the dams go where they will deliver the results. The reality is, what does it take for the Leader of the Opposition to sack a general secretary? Wine to ICAC? No. Covering up a crime? No.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. You have ruled on this and the Minister is flouting your ruling.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister returned to the leave of the question. I will allow only slight digressions.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** Talk about rolling, the Leader of the Opposition rolled Kaila Murnain on radio yesterday on *The Ray Hadley Morning Show*. Let us talk about rolling. The truth of the matter is no-one owes more to the general secretary than the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. I ask that you sit him down; he is flouting your ruling. The Minister has been directed a number of times to answer the question asked and he simply is not.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** The question was—was I rolled? Let us talk about rolling because the Leader of the Opposition will not roll the general secretary—fact. What will it take for the Leader of the Opposition to roll the general secretary? Apparently, not covering up a crime, not lying to ICAC. Those are not sackable offences.

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Minister is continuing to flout your ruling about being relevant. He is not being relevant and is entirely wanting to distract

from the question, which relates to the environment protections that he as the environment Minister is now seeing waived in this process of so-called urgency about dams.

**The SPEAKER:** I ask the Minister to return to the leave of the question.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** I have answered the question but while we are on the topic of bags, which one do they want to ban—this one. They want to ban the bag but they do not want to ban the contents of the bag. That is the reality.

**Mr Paul Scully:** Point of order: It is with some reluctance that I rise on Standing Order 129. If the Minister wants to really take on plastic bags, ban them on Thursday when you have the chance, mate.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** The reality is that we are not going to ban the plastic bag on Thursday because it does not go far enough. We need to make sure that we ban straws and we deal with single-use plastics. Unlike those opposite, we are not going to virtue "single use"; we are going to get real action for our environment. They have no credibility. We are talking about cleaning up the environment because they cannot even clean up themselves. The Leader of the Opposition owes her career to the general secretary. That is why she will not sack her.

### BUSHFIRE SEASON

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:15):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Will the Minister update the House on the fires across the State and how the Government is supporting communities to be ready for summer?

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (15:15):** I thank the member for Manly for his interest and his question about what has happened over the course of the past couple of weeks. What we have seen over the past couple of weeks, in an unusually early entry into the bushfire season, is leadership. We have seen leadership from the Premier in two visits to the fire lines. I have seen her, with the Deputy Premier, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, hugging victims of natural disaster. I have seen them stand there and talk to individuals about their specific problems. That has been fantastic leadership. It has been warming, it has been encouraging and it has shown empathy.

I have seen the Deputy Premier dig into the bowels of his department to find money to rebuild infrastructure that was dying. To give credit where credit is due, a couple of weeks ago I stood alongside the member for Lismore, who was up there with me inspecting some of the areas affected by bushfire. But we have also seen a lack of leadership; we have also seen a complete disregard for the volunteers of this State. The Leader of the Opposition has not once tweeted her empathy for the victims of bushfires. The Leader of the Opposition has not once asked to visit the bushfire areas of New South Wales. I can tell the House what she has done—

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order: I ask for that comment to be withdrawn. It is offensive, particularly in relation to this issue.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** It is true.

**The SPEAKER:** The member has asked for it to be withdrawn.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** Mr Speaker, I am not going to withdraw it and I will tell you why. She has been good enough to tweet about climate protesters—

**Mr Chris Minns:** Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 129. Surely there is some issue in this Parliament that is above your grubby innuendo.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Kogarah will resume his seat.

**Mr Chris Minns:** Why do you have to politicise their work?

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** The last bloke to call me a grub was Luke Foley, so let us just get down to that. You want to talk to me about grubby—

**Ms Jo Haylen:** Point of order—

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

**Ms Jo Haylen:** My point of order is Standing Order 129. This is clearly not relevant to the question. I ask the Speaker to bring the Minister back to the question.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, I ask you to return to the leave of the question.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** I am quite happy to. The question was about the support the New South Wales Government is giving the communities of the victims of bushfires. I have just said the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister have shown true leadership in providing the emotional support to these communities, which is so desperately needed in a time of drought, but I am disappointed that when one looks for leadership across the political divide in times like these, we look for leadership across the leadership divide—and to be fair I saw it from the member for Lismore—

**Mr Clayton Barr:** Point of order—

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

**Mr Clayton Barr:** Mr Speaker, I was going to bring your attention to the fact that the clock has not restarted.

**The SPEAKER:** It has restarted now, thank you.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** I saw it from the member for Lismore and I give her that credit. But what I am saying is that we really need something better from the Opposition.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: Mr Speaker—

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

**Ms Jodi McKay:** My point of order is Standing Order 129. I refer the Minister to my tweet of 10 October.

**The SPEAKER:** I have just ruled on that. The Leader of the Opposition will stop right now.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** "My gratitude for our heroic responders and concern for residents still in harm's way".

**The SPEAKER:** That is enough. The Minister and the Leader of the Opposition will sit down.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** You should actually pay attention. If you are going to attack me, get your facts right, you grub.

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time. None of that contribution will be recorded in *Hansard*. The Minister will continue.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** I ask her to withdraw that comment. She called me a grub and I take great offence to that.

**The SPEAKER:** You have just put it in *Hansard*. Are you asking for that to be removed?

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** While we are on personal reflections—

**The SPEAKER:** That is fine. I am happy for the Minister to continue.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** I will not withdraw. In fact, I will repeat it: You are a grub.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** While we are on personal reflections I table to the House a headline from *The Australian* newspaper—by a very effective journalist named Andrew Clennell on 1 July—"Corruption a thing of the past, says ... Jodi McKay". That was four months ago. How are you going with that? Have we passed that, have we?

**Ms Kate Washington:** Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 73. The Minister is referring to a personal reflection in bringing that to this Chamber. That is exactly what Standing Order 73 is designed to stop.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough. I ask the Minister to be wary of Standing Order 73.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** Coming from the first woman in the history of this Parliament to use the f-word, and she wants to cast reflections on me, my goodness gracious—

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I have just ruled. The Minister will continue.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** It is a sad, sad day when a member of this House has to stand up and highlight to a Leader of the Opposition that she has some moral obligation to show—

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. I have just ruled. It had better be good.

**Mr Greg Warren:** My point of order relates to Standing Order Nos 59 and 129. We are talking about volunteers in areas that have been seriously affected and the Minister is shamelessly using this opportunity to attempt to defame the Leader of the Opposition and defame members on this side.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough.

**Mr Greg Warren:** While people are out there dying and being punished, you use this grotesque opportunity to shine through your ugly side.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Campbelltown will remind himself of what happened when he did that last time. I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the first time.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** I am backing the volunteers. I remind the Labor Party that in Victoria it was their union that wanted to can the volunteers and the Volunteer Fire Service—their union. They are taking their instructions from the union at the expense of the volunteers. I do not mind taking criticism from those opposite but I am not going to be criticised for ignoring the volunteers when it was the Victorian Labor Party that wanted to shut down the volunteer firefighting service. I suspect that is why the Leader of the Opposition has not thanked the volunteer firefighters because she is taking her lead from the New South Wales fire brigade union. That is where she is taking her lead from. [*Extension of time*]

**The SPEAKER:** I direct the Minister to make his comments relevant to the question. If he strays from it, I will sit him down.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** As to the comments by the member for Campbelltown about backing up the volunteers, it was this Government, the Premier and the Deputy Premier, that issued the volunteer employment protection order—we have done that; there has been no comment from those opposite calling for it—which will allow volunteers to take time off work to assist the ongoing operations that we are seeing at the moment.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** I will not hear the member's point of order.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** More than 500 volunteers are on the fire line at the moment, acting in very, very difficult circumstances. I would invite any member opposite who wants to join the member for Lismore in going to visit these firefighters on the frontline to do that. I would be delighted to see more members of Parliament showing the sort of empathy that we have seen from the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister but at the moment I have not seen that. We are working, of course, with the Commonwealth to extend natural disaster declarations.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order—

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

**Mr Greg Warren:** My point of order is Standing Order 130. Clearly the Minister wants to debate the issue.

**The SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order. The member will resume his seat. The Minister will continue.

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT:** We have declared and extended the natural disaster declarations, which trigger a range of assistance for communities to get back on their feet. We have seen this. Those communities need our assistance. The Deputy Premier already made very passionate comments this afternoon to the House about why we need to get behind these communities. These bushfires will have ongoing, long-term effects on these communities, not just emotionally but financially as well. That is why we have been giving concessional interest rate loans for small businesses with the Natural Disaster Assistance Scheme, we have given grants through non-profit organisations, freight subsidies and we will see these services rolled out time and time again over the course of the next couple of months as we enter a very dangerous bushfire season. On behalf of members of this House I commend the work done by volunteers, who we should all get behind.

### WORLDPRIDE 2023

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (15:25):** I direct my question to the tourism Minister. How is the New South Wales Government supporting the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras bid for WorldPride in 2023?

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney) (15:25):** I thank the member for Sydney. It is good that question time will finish on a brighter note than we have seen from the Chamber over the last hour or so. Without a doubt, this weekend Sydney will be the major events capital—

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

**Mr STUART AYRES:** We have everything from the Rugby League World Cup 9s, the Everest is taking place and the Constellation Cup. What will really take place on Sunday evening is everyone right across New South Wales and Australia will hold their breath to see whether Sydney is named as the location for the WorldPride event in 2023. For members who may not be aware, WorldPride is an event that has been running every two years since it started in Rome in 2000. In 2019 it will be held in New York, in 2021 it will be held in Copenhagen, and Sydney, with a bid led by the Department of Premier and Cabinet along with Destination NSW, is pitching to bring the WorldPride event here in 2023. We are working very closely with the Commonwealth Government to do so.

This is a significant investment into the New South Wales economy. Deloitte and Sydney Mardi Gras indicate that this event will attract in excess of one million visitors when integrated with the Sydney Mardi Gras, which is a fantastic festival. On top of that, the economic footprint would exceed \$645 million. This creates a very unique opportunity for the WorldPride event because it has never been in the Southern Hemisphere before and it has also never had an opportunity to reach out to people right across the Asia Pacific. This is a particularly important part of the Sydney bid. We have also recognised the opportunity to empower First Nation peoples, particularly through what has already taken place with Sydney Mardi Gras and the opportunity to showcase that on the world stage.

In 2023 the Sydney Mardi Gras will celebrate its forty-fifth anniversary. There is an opportunity to integrate WorldPride into the Mardi Gras to create a 17-day combined anniversary and WorldPride 2023 festival. This is an opportunity to really showcase Sydney and New South Wales' natural landscapes, the Harbour Bridge, our wonderful institutions and art galleries. The renewal of infrastructure right across this city is another example of why we should bring global events like WorldPride to Sydney. It also gives us a very unique and important opportunity to elevate the voices of LGBTIQI people right across the Asia Pacific. This is a part of the world that represents almost 60 per cent of the world's population but is a part of the world that often does not recognise the very challenging environment that LGBTIQI people have to face across these countries.

Australia should take a leadership role in providing an opportunity for people to express their voice, their feelings and do so in a way that Sydney has showcased on the world stage for well in excess of 50 years. This is exactly the type of thing we should do to showcase Sydney as a major events destination and it is a wonderful opportunity to build on the fantastic work that we have had with the Sydney Mardi Gras. We have also seen the depth of experiences that can be built into this. The Mardi Gras now attracts over 700,000 people through Sydney. It is the largest event of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. As I have said before, Sydney is the major events destination. This is an opportunity to bring together social groups and corporate supporters to get behind WorldPride in 2023.

We know Sydney is the best major events city in this country. We have a government that has been investing in new infrastructure. We have a world-class event in the Sydney Mardi Gras, which is celebrating its forty-fifth anniversary in 2023. We have a long track record and a very rich history of supporting gay and lesbian people right across our communities. I know of the personal advocacy from the member for Sydney. I think he will join the bid team in Athens this week. On behalf of all members in the Chamber, I thank him very much for his support in this bid and for his leadership in the community. The Chamber stands as one in this national bid to bring WorldPride to Sydney in 2023.

#### **SYDNEY CBD AND WESTERN HARBOUR PRECINCT**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:29):** I address my question to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is planning for the future of the Sydney CBD and the Western Harbour Precinct?

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (15:30):** I plan to be entirely relevant to the question. On that note, I thank the member for North Shore for her question. She would know better than most about the need for strategic planning to grow cities and suburbs in a way that makes people's lives better and also preserves the beauty of Sydney's iconic harbour. I congratulate her on her advocacy for the acquisition of 1 Henry Lawson Drive to make sure that the harbourfront area around Blues Point is preserved for future generations.

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Oh, that's good news.

**Mr ROB STOKES:** I heard the interjection from the member for Auburn, "Oh, that's good news," as if that is something that should not have been done. Members on this side of the House believe that the harbour foreshore belongs to everyone in New South Wales. We will take every opportunity to acquire lands for that purpose.

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

**Mr ROB STOKES:** That is why as part of our vision for the Western Harbour Precinct we are looking to ensure the whole area, from Rozelle Bay all the way to Woolloomooloo Bay, has a publicly accessible waterfront. The nature, constraints and opportunities in the Pyrmont peninsula and the Western Harbour Precinct are not dissimilar to those faced by areas of the North Shore. Like areas north of the bridge, Pyrmont and the western harbour are both residential precincts and jobs hubs. In particular, with the development of Jacksons Landing over the last decade or so we have seen the Pyrmont peninsula go from a residential population of about 3,000 to about 9,000. It is also typified increasingly by jobs in tourism, in high-tech information technology and education.

Like the North Shore, Pyrmont and the Western Harbour Precinct also have high tourism value with the Powerhouse Museum, Darling Harbour and other attractions. When we are talking about the Eastern Harbour City, it is very clear that the eastern edge of that city is shaped by The Domain and the Royal Botanic Garden. There is a clear landscape break that shapes the eastern edge of the harbour city. However, in relation to the western side of the harbour city there was the container port, the port facilities and a whole range of industrial uses that have been displaced over time. They are mostly gone and have been replaced instead by a whole mismatch of different uses, supported by a whole mismatch of planning controls that have been accreted like some sort of palimpsest over the whole.

There is now a need to identify how we are going to approach the city from the west in this Western Harbour Precinct. There is a great opportunity. The existing context of heritage of different uses provides an incredible canvas to look at how we continue to grow jobs and grow opportunities for people to live in this great part of Sydney adjacent to the CBD. On one side we will have the new 183-metre tall Cockle Bay tower development right next to the CBD, which will provide up to a hectare of new public open space going right over the top of the Western Distributor, uniting the CBD back to the harbour at Darling Harbour.

On the other side we will have the new Sydney Fish Market at Blackwattle Bay, which is set to be visited by more than 5 million people each year as one of Australia's leading tourist attractions and drivers of job creation. More people visit the Sydney Fish Market than visit the Great Barrier Reef. The new fish markets will include public promenades, a ferry wharf and more than 30,000 square metres of new public open space for the community, not to mention the rebuilding of important pedestrian, cycling and open space connections between Glebe, Pyrmont and through the CBD to Woolloomooloo.

Getting the bit in the middle between Cockle Bay and the fish markets done right is both a challenge and an opportunity. That is why the Premier and I recently announced a review by the Greater Sydney Commission [GSC] into the Pyrmont and Western Harbour Precinct. We must begin forward planning for this area to ensure the best planning outcomes for the community of Pyrmont—whether they live or work there, or whether they are one of the many Sydneysiders or international tourists who visit every day. The GSC furnished its report to the Government just two weeks ago. Since then we have accepted all three recommendations and have begun our work to bring this entire mismatch of planning controls together to plan strategically for the region. What the report affirmed is that we must plan for this precinct strategically rather than on a site-by-site basis. [*Extension of time*]

This will ensure the long-term liveability and sustainability of the area. The report also identified the constraints of the region's current public transport offerings and the need to ensure that a whole range of transport options are provided to facilitate access to the precinct. There will be more to say on this in the future, but the Government will seek ways to partner with the community, the council and the private sector to ensure the best outcomes for this area.

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

I have had the opportunity to talk to some of the constituents of the member for Summer Hill about some great ideas for the western part of this precinct. We need to ensure that there is greater co-ordination of large-scale developments in Pyrmont, particularly at the sites identified by the GSC as being capable of supporting greater density, including the Powerhouse, the Bays Precinct, The Star, the Harbourside Shopping Centre, the University of Technology Sydney and the existing and future fish market sites, but most importantly we now have an opportunity to plan for the green infrastructure as well and the open spaces in this area.

We need jobs and we need homes; we need the linkages between them as well. We have an opportunity to plan for pedestrian and cycling connections to link Rozelle Bay with the CBD and we have a chance to work together with council and local residents for the future of Pyrmont, which has not been done in more than 30 years. This is a prime jobs, tourism and residential precinct on the fringe of the CBD, which will become increasingly important as our city grows. We must therefore plan strategically for this area, just like we are doing for other

inner city hubs set for revitalisation—such as the Central Station precinct and also Waterloo—to make sure that, as this city continues to grow, it continues to get better.

*Documents*

**ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Reports**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with section 32 of the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014, I table the report of the Advocate for Children and Young People for the year ended 30 June 2019. I order that the report be printed.

**PARLIAMENTARY ETHICS ADVISER**

**Reports**

**The SPEAKER:** I table the report of the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser for the year ended 30 June 2019. I order that the report be printed.

In accordance with clause 6 of the resolution of the House relating to the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser, I table a copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to the Hon. Troy Grant, former Minister, dated 13 October 2019.

*Committees*

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

**Reports**

**The CLERK:** I announce receipt of the report of the Joint Select Committee on Sydney's Night Time Economy entitled *Sydney's Night Time Economy*, dated September 2019.

*Documents*

**PUBLIC FINANCE AND AUDIT ACT**

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 73C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1982, I announce receipt of the report on State Finances 2018-19, received out of session on 8 October 2019 and authorised to be printed.

**AUDIT OFFICE**

**Reports**

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 12A of the Annual Reports (Statutory bodies) Act 1984, I announce receipt of the report of the Audit Office for the year ended 30 June 2019, received out of session on 4 October 2019 and authorised to be printed.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL**

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 52A of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the report of the Auditor-General entitled *Report on State Finances*, dated 10 October 2019, received out of session on 10 October 2019 and authorised of to be printed.

*Committees*

**LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Reports**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 6/57*, dated 15 October 2019.

I move:

That the report be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** I also table minutes of the committee meeting regarding *Legislation Review Digest No. 5/57*.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

**The Star Casino**

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

**Low-cost Housing and Homelessness**

Petition requesting increased funding for low-cost housing and homelessness services, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Inner-city Ferry Services**

Petition calling on the Government to fast-track project work for ferry wharves and services at Glebe Point; Johnstons Bay, Pyrmont; Woolloomooloo; and Elizabeth Bay, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Pet Shops**

Petition opposing the sale of animals in pet shops, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Route 389 Bus Services**

Petition requesting more reliable 389 bus services, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Pig-dog Hunting Ban**

Petition requesting the banning of pig-dog hunting in New South Wales, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Intensive Duck Factories**

Petition requesting the banning of the operation of intensive duck factories without easily accessible swimming water for ducks, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Powerhouse Museum Ultimo**

Petition requesting the retention of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo and the expansion of museum services to other parts of New South Wales, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Companion Animals on Public Transport**

Petition requesting that companion animals be allowed to travel with their owners on all public transport, including trains, buses, light rail and ferries, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**Owners Corporations and Short-term Letting**

Petition requesting that owners corporations be given the authority to control short-term letting in their buildings, including to place limits beyond State controls or to ban the practice outright, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

*Bills***STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL (NO 2) 2019****First Reading**

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

**Second Reading Speech**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (15:39):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (No 2) 2019 continues the statute law revision program that has been in place for more than 30 years. Statute law bills have featured in most sessions of Parliament since 1984. They are an effective method for making minor policy changes and maintaining the quality of the New South Wales statute book. Schedule 1 to the bill contains policy changes of a minor and uncontroversial nature. These

changes are for proposals that are too inconsequential to warrant a separate amending bill. The schedule contains amendments to 25 Acts and related amendments to three instruments.

Schedule 1 includes an amendment to the Fair Trading Legislation Amendment (Reform) Act 2018. Currently, the Commissioner for Fair Trading approves the form of certificates of insurance and evidence of cover by alternative indemnity products. The amendment transfers that function to the State Insurance Regulatory Authority [SIRA]. As the regulator of the home building compensation scheme, SIRA is the most appropriate entity to approve forms relating to the certificates of insurance and evidence of cover under the Home Building Act 1989. Schedule 1 also includes amendments to remove limitations on access by individuals to their personal information. An amendment to the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 clarifies that any person who has left statutory out-of-home care is entitled to access and possess personal information held by the responsible person or agency during the period of their care.

The proposed amendments to the Workers' Compensation (Dust Diseases) Act 1942 make the amount of funeral expenses compensation payable consistent with the Workers Compensation Act 1987. This change was recommended by the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice's 2018 Review of the Dust Diseases Scheme. The amendments increase the amount of funeral expenses compensation payable in respect of the death of a worker resulting from a dust disease from \$9,000 to \$15,000. This is in line with funeral expenses compensation payable for workers generally.

Schedule 1 also amends the Ombudsman Act 1974 to remove the requirement for the Ombudsman to be under 65 years of age and extend the effect of the amendment to any person currently appointed. This is consistent with the general approach of removing age limits for statutory officers. Schedule 1 contains amendments to a number of Acts in the portfolio of the Minister for Customer Service. These include the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007, Gaming Machines Act 2001, Public Lotteries Act 1996, Registered Clubs Act 1976 and Totalizator Act 1997. The amendments modernise and achieve greater consistency in provisions relating to the service of documents. For example, the amendments provide for service of particular documents by electronic communication in addition to existing methods of service.

Schedule 1 includes amendments to the Betting and Racing Act 1988 and Public Lotteries Act 1996, and further changes to the Totalizator Act 1997. The amendments allow the Secretary of the Department of Customer Service to delegate certain functions to appropriately qualified public service employees or other delegates authorised by regulations. Schedule 1 also amends the Registered Clubs Act 1976. Currently, the Secretary of the Department of Customer Service may carry out investigations and inquiries to determine whether a complaint about the secretary or a member of the governing body of a registered club should be made to the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority.

The amendments ensure those powers remain available in relation to a proposed complaint and after a complaint has been made, right up until the authority determines the complaint. Schedule 1 to the bill amends the Road Transport Act 2013 to replace references in the Act to "former" written-off light and heavy vehicles with "inspected" written-off light and heavy vehicles. This will make the language of the Act consistent with language used in the motor vehicle repair industry and other jurisdictions.

Schedule 2 to the bill deals purely with statute law revision matters consisting of minor technical changes to legislation that Parliamentary Counsel considers are appropriate for inclusion in the bill. Examples of amendments in that schedule are corrections of cross-references, typographical errors and terminology. It also includes amendments arising out of the enactment of other legislation. Schedule 3 to the bill contains general savings, transitional and other provisions. This includes a provision that deals with the effect of amendments on amending provisions. This schedule also includes a provision allowing for regulations to be made that are of a savings or transitional nature. Each amendment included in the bill is explained in detail in explanatory notes included at the beginning of the bill or beneath the amendments.

I hope that members will appreciate the uncontroversial nature of the provisions contained in the bill. If any amendment causes concern or requires clarification, it should be brought to my attention. If necessary, I will arrange for government staff to provide additional information on the matters raised. If any particular matter of concern cannot be resolved and is likely to delay the passage of the bill, the Government is prepared to consider withdrawing the matter from the bill. Withdrawn proposals can also be dealt with in a second bill—using the procedure for splitting bills in the Legislative Council—which can be dealt with in each of the Houses in the same way as an ordinary bill. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

**ROAD TRANSPORT AMENDMENT (MOBILE PHONE DETECTION) BILL 2019****Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:47):** I make a brief contribution to debate on the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. From the outset I acknowledge the great work of the Minister for Transport and Roads on road safety across New South Wales. On the Central Coast, where the beautiful electorate of Terrigal is located, people are very mindful of road safety. The purpose of this bill is to amend transport legislation to further support the rollout of the world-first mobile phone detection camera program in New South Wales before the end of 2019. The bill does a number of things. First, it introduces a deeming provision that states that when a device is picked up by the cameras it is deemed to be a mobile phone unless the driver can prove otherwise. This provision brings the mobile phone detection program into line with other road safety programs where a deeming provision is in place, for example the speed camera program, where the registered owner is deemed to be the driver unless they can prove otherwise.

Second, the bill clarifies that an individual is not committing an offence if the driver is complying with a requirement made by a police officer or other authorised officer to hand the phone to the officer. The Government conducted a six-month trial that checked 8.5 million vehicles. It detected around 100,000 people illegally using their mobile phones while driving. The Government has been absolutely steadfast in saying, "Get your hand off your phone." But some people still are not listening and are putting their lives and, more importantly, the lives of others at risk by continuing that sort of behaviour. But there are consequences to actions, which is why this bill provides for a \$344 fine and five demerit points, which will increase to 10 demerit points during holiday periods and is a very clear indication that the Government has zero tolerance for using a mobile phone while driving a motor vehicle.

I note that the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections is in the Chamber. I am sure he would not want the people who use his holiday rentals to be caught using their phones and get double demerit points during the holidays. He is a regular visitor to the Central Coast so he knows that the M1-F3 is an incredibly busy piece of road. If you take your eyes off the road to look at your mobile phone while you are doing 110 kilometres an hour you cover 30 metres every second or so. The Minister and I have both seen people driving at 110 kilometres an hour who were looking at their mobile phones instead of concentrating on the road. It is quite terrifying.

Statistics show that holding your mobile phone in your hand to make or receive a phone call while driving is associated with at least a fourfold increase in the risk of having a crash. When you are driving at 110 kilometres an hour on a freeway it is not going to end well. Texting or accessing social media and other uses of a phone while driving increases that risk even further. It is an even greater distraction from the task of driving. As I said, the trial period identified 100,000 drivers out of the 8.5 million surveyed using their mobile phones while driving, which represents a non-compliance rate of 1.2 per cent. That is clearly totally unacceptable to this Government.

The bill sends a strong message to drivers across New South Wales that illegal mobile phone usage is always unsafe. It cannot and will not be tolerated; offenders will be caught out anywhere and anytime. There is strong community support for more enforcement to stop illegal mobile phone use, with 80 per cent of those surveyed supporting the use of mobile phone detection cameras. The program rollout will begin this year and expand to include 135 million vehicles checks per year by 2023. This will occur with the use of fixed cameras as well as mobile cameras on trailers. As I said, for those of us who travel up and down the F1-M3 on a regular basis—taking into account heavy vehicle usage and the large volume of traffic going to and from the Central Coast every day—it is vital that commuters obey these laws.

No-one wants to be the cause of a fatality and have to live with the fact that someone has died because they looked at a text message or, even worse, read a social media tag. It is completely unacceptable, especially when it could end a life. I say to all drivers: You will be caught; it is just a matter of time. I acknowledge the great work of the Minister on this bill. He gave a very impassioned description of why this bill is so necessary. I thank Caity McLoughlin from the Minister's office, who was responsible for drafting this very good amendment and legislation. These sorts of amendments save lives. We call on the drivers of New South Wales to be careful on our roads. The last thing we want is for a police officer to knock on somebody's door to tell them that their loved one will not be coming home because they were reading a text message, tweet or Facebook post that cost them their life or the life of another innocent road user.

Unrestricted driver licence holders can still use their mobile phones for audio calls, music and/or navigational functions so long as the phone is secured in a cradle and can be operated without touching it, for example through the car's bluetooth functions and/or Apple CarPlay. I note that the member for Shellharbour—who probably spends almost as much time on the road as I do—is in the Chamber.

These days those devices are already installed in almost every modern vehicle or can be retrofitted to ensure that a driver does not lose concentration on the road. I note that the Minister walked into the Chamber a second ago; I was going to congratulate him on this legislation, which I think the member for Shellharbour will add to. This is a very good amendment. I thank Katie in the Minister's office for her work; she can rest comfortably in the knowledge that the legislation she has helped draft will go a long way towards saving people's lives on the roads of New South Wales. Obviously I am firmly in support of this wonderful legislation and I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (15:55):** Like my Labor colleagues, whilst I support the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019 and agree we should make use of all appropriate technologies that would increase safety on our roads, I have some concerns. Firstly, I make absolutely clear that I support the goals of the bill. There can be no doubt that this legislation is desperately needed. For example, between 2012 and 2018 in New South Wales there were 158 casualty crashes involving a driver or rider using a phone, which resulted in 12 deaths and 212 injuries. For obvious reasons, these figures are underreported. In 2017 New South Wales police handed out 42,000 fines to drivers caught using their mobile phones. It is absolutely astounding that there were so many. Earlier this year the six-month pilot of mobile phone detection cameras caught more than double that figure. Of the 8.5 million vehicles that were checked, 100,000 drivers were using their mobile phones illegally.

Studies have shown that using a mobile phone while driving can increase the risk of crashing by up to four times. If a driver takes their eyes off the road for just two seconds to look at their phone while driving at 60 kilometres per hour, they are technically driving blind for 33 metres. A lot of these statistics have been covered in the debate already, but they bear repeating and help to illustrate the nature and magnitude of the issue we are dealing with. We need real action and change on this issue to protect the safety of our State's citizens. This bill seeks to do just that, which is why I and my Labor colleagues will support it. However, as I said earlier, I have some concerns. My primary concern relates to the calls for signage before and after the cameras.

Earlier in this debate the member for Miranda stated that generic signage across the State would advertise the use of mobile phone detection cameras. Whilst generic signage across the State is an important first step, specific advisory signs should be installed both before and after a camera's location to alert drivers of the camera's presence. If these cameras are intended to increase safety and not to raise revenue, the Government should have no issue with installing warning signs to alert drivers, just as it has done with mobile speed cameras. Warning signs ensure equity of knowledge for all drivers. More signs will equate to more coverage of this very important message and, therefore, fewer drivers using their phones and fewer risks on our roads. We need to encourage widespread behavioural change, which will not be easy and probably will not be quick. Appropriate signage at intersections will help to do just that.

On that point, I would like to know the level of coverage this change to our State's road rules will receive prior to coming into effect. Unfortunately, the illegal use of mobile phones is so widespread in our community that it will be hard to curb this pattern. For some people, the habit will be very hard to break. We will need widespread messaging and strong campaigning to support the re-education of our State's drivers, and that will not happen overnight. Mobile phone usage in our society is still evolving. Our increasing dependence on them has crept into our cars and onto our roads, and is compromising the safety of our State's citizens. Our relationship with our phones is increasingly close and increasingly complex, so proper warning signs and a full program of widespread messaging and re-education are necessities at this point.

The mass incidence of drivers' mobile phone use, as proven in the trial or pilot for this program, leads me to be concerned with how Revenue NSW and other government bodies will cope with the very rapid growth in fines being issued once this legislation comes into effect. I would like an assurance that government departments will be properly resourced and possibly expanded temporarily when the cameras are switched on and fines begin to be issued. I understand that the Government will institute a grace period for the cameras: Over a three-month period, drivers who are photographed using their phones illegally will receive warnings rather than fines. We must therefore ensure that the cameras are widespread in those three months and that they are able to reach as many drivers who are currently doing the wrong thing as possible during that period. I repeat that the legislation must be accompanied by techniques such as signage and media campaigns to re-educate the public, due to how shockingly widespread the issue is.

I share the concerns of other members who spoke prior to me about possible privacy issues that will stem from the introduction of these cameras. How does the Government intend to overcome issues regarding the angle of the photos and the likelihood that they may be revealing for some drivers? For how long will the images be stored? Where will they be stored? How will they be protected? In closing, I agree that we must make use of every tool at our disposal to increase safety on our roads and decrease illegal mobile phone use while driving. As such, I support the bill. But I add my support to the calls for warning or advisory signs at camera locations to promote

real behavioural change, and ensure that this legislation is accepted by the community and viewed as the safety program that it is designed to be. I hope that this concern and the concerns already explored by me and my colleagues will be properly amended in the Legislative Council. I support the bill and commend it to the House.

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:01):** I speak in debate on the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. We know that the use of smartphones increases a driver's risk of crashing by a factor of four. That is an unacceptable risk. Contemporary changes in the technology we use every day necessitate legislative reform to ensure the safety of all New South Wales residents on the roads, whether they are drivers, passengers, cyclists or pedestrians. Improvements in safety are undoubtedly a crucial imperative and should always be supported. However, the importance of education existing within and alongside any legislative measures is paramount.

The NRMA has noted that any measure of this kind should include the installation of advisory signage before and after the cameras. It has also made clear that it opposes the introduction of legislation without correct signage being included. In the same way as drivers are notified of upcoming speed cameras, they must also be notified about the monitoring of mobile device usage to ensure that this bill is truly about improving road safety and encouraging behavioural change, not just revenue raising from communities that are already grappling with the rising cost of living. Furthermore, with the inevitable increase of offences due to the introduction of mobile device detection, the Government needs to confirm that it has established adequate capacity for fine processing.

It is also worth noting that despite the excellent work undertaken by the NSW Police Force to tackle road safety, in many electorates—particularly those in regions such as mine—our police force is under extreme pressure and at times understaffed. This under-resourcing inevitably has a significant impact on road safety in our area. Our police are an invaluable resource, not only on the roads but also in the classrooms and communities where this education will be rolled out. Contributing to the education of current and future motorists on best practice driving and overall road safety is another quiver in the bow of our police, who are already doing amazing work as education officers. Our New South Wales police should be commended for their advocacy in these spaces, particularly among our new generation of drivers, who do not remember a world before smartphones. I would like to see the expansion of this work in schools as a preventative measure, alongside the implementation of mobile device detection and enforcement.

I wholeheartedly support the improvement of safety for all road users, but achieving this requires a more considered approach than enforcement alone. The education of all members of our community on the additional dangers that these mobile devices represent is essential to preventing drivers from participating in this risk-taking behaviour. This education must include adequate road signage about detection cameras, otherwise this bill will fail to ensure the results in behavioural change that it is seeking. Given the history of the office of the Minister for Customer Service, I would also like clarification about how the Government intends to use and monitor these images, how long the images will be stored and who will have access to those images. I would also like it to be noted that the Law Society of New South Wales has indicated that it does not support the reversal of the onus of proof in the bill or the legislative deeming in this bill.

I point out that between July 2014 and July 2015 more than 35,300 fines for the use of handheld mobile phones were issued in New South Wales. Yet this legislation is being introduced in 2019. Between 2010 and 2014 there were 236 crashes, including several fatal crashes. Today I share the experience of my mum and my sister when they were on a trip to my house from Newcastle. They were travelling on a major road—not on the highway—when they saw a car in front of them swerve to the wrong side of the road and have a head-on collision with another car. My sister, who is a nurse, saw the accident happen and ran straight over to the accident scene. She could not get in the driver's window so she climbed in through the passenger side window. The young girl in the accident had her phone in her lap. She was gurgling and my sister, Trudii, lifted up her head so that she could continue to breathe. The ambulance arrived and Trudii provided all the support she possibly could. The girl was taken to hospital where she later died.

There was a lovely story attached to this. My sister is a registered nurse and she identified the name of the girl on a patient she was working with later in her career. She spoke to the dad of the girl and was able to reassure him that his daughter had received the best possible care until the ambulance arrived. Our hearts go out to all of those who have loved ones who have been harmed because people have used mobile phones while they were driving. We cannot stress enough the importance of further education so that we do not get to that point. I have looked at the website, but despite all this information there have only been two campaigns—the Get Your Hand Off It campaign and the Know the Rules campaign. The number of demerit points for mobile phone use has gone up from four points to five points, but I wonder how many people actually know about that. That is not about education; it is just another penalty that has been put in place.

I point out to communities across New South Wales that whilst driving or riding you can only use your phone if the phone is in a cradle fixed to your vehicle and it can be operated without touching the phone. That

includes its use as an audio-playing device or as a navigation device. I think we need further education about that. In posher cars than my Toyota Corolla there is a device that is not a phone—it sits behind the phone. I have watched many people talk into devices like that, receive messages and reply to messages, but according to the rules that is illegal. So we need additional clarification because people I know are using those devices thinking that they are doing the right thing out there on the roads by not touching their devices, but using Siri or the technology available in their cars.

I point out again that 8.5 million drivers were checked and over 100,000 drivers were detected using their mobile phones illegally. We must pass this legislation, but we must also provide the education that comes with it. I reiterate that, given the number of offences that we expect to be detected, we need to ensure that the fine-processing capacity is sufficient to manage this change with integrity. I support the referral of this bill to a portfolio committee when it goes to the Legislative Council, and encourage ongoing education programs and parallel additional staff to handle the additional processing that this bill will create. It is not worth the risk: Get Your Hand Off It.

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (16:08):** I speak on the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019, which every member of this House should get behind because it has a very simple message about making our roads safer. The decision by someone to pick up a phone when they are behind the wheel of a car can have fatal consequences. It does not matter whether it is on a busy motorway or on an isolated road in the bush, there is no excuse to use a phone illegally. Everyone needs to accept that.

As Minister for Regional Transport and Roads I am updated on the State's road toll every day, which is pretty confronting. Every day I get a text message. Every day I am informed of a life that is lost on the roads of our State—the life of an elderly person, a young person or the lives of family members. These deaths have devastating impacts in local communities. But my experience is nothing when compared to the experiences of those in our emergency services. They are confronted daily by accidents and road incidents. In the country it can be more horrific because quite often the first responders who turn up to road incidents know the individuals. It may be somebody from the local community. There may be a young child in the car accident who is a student at the local school. It may be a teenager who belongs to the local football team. Accidents like these have ripple effects on local communities and a wider impact on many individuals. So far this year we have lost 295 lives on our roads. Of these accidents, 216 have occurred outside Sydney, which means that two-thirds of the road accident fatalities are occurring in the bush.

I have been talking about fatal accidents only, not about injuries that are sustained in crashes. If you have a look at the number—216 people—it is the equivalent to the population of some small country towns. Everybody should find that confronting. In the past six years at least 12 people have died on New South Wales roads in crashes where mobile phone use was a factor and hundreds more have been injured—and those are just the ones that we know about. The statistics are pretty clear: If you take your eyes off the road for two seconds at a speed of 100 kilometres an hour you will travel 55 metres virtually blind. If you take your eyes off the road for longer than two seconds you will double your risk of having a crash. If you hold your phone in your hand while driving to take or make a phone call your risk of having a crash increases fourfold.

More than 70 per cent of drivers rank illegal phone use as the biggest threat to road safety, yet almost 20 per cent of drivers read texts when driving. They know it is dangerous but they do it anyway, because they think that they will not get caught, they think that they are doing it carefully and they think that they are the exception to the rule. The culture of using a mobile phone while driving has to stop. There is no exception to this rule. Drivers who use their mobile phones illegally will get caught and will be fined. Drivers using their mobile phones are not only putting themselves at risk; they are putting their passengers and every other motorist on the road at risk.

Road safety is everybody's responsibility, which is why this bill is important in ensuring that people do not use mobile phones while driving. During our six-month trial more than 100,000 people were caught out in just two locations. People were seen with phones in their laps, heads down, texting as they drove. People were holding phones to their ears as they were driving along. There were people who did not even have two hands on the wheel—and no hands on the wheel. This is confronting. This is serious. That is why we have introduced this bill. We all need to work towards driving behavioural change. We need to remind people of their responsibility to others every time they get behind the wheel of a car.

I know that some parts of the community will want signage around mobile phone detection cameras to alert motorists, as occurs with fixed and mobile speed cameras. However, we know that if people think they can game the system they will not change their behaviour. We need people to know that using a mobile phone while driving is illegal. It puts other people at risk, puts yourself at risk and puts at risk those precious individuals who are the cargo in your car. This is not about making money; it is about saving lives. I am done with giving people

multiple warnings or ways to avoid doing the right thing. The reality is that there is absolutely no reason you need to touch your phone while driving. Yet some people continue to do it.

Those who get a penalty notice in future will wish they had put the phone away. They will wish that they put it in the glove box or the boot of the car. But that is nothing compared with the regret they would feel if they hit someone. No text or call is that important. Independent modelling has shown that our mobile phone detection cameras could prevent around 100 fatal and serious injury crashes over five years. As the Minister for Transport and Roads has already noted in this House, this bill is genuinely about saving lives. It is something I am pleased to work on with the Minister, the Hon. Andrew Constance, to ensure that we are doing our best in this space to save the lives of people on our State's roads. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (16:16):** The Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019 amends the Road Transport Act 2013 to expand provisions outlawing the use of mobile phone devices whilst driving. It shifts the onus of proof from enforcement agencies to drivers, establishing the presumption that objects held by or resting on the driver in a photograph taken by a mobile phone camera are deemed to be a mobile phone for the purposes of enforcement. In plain language, if a mobile phone camera takes a picture of a driver with an object on their lap or in their hand it will be up to the driver to prove that it is not a mobile phone if they want to avoid loss of demerit points and a fine. The bill also amends the Road Rules 2014 to exempt drivers from committing an offence if they do so under instruction by police.

Labor supports measures to improve road safety, as foreshadowed by the shadow Minister for Rural Roads. However, we will seek to address deficiencies in the bill by moving amendments in the other place. We look forward to comprehensive consideration of the bill through the Committee process. I will focus on two clear deficiencies with the bill. First, the bill shifts the onus of proof to accused drivers, which fundamentally bucks core tenets underpinning our judicial system. Secondly, the Opposition objects to the blatant revenue-raising element in the bill. The Minister for Transport and Roads is ignoring best practice in failing to install proper warning signage before and after mobile phone cameras.

As the Minister reported in his second reading speech, 158 crashes were recorded in New South Wales between 2012 and 2018 where there was a clear link between the accident and the use of a mobile phone. Some 212 people were injured and, tragically, 12 people lost their lives. Protecting the lives of drivers and their families is paramount, as is the wellbeing of pedestrians and cyclists who are often caught up in these accidents. Road accident statistics indicate that accidents involving cyclists and pedestrians have risen by 1 per cent in the past 10 years in Australia. Cyclists and pedestrians are respectively involved in 3 per cent and 14 per cent of all accidents. The same statistics show that roughly 5 per cent of all accidents are caused by drivers not paying attention, including those using mobile phone devices while driving.

It is fair that those who are found illegally using their mobile phones should be subject to penalty. For decades we have heard the messages that drivers need to "Get their hand off it" and that no call or text message is worth the risk to your life or the lives of the passengers in your car. Those awareness campaigns are important and they should continue in conjunction with enforcement. Decades of experience show that this approach works. People will remember countless speeding campaigns such as the "pinkie" campaign that told male drivers in particular: "Speeding. No one thinks big of you". Those campaigns are an important element in changing driver behaviour.

The Government held a pilot program to test mobile phone cameras from January to June this year. In that time 8.5 million vehicles were checked and more than 100,000 people were detected using their mobile phones illegally. It is clear that action must be taken and that this problem is significant. I note that in his second reading speech the Minister assured the Parliament that the Government tested the global market and adopted the best available camera technology to conduct the trial early this year. Reportedly, high-definition cameras will be placed at 45 hotspots across the State, at a total cost of \$88 million. They are able to detect phone use irrespective of the weather, light or the speed of the driver. Having the best available technology is a good thing. However, it must be used in conjunction with best practice.

The bill undermines some of the tenets of our legal framework—I mentioned earlier the onus of proof. In this case, rather than a police officer or Revenue NSW needing to prove that an object in the driver's hand or lap is a mobile phone, the driver will need to prove otherwise. Our judicial system rests upon the critical tenet that any accused person is innocent until proven guilty. The current drafting of the bill undermines that tenet and I believe it should be reconsidered. The Law Society of New South Wales has indicated the need for amendment in this area. In its material in relation to the bill it states:

The provision as proposed abrogates the prosecution's responsibility to prove an offence and instead places an unnecessary and unfair evidentiary burden on an individual to prove that they are innocent.

In addition, we are concerned that this amendment may, in practice, lead to additional disputes in court, resulting in an increase in work and costs for the Local Court.

I hope that the Committee process in the other place addresses those concerns. As I stated earlier, Labor will be seeking amendment in this regard. Practical considerations also need to be given to implementation. A massive number of drivers engage in this unsafe practice. Given the results of the trial, there is a strong likelihood that Revenue NSW and other agencies will see a huge increase in pressure on their processing capacities. In fact, the Government has said that it has a plan to expand progressively the capacity of those agencies to conduct 135 million vehicle checks by 2023. In the push to process those offences I am concerned that oversight will slip and innocent drivers may be penalised wrongfully.

I note that the Minister gave assurances in his second reading speech that photographs will not be the only screen used to enforce offences and that the final arbiter will be an appropriately trained officer. I raise the same concern I did earlier: Given the extraordinary influx of fines and offences that evidence suggests we will see following enactment of the bill, will the Minister guarantee that the department will be able to meet the increased demands on processing capacity and workload? I contend that this is going to be very difficult. If we want a system that is based on integrity and fairness, the last thing we need is for the onus of proof to be shifted onto drivers.

The bill should be about changing driver behaviour and saving lives. However, the community has rightly raised concerns that this may not be the Minister's prime objective here. The Minister clearly sees a huge opportunity to line the State's coffers in what might be the biggest revenue-raising exercise we have seen in quite some time. For reference, the current penalty for using a mobile phone while driving is five demerit points or \$344—not an insignificant fine. The bill does not currently provide for any signage when a driver approaches a mobile phone detection camera or after they pass a mobile phone detection camera. Advisory signage is a critical component of raising road safety standards and awareness. It is crystal clear that their inclusion in this program would improve road safety across the board. The NRMA has been the strongest advocate on this front. It developed the key 2017 recommendations on which this legislation is based. In response to the failure by the Government to include warning signage in the scheme, the NRMA said:

We want people to change their behaviour behind the wheel—not three weeks later when they get the fine in the mail. Warning signs are a vital part of the enforcement and education mix.

If the Minister is serious about changing driver behaviour—and I think all members would agree that this is about changing driver behaviour—then he should heed advice from the experts and ensure that warning signage is included before and after a driver passes a mobile phone detection camera. Finally, I note the issue raised by my colleagues about privacy. The community is rightly concerned about the Government's blatant disregard of privacy, particularly about information pertaining to road infringements. The technology requires photographs to be taken of drivers' laps from above and there is little clarity around how the photographs will be accessed, stored and disposed of.

This is important because the positioning of the camera means that photographs are taken from above sensitive body areas, including down drivers' shirts and of their laps. We need to know who will see those photographs, where they will be stored and how they will be disposed of. I am pleased that the Privacy Commissioner is involved in the development of the scheme in this respect but urge the Minister to clarify the Government's response in his speech in reply to the bill before the Parliament this afternoon. Let us protect the safety of drivers and road users. Let us use best-practice technology in education and changing driver behaviour and not miss the opportunity to make sure that we strengthen the integrity and fairness of our road rules, and not at the expense of revenue raising. Let us get this legislation right.

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (16:26):** In addressing the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019, I echo the concerns of The Greens about the use of mobile phones when driving cars. Of course this is a recipe for disaster. Anyone who seeks to use a mobile phone to take a call, make a call or send a text whilst driving is putting at risk not only themselves but also other road users and their passengers. We acknowledge that the Government is seeking to address this with the bill. However, we believe there are shortcomings in the bill that need to be addressed before it can deal effectively with mobile phone detection camera use. I echo the comments of the Law Society that we are seeing something very different in the bill—the onus of proof is being reversed. The Law Society states:

The provision as proposed abrogates the prosecution's responsibility to prove an offence and instead places an unnecessary and unfair evidentiary burden on an individual to prove that they are innocent.

In addition, we are concerned that this amendment may, in practice, lead to additional disputes in court, resulting in an increase in work and costs for the Local Court. Members of the public will bear the cost of attending court in terms of lost work and engaging legal representation.

The issue raised by the Law Society is important and valid, and should be considered by the Parliament and the Government. We support the NRMA's view that there should be signage before and after mobile phone detection camera locations. As has been raised previously in the debate today, the role of signage in changing driver behaviour is critical. If signage were introduced it would silence those people who will make the call that this is simply about revenue raising. Finally, when it comes to the privacy, capture, storage, retention and disposal of data, it is important that this is undertaken using the strictest privacy procedures possible. The Minister for Regional Transport and Roads receives text messages when the road toll increases.

It is true that we have an horrific road toll. It is something we need to address and the Government's "Towards Zero" campaign is a part of that. Deaths caused by accidents contribute significantly to the road toll. They are incredibly damaging to all those involved. But there is a second road toll, and that is the toll from air pollution in our community. Melbourne University's Energy Institute collated information on international and domestic data and put together a report that estimated that last year, while 1,224 Australians lost their lives due to vehicle accidents, about 1,715 died as a result of vehicle pollution.

We know from this study and others that vehicle pollution leads to more deaths than do vehicle accidents. But in Australia we are doing minimal work to address vehicle pollution. We have the filthiest fuel standards and the dirtiest fuel in the OECD. Mexico used to be at the bottom of the rankings and was a laughing stock but now it is Australia, especially regarding sulphur in our fuel. The bill attempts to prevent road accidents, which is important. But is it a pity that no Minister gets a text message about those people who have died due to air pollution. Air pollution from vehicle exhausts is a mixture comprising a number of different key pollutants, including particulate matter, ground-level ozone, oxides of nitrogen, carbon monoxide and sulphur dioxide.

A fantastic opinion piece by Behyad Jafari about electric vehicles revealed that one of the most important ways to deal with the toxic pollution that comes from internal combustion engines, particularly diesel vehicles with PM2.5 and PM10 particulate matter, is to move to electric vehicles. That can make a significant difference when it comes to the two horrific road tolls in Australia: from accidents and from air pollution. The bill is an important part of addressing the distractions and the activities that can lead to road accidents not only in our cities but also in regional and rural New South Wales. However, it is important that we do not forget the air pollution toll, particularly on young people and those with asthma and other chronic lung issues. We must do everything we can to reduce the road toll from air pollution. Electric vehicles are a very important part of the solution, and around the world significant steps are being taken in that regard.

In Europe and in the United States very strong measures are being taken around low-emission vehicles and reducing emissions from combustion engines. The United Kingdom has taken some very strong steps to reduce emissions. In Europe there is significant take-up of electric vehicles, which is particularly important as those markets are dominated by diesel vehicles. Last year in the United Kingdom legislation was passed to ensure that 50 per cent of new car sales are ultra-low emission by 2030. In Australia we are going in the wrong direction. The Greens think this bill is important. In our view, removing the deeming provisions and introducing signage is an important way to improve the bill. I call on the Government to think carefully and to work with its Federal counterparts to make sure we clean the air in our State because we know there are more deaths caused by vehicle pollution than by traffic accidents. That is something we need to improve on.

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:33):** I also contribute to debate on the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019 on behalf of The Greens. As a regional MP, I know more than most how dangerous it is to touch your phone while driving on our country roads. The Greens welcome the strong measures introduced to address this issue and the technology that the police have developed. That is a very positive move because members of my community tell me anecdotally that they see this activity a lot and it is very disturbing. However, we are concerned—and we will be raising these concerns in the other place—about the onus of proof shifting to the driver. We do not see deeming provisions all that often. The main reason for those rare cases is police argue that without such laws they would find it more difficult to prosecute people. Our concern about the reversal of the onus of proof in this case is that it will shift responsibility to the court and to members of the community. Shifting it from one area to another does not sound like the way to go.

Many groups, including Civil Liberties Australia, argue that reversing the onus is dangerous because it leads to more people who are innocent being found guilty, especially those who do not have the money to fight against a well-resourced prosecution. Also, many will end up pleading guilty because they simply cannot prove their innocence or cannot afford to prove their innocence. It gives the State too much power. The bill amends the Road Transport Act and Road Rules 2014 to improve road safety by supporting the prosecution of camera-detected mobile phone use offences. 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. Those images are referred for further review and verification by appropriately trained personnel. Where does the expertise lie in terms of identifying a breach of the Road Transport Act and road rules? The expertise lies with the police in analysing that camera shot, the high-resolution image. Whilst I do not want to see police prosecutors spending their lives trying to prove these cases, with speeding and parking offences the defence of honest and reasonable mistake of fact is rarely used because members of the community then have to go to court and dispute it.

I do not believe we are talking about a huge number of cases. This deeming provision makes an assumption that one is guilty. The golden thread in our legal system is that one is innocent until proven guilty. The judiciary and the police are resourced to prove that someone is a crook—or in this case that someone is doing something dangerous that threatens the community—not the other way around. Whilst we recognise the intention, given the high quality of the images the camera technology produces and the process of review and verification, the Law Society of New South Wales and The Greens query the need for a deeming provision. As we have heard from the Law Society, the provision places the responsibility to disprove an offence on the individual. We are concerned that, in practice, the amendment may lead to additional disputes in court, resulting in an increase in work and cost for the Local Court.

Our courts are clogged to the maximum and the idea that citizens must rebut that presumption—a complete reversal of the presumption—is of concern. How does a person prove that in real time? The technology and expertise lie with the police. The Greens will move amendments to the bill in the other place. We hope the Minister will accept that the deeming aspect is unfair and will defeat our attempts to make it easier for the police to fine people. Offending drivers will lose demerit points and have to pay a significant fine—we have no issue with that whatsoever. But we raise those practical concerns and will move amendments in the other place to address them.

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (16:39):** In reply: I thank all members who have contributed to debate on the Road Transport Amendment (Mobile Phone Detection) Bill 2019. I will address some of the issues that affect my dear friends in the Left. I will also go to the heart of some of the issues that have been raised in debate as I sense that all members support the intent of what is sought to be achieved by using mobile phone detection cameras. In relation to advisory signage, I take issue with what has been said. One of the reasons we wanted to generate a culture of mobile phone use being as dangerous as drink-driving, for example, is we need people to think the moment they back out of their driveway there is every chance they could be picked up holding a mobile phone to their ear. I am not being unreasonable here. We are saying to people: Stick it in a cradle or turn on the bluetooth. We are saying to people that if the phone rings they can pass it to someone.

I reiterate that there is no evidence in this area, other than from the NRMA, which has a bunch of policy advisers—and we see the election of typically high-profile people to sit on its board. But going to the heart of the issue, we cannot ignore the evidence brought to me by the Centre for Road Safety or the Monash University Accident Research Centre. I say to the Labor Party, in particular: Drop the amendment and listen to what I am about to say. The Monash University Accident Research Centre recently undertook research into the efficacy of speed camera programs in other States. If New South Wales were to adopt the Victorian measures in relation to speed cameras, which would mean removing all signage and increasing hours of operation, it would have the potential to save up to 75 lives per annum. That is 75 people. I note that location-based speed camera signage does not exist in any other Australian State.

The road toll right now is 295 people, which is 10 more than last year. That is the type of evidence we need to look at when making this decision. I did not make the decision about road advisory signage lightly. There will be a three-month grace period and statewide signage will ensure that drivers are alerted to the risks of using a mobile phone illegally whilst driving. The suggestion that location-based cameras are required to alert drivers to the risks is utterly unfounded and, if anything, counterproductive to the objectives of this program. Statewide signage will exist. That is a good compromise for everybody.

I want drivers to know that the moment they back out of the driveway there is the potential for a portable mobile phone detection camera to expose them for engaging in a hideous practice across our road network. We cannot ignore the fact that the trial picked up 100,000 people in six months. We have all seen it happen; we have all seen evidence of this behaviour. Although members opposite say we should have signage, before the bill goes to the upper House I encourage them to look at the evidence. I am happy to provide proof from the Centre for Road Safety.

The member for Summer Hill made a constructive contribution to the debate about the exposure of people who are sitting in the car. First of all, the algorithm is designed so that about 90 per cent of the images are destroyed either within an hour or certainly within a two-day period. When the algorithm picks up a mobile phone an

authorised officer will assess it. At that point the image is cropped and zoomed in to identify the offence. This is why we have been working with the Privacy Commissioner on this. We want to give people surety that ultimately the image will be assessed by an authorised officer. The focus will solely be on the driver's seat. Time and location data relating to passengers is blocked out.

This is the benefit of the technology we are using. To that end, it is important to note that 90 per cent of the images are irretrievably deleted within an hour. Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] will be the custodian of the images that continue to be held. It takes all of its obligations on privacy and security seriously. Under the State Records Act 1998 an image showing an offence is required to be stored for a minimum of seven years. It may only be accessed by vetted personnel from RMS and Revenue NSW, which is the agency responsible for issuing the infringement notice.

An individual has the right to view the images on the Revenue NSW website of an alleged offence committed in a vehicle that is registered in their name. This is similar to the speed cameras and the red-light cameras that already exist. Therein lies the argument about the reverse onus of proof, which I will touch on in a moment. I reiterate that we have been working closely with the Privacy Commissioner throughout the planning and trial of the program and that will continue. That does not just stop because we have reached this point. At the commencement of the program a notice will be published on the Transport for NSW website, which will outline the type of information collected and held, how the information is used and to whom the information is disclosed.

This commitment exemplifies the close working relationship that the agency has with the Information and Privacy Commission to ensure transparency and to reassure the community that their information is being used in a secure and appropriate manner. Earlier today the upper House moved a motion to refer the bill to a committee. I am absolutely determined to have these cameras rolled out before the Christmas period in December. The public trial that we conducted provided strong evidence and the community responsiveness to the trial through survey work showed an increasing appetite for this technology to be used. Since we made the announcement community sentiment has been overwhelmingly positive.

During the crossbench upper House briefing this morning Mr David Shoebridge expressed concerns to me, which were echoed by the member for Ballina, about the reverse onus of proof. The bill does not create a new offence. We are simply applying technology to enforce an existing offence, as well as amplifying existing efforts to increase people's awareness of the risks and impacts that illegal mobile phone usage has while driving. The legislative amendment is a balanced change to our laws which shifts the onus but does not take away procedural fairness from the alleged offender. It must be remembered that admission of an offence only occurs on payment of an infringement unless it is appealed. At that point a person has the opportunity to have the matter heard in court, which will be judged by a magistrate on the merit of the evidence provided by the appellant.

I reiterate that the reverse onus of proof or the deeming provision aligns the program with all other camera programs operating in New South Wales, such as the New South Wales speed camera program, where the onus of proof is on the registered owner of the vehicle. They must prove they were not driving at the time of the alleged offence. There is nothing new in this. This is just creating consistency. To the member for Ballina's point, if one wants to clog the courts there is no better way than not having the reverse onus of proof. That is why this provides absolute certainty in the process. We are very keen to work with the private sector on ways to reduce our road toll.

Acusensus was involved in the trial and delivery of this program. This exemplifies that we want to see the best way to change behaviours and, most importantly for me, reduce the number of crashes. Automated camera-based enforcement coupled with police enforcement will continue to play a critical role in targeting high-risk behaviour on our roads such as speeding and running red lights. Last week I released data relating to the effectiveness of red-light speed cameras at around 171 intersections. Everyone hates those cameras but we cannot ignore a reduction in fatalities of 74 per cent. I note members opposite have said in the Chamber today that this is all about revenue raising. They are wrong.

Do members opposite know that the revenue raised from using cameras goes straight into a Community Road Safety Fund to try to get people to behave on the roads? People pay the fines and we put it back into the Community Road Safety Fund to try to reinforce the safety point and to change people's behaviours. It is not going to the Consolidated Fund for Treasury to waste somewhere—not that our Treasury would waste money. The point is that it is not going into areas other than road safety. I do not want to collect the money. I want people to do the right thing. This is not about revenue raising; we have to pay to install the cameras. That is why it is important that fine revenue is not applied the way members opposite think it is. It is hypothecated in a sensible way back into the fund.

I ask members opposite to reconsider supporting the bill. I am very happy to make available the experts involved in the Centre for Road Safety for members to give due consideration to the bill. Whilst I respect and

admire the work that the NRMA does, I am sorry to say that in this instance it is wrong. When I have been asked questions about speed cameras and the signage concerning those cameras I have been open that we are the only State that is doing it. Guess what? Our road toll is up. Ultimately we all have to weigh this up. Road safety initiatives are hard. It is hard to shift the community's views on them and it is hard to get people to understand them. I know every member in this place wants to see a reduction in crash rates so that fewer people are injured and fewer people die on our roads. I think that is pretty straightforward.

The benefits that can be derived from this initiative are a no-brainer. I ask members opposite to reconsider their position because I would sooner be guided by the work that has been done by the experts at the Monash University Accident Research Centre in relation to advisory science. If we do not tackle this issue and if this program is not up and running by December, we will have a lot to answer for in respect of the Christmas period road toll. We are being sensible. We are giving people a three-month grace period. We will not penalise people in the first place. I remind all members that five demerit points is a fair penalty. If we consider double demerit points, drivers can be booked for 10 demerit points in a double demerit points period.

I dare say that I agree with the member for Summer Hill concerning the magnitude of the cost of those fines, particularly in country areas. But one thing that is changing people's thinking around this program is the five demerit points. We are not changing that; it will stay in place. Ultimately we cannot ignore the trial. We want to roll it out and we want to be the first in the world to do it. It is good, sensible technology. Enough safety nets have been introduced through the work undertaken by the Privacy Commissioner. I urge all members in this House to support this legislation, unamended, and to send a message to their colleagues in the upper House to do the same.

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

**Motion agreed to.**

### **Third Reading**

**Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE:** I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

**Motion agreed to.**

### *Documents*

#### **REGISTER OF DISCLOSURES**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** By leave: In accordance with clause 21 of the Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983, I table the Register of Disclosures by Members of the Legislative Assembly as at 30 June 2019. I order that the document be printed.

### *Bills*

#### **ROAD TRANSPORT AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2019**

#### **Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from 21 August 2019.**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (16:55):** I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Road Transport Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2019. I note from the outset that we do not oppose it. As the bill is rather general in nature and makes important amendments to existing road transport Acts and their regulations, the Opposition believes—or is being convinced of—the Government's case that they are necessary amendments to strengthen, for example, the road transport Acts and to ensure compliance with existing regulations, particularly road legislation. The bill proposes amendments to certain provisions of the driver licence disqualification reforms introduced by the Government in 2017. It seeks to clarify the circumstances in which police and law enforcement are able to request blood and urine samples from drivers involved in fatal off-road accidents to enhance evidence-gathering capabilities. The bill also includes amendments that will put beyond doubt the circumstances in which a motor vehicle assessor must notify the Written-off Heavy Vehicles Register of a damaged vehicle.

Labor does not oppose the bill. The rationale for the bill is road safety. The statistics indicate that the road toll will be steeper in 2019 than it was in 2018 and there has not been a significant decline in the number of people who have unfortunately been the subject of a fatality on our roads. According to the daily report of the NSW Centre for Road Safety, 347 lives were lost in 2018, which is too many. In relation to those convicted in the Local Court of serious offences, or what are termed "never eligible offences", the legislation makes it clear that there will no longer be provision for an applicant to have their disqualification removed in the Local Court.

In some cases in the Local Court, according to the Minister in his second reading speech, individuals, once convicted, have sought to have their disqualification overturned. The bill means that that will no longer be possible. The next amendment relates to police demanding blood and/or urine tests in the event of a fatal motor vehicle accident. Members would be aware that that is a provision that is available on open roads, on public roads, but the legislation deals with what I assume would be a rather small number of cases, perhaps anomaly cases in the law, where potentially accidents occur off-road or on non-public roads, so that there is no ambiguity in law in relation to that.

The third amendment that I deal with is the national register for written-off heavy vehicles, a register that I was not previously aware of but is an important piece of road safety infrastructure that ensures that those vehicles that have been the subject of a serious accident are not returned to our roads via other means. Obviously heavy vehicles have many structural points that are subject to stress or fracture in the event of a serious accident and the legislation ensures that there is a compulsory process in place so that the heavy vehicle is referred to the national register and not returned to our roads. It is for those reasons that the Opposition does not oppose the legislation and we commend it to the House.

**Debate interrupted.**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind all members, particularly those to my left, that four members are on three calls to order and seven members are on two calls. I am sure they are aware that I will not tolerate unruly or disrespectful behaviour. All members will be heard in silence throughout the public interest debate.

*Public Interest Debate*

**WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (17:00):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises the severe drought threatening regional communities and regional town water supply.
- (2) Acknowledges the Government is proactively investing in water infrastructure that is needed to address this drought and future droughts.
- (3) Notes the role dams play in keeping rivers running for the environment and farms when rainfall would be insufficient to create flows.

As a regional member of Parliament, I and all members are well aware of the challenges we face in regional New South Wales. We have no pump on the Hastings River, and similarly on the Macleay River and the Bellinger River. It is a very challenging time, not just for our mid North Coast, but for the entire State. The fact is that too often, under Labor, you're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't. Only the Coalition, with its dams and pipelines, gives a damn about securing the water of New South Wales. We are getting on with building dams in New South Wales. This weekend we were shoulder to shoulder with the Federal Government announcing an investment of over \$1 billion for three new dams across New South Wales. While we strip away the red and green tape, the time delays, we are going to get on with the job while the Labor Party continues to pile on hypocrisies.

The Greens and Labor oppose us getting on with the job of fast-tracking building critical infrastructure to secure water in New South Wales. During the millennium drought it was the Labor Party who fast-tracked approval for the enlargement of Canberra's Cotter Dam—a \$400 million project which increased Canberra's water storage capacity by about 35 per cent. Those that are currently opposing this investment to secure water supply in their own communities backed this project in 2009. The project was fast-tracked by Andrew Barr, who was the then planning Minister, using his call-in powers.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** No relation.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** I note the interjection and acknowledge that he was no relative of the shadow spokesperson for water. The other Mr Barr said:

It is an important project that could help drought-proof the capital. If it proceeds it will help ensure we have adequate and safe drinking water supplies even if climate change leads to longer and more severe droughts.

I ask those opposite to look the people of Tenterfield, Tamworth, Dubbo, Orange, Wagga Wagga, Broken Hill, and every town in between, in the eye and explain to them why they are less important than the people of the Australian Capital Territory. If only Labor and The Greens had standards consistent with their colleagues in the Australian Capital Territory. It has been said many times today by the Leader of the Opposition that we have built no dams in New South Wales. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition was with us at Warwick Farm at the local government and shires conference where I was able to highlight and acknowledge the mayor of the Nambucca Valley, Rhonda Hoban.

Rhonda Hoban, with myself and the then Federal Minister Warren Truss, was able to open a \$56 million dam delivering water security to the Nambucca Valley, giving the community the ability to ensure that water restrictions are not in place on the mid North Coast. The Deputy Premier highlighted the work of taking Nimmitabel out of water restrictions. A new dam went into that community. It is important that we speak not with forked tongue but with truth about what we have achieved as a government on behalf of our communities.

We have built 2.3 billion litres of storage across New South Wales, which has expanded the water storage of small towns across the State. That includes other storages, such as the Glen Innes off-stream storage, the Lake Wallace Dam in Nimmitabel, the Kyogle water supply augmentation and water storages in Cobar and Nyngan. We have invested in 14 pipelines across the State, including the \$470 million Broken Hill pipeline, without which Broken Hill was two weeks away from running out of water.

We have invested in 60 bores across the State, including \$30 million for one in Dubbo, which was a lifeline for the 50,000 people in that community. As well as those town supply dams we are increasing the height of weirs—which are smaller dams that are a very productive and sensible option—to boost the storage for towns facing severe drought conditions and to expand their storages for future droughts. We have built 40 sewage treatment plants and 31 water treatment plants since we came to government. Those plants are being used across the State for crop irrigation, fighting bushfires, watering parks and ovals and industrial use, taking pressure off local water supplies.

In the latest round of the Safe and Secure Water Program the Government provided \$25 million to build Tuross Dam in Eurobodalla. The dam will add three billion litres of storage. In addition to the water storage projects we have already delivered, we are investing in further town storage projects with weir upgrades at Wilcannia, Walgett and Tamworth. In Wilcannia we are working on increasing the height of the weir by one metre, which will add 2.8 billion litres of storage. Once completed, the two weir upgrades in Walgett and Wilcannia will add 3.9 billion litres of storage to the State.

Walgett is one of the towns facing the brunt of the drought. Right now the Government is carting water into the community to ensure it does not run out. To prepare Walgett for future droughts the Government has invested 100 per cent of funding to raise the Walgett Weir by one metre, adding over 1.1 billion litres of storage for the town. I acknowledge the work of Regional Town Water Supply Coordinator James McTavish, who has been driving unbelievable kilometres across the State for the past year to help our 92 local water authorities across New South Wales to keep our towns in water. He has done a remarkable job and the support of the Government has been very important.

We need to deal with this drought, but we also have to plan for future ones. The community expects nothing less of us. That is why Sunday's announcement by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Premier and the Deputy Premier was so important. I agree with the shadow spokesperson for water: We do not want a five-year approval time frame to get these projects done. I seek his bipartisan support as we introduce legislation to this House to ensure that we fast-track these processes, have proper environmental considerations and get on with the job of waterproofing this wonderful State.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (17:07):** I make a contribution to the public interest debate on the motion moved by the Minister for Water, Property and Housing. I say from the outset that the Opposition has no objection to paragraphs (1) and (3) of the motion, but the Minister did change some of the language around climate variability in paragraph (3) when she moved the motion in the House. I move an amendment to replace paragraph (2) of the motion. I move:

That the motion be amended by omitting all words in paragraph (2), with a view to inserting:

- (2) Condemns the Government for failing to make the necessary investment in water infrastructure for towns in New South Wales as they approach day zero.

Here is the rub. Day after day, time after time, we come to this Chamber and Government members seek to do two things. Firstly, they try to laud us with all the insults and criticisms in the world and then, secondly, they say, "We want to work on a bipartisan basis." They insult us by saying, "Please work with us", and then double down on the insults. That is how it works every day in this Chamber. I acknowledge a number of things that the Government is doing that we support, including building new pipelines and bores, increasing weir heights and things like that. They are all fantastic projects because they helped deliver water yesterday and they are helping to deliver water for today and tomorrow. It is real water; H<sub>2</sub>O that can be accessed by those communities right now, during one of the worst droughts that this country has ever had. That is fantastic. But I will not tolerate the self-congratulatory comments in paragraph (2) of the motion, which acknowledges the work that is happening right now. My reasons for that are founded on facts.

The first reason is that the proposals announced over the weekend were labelled as "new" dams. Does any member want to tell me that the Dungowan Dam does not currently exist? Does any member want to tell me

that the Wyangala Dam does not currently exist? Do the projects involve new dams or are they amendments to existing pieces of infrastructure? We should clarify that. We should stop calling them new dams. The other issue I want to clarify, which the Minister referred to in her contribution to this debate, is getting rid of the red, green, blue, yellow, orange, pink or purple—whatever you want to call it—tape to deliver these projects faster. Here is a secret: You have been in government for 8½ years. There is no amount of tape that could have stopped you from progressing any of those proposals. I will tell you the only thing that stopped you—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Cessnock will direct his comments through the Chair.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR:** The only thing that has stopped the Government—and the Deputy Premier has acknowledged this very publicly in multiple media forums—is that it did not learn the lessons of the millennial drought. It did not take action after the millennial drought broke and it did not proceed through the courses of action that were set up at the time. I will explain the history of this particular Government and some of the Ministers who are sitting opposite me. When the desalination plant was proposed and built, was there wide support from the current Government? No. What about the Tillegra Dam, which was on and off the table, and which I publicly endorsed in 2014. Did the Government members vote for it? No. Did they vote against it? Yes.

Then when they got into government they sold it. Now that proposition is not even on the table. It was a shovel-ready project for 650 gigalitres of water, which could be piped anywhere, and the Government sold the opportunity that was built up—the property had been acquired—for four decades and across six different governments of all political persuasions. The Government sold it down the channel. The kicker to what is coming down the pipeline with the removal of all the green, red, purple, pink and blue tape is that in 2013 there was an upper House inquiry into the adequacy of water storages in New South Wales led by the Hon. Rick Colless. Government members might know him because he is a Nat. Recommendation 17 of that inquiry stated:

That the NSW Government ensure that new storage proposals are comprehensively assessed in terms of costs, benefits, storage efficiency, geological suitability of the site, environmental considerations, community expectations and other factors as appropriate.

Guess what Government members did to that recommendation through the Department of Premier and Cabinet in 2013? Support. Thank you very much.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (17:12):** The member for Cessnock has obviously been drinking his bath water because he has no idea what he is talking about. This is a \$480 million brand-new dam for Tamworth. The city is home to 60,000 people and running out of water is not an option. All afternoon we have heard Opposition members talk about their opposition to building water infrastructure and creating more water storage.

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

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** They are happy to sit on the benches in opposition and watch towns in regional New South Wales run dry. They do not care about people and they do not care about what happens in regional New South Wales. We heard that very clearly from the member for Cessnock. This new dam is brilliant news for Tamworth. We need to increase water storage so our communities feel safe that they will have the water they need to get through the drier times. The plan says it will take four years to build; we will work to get it done earlier if we can. It is critical infrastructure and has been identified as being of State significance. I want to ensure there are no hold-ups to this project and I want to bust through the red tape. The Minister for Water, Property and Housing is right behind that push. My message to the Opposition is very clear: Everyone needs to get behind water infrastructure projects in regional New South Wales at the moment. Why does the Opposition not want to get behind water infrastructure projects? Why does it want to see regional New South Wales run dry?

*[An Opposition member interjected.]*

If you want to obstruct it, get out of the way and let us get on with it.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Cessnock that he is on three calls to order.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** Members opposite are the ones complaining that we do not have enough water. They had better not complain about building a new dam. I see the member for Murray sitting over there, smirking and grinning. Let me tell you, letting the water run through to South Australia—shame on you. It is an absolute disgrace. The \$480 million project will not only secure water for the cities in the regions; it will also give confidence to our agribusiness and food processing sectors.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Port Stephens that she is on three calls to order.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** This is a critical infrastructure project. I thank the Federal and State governments and Tamworth Regional Council for the vision to purchase the land that the new Dungowan Dam

will sit on. We will get cracking on this project. The member for Cessnock must be Lennox Walker, because earlier today he said that when you build a dam it takes years to fill. In 2017 we upgraded Chaffey Dam from 60,000 megalitres to 100,000 megalitres; as soon as we cut the ribbon, it rained for three months and filled that dam. Go back and check it. You have no idea.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind Opposition members that many of them are already on three calls to order.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON:** We will build the infrastructure to keep our communities safe and to make sure that our cities do not run out of water. In addition to the \$480 million, the New South Wales Government is investing close to \$50 million for water initiatives in the New England region to help communities doing it tough during this prolonged drought. That includes the \$78 million recently committed to critical drought initiatives and follows the \$5.3 million in emergency funding for WaterNSW to construct temporary weirs on the Peel River. That includes the pipeline—\$40 million—which will direct the water from Chaffey Dam to Tamworth, which will reduce transmission losses.

There is also \$3.4 million for the Tamworth drought response, enabling WaterNSW to construct a temporary weir; and \$3.5 million for WaterNSW to accelerate detailed option analysis to secure town water supplies for the Upper Namoi around Barraba and Manilla, including \$1.45 million for off-stream storage infrastructure around Tamworth Regional Council's Calala Water Treatment Plant. For the town of Walcha—which is normally safe country but is now on its knees—we have detailed planning underway: \$1.5 million to immediately construct infrastructure, including pipelines to connect the town's water supply with existing off-river creek storage and to build a new off-creek storage for Walcha. Day after day I sit in this Chamber and listen to members opposite criticise water infrastructure. They do not care about regional New South Wales. They want our towns to run out of water. Shame on them. We will build it and we will protect our communities. [*Time expired.*]

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (17:18):** The Coalition has invented disagreement on this side of the House. The only disagreement is in its Cabinet. The Coalition should get its ducks lined up before it accuses Labor of opposing anything. We are not opposing anything. Dams are fine but dams are not a comprehensive water plan and will not address today's immediate needs.

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

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN:** The member for Tamworth accuses Labor of not caring about rural and regional New South Wales. What humbug! Everybody cares about everybody in this State. How dare the member accuse me of not supporting rural and regional New South Wales. How dare he. I have been supporting Tenterfield, which will run out of water, in a range of ways. Tenterfield needs immediate support with issues such as water access licences. I have written to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing about the unregulated Mole River, which has ceased flowing and has dried to a few waterholes. People with water access licences have still been charged. They are not getting any water out of the river and have had to destock their properties, and obviously they do not want to pay.

I have also written to the Minister about a person—I will not say his name. Everybody is getting water from his bore and I have asked that he be able to increase the amount that he is taking out so that people in Legume and Liston, farmers on the western side of the Mole River and many others can get water. I have also written about another business with the same issue, as well as issues with the Natural Resources Access Regulator. We need to talk about water, and I mean really talk. In a recent debate in this place I said that a water summit would be a useful discussion to have here, not these affected discussions and debates we have across the table in about 30 minutes. That comment stands.

The Deputy Premier and the Minister for Water, Property and Housing said they want Labor's support to build dams. They first need to get support, as I said, from their own colleagues. No-one on this side of the House is standing in their way. They have had nine years to do it and they have not put in a development application. No-one has stopped them. The Deputy Premier has blamed lefties, greenies, Labor, but those groups are not in government—the Deputy Premier is. I ask him to stop blaming Labor, greenies and lefties. The only group he has left out is the reds under the bed but I am waiting for that; it will come. I am not sure if the Deputy Premier realises how lame he sounds when he comes in here and shouts and carries on with all that nonsense.

It would behove the Government to lay out its water security plans—and not just dams—so that all MPs, particularly those of us whose local towns are running out of water, could go back to our communities and inform them of what is happening and what the plan is. On Thursday night in Tenterfield there is going to be a meeting about the water crisis, recycled water—all of those issues. I can go back and say, "Well, we're going to build dams." That is going to be really helpful on Thursday night, telling everyone there who is running out of water

and using recycled water that we are going to build dams. That just does not cut it. In April, the Tenterfield dam was at 37 per cent capacity; in August, 32 per cent; and in October, it is below 30 per cent. Tenterfield Council have been putting out media releases warning local people that they have to boil water now because when the dam's level drops below a certain point the water is not safe. In the best-case scenario, 4 January 2020 is D-day for Tenterfield.

Another issue that I bring to the attention of the House relates to the fires and the dams. In September the Mount Mackenzie Road fire destroyed property and grazing lands south of the town, but it also torched the catchment of the Tenterfield Dam, which was already below 30 per cent capacity. We have found out that there is a potential gap in the Office of Emergency Management being able to recover money and support for the catchment damage. There is no money or timely response. We need to address these issues in a timely way. Dams are fine; have all the dams you like. Talk about dams forever. Dams are not a comprehensive water plan.

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (17:23):** I am perhaps a bit baffled. I thought this was a public interest debate. The member for Cessnock said, "We already accept the third part of the motion," and then the member for Lismore said that the Coalition is inventing disagreement, that dams are fine, and that no-one is standing in the way. So I say to the Minister: Bring on the legislation for the next few days. The second part of the motion notes that the New South Wales Government is proactively investing in the water infrastructure needed to address this drought and future droughts. It is interesting that the Deputy Premier, the Minister and the member for Tamworth have already touched upon this. There will be 14 pipelines, 60 bores and improvements to weirs. The funding of \$4.2 billion has been put aside for Snowy Hydro 2.0. Who opposed Snowy Hydro 2.0?

**Government members:** They did.

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY:** One of the key elements of Snowy Hydro 2.0—the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund—was building water security. In contrast, the Welcome Reef Dam near Braidwood was cancelled in 2002. Who did that? It was cancelled by the Carr Government. The *Courier Mail* of 9 October had the headline, "NSW comes to rescue for QLD water supplies". Since June 2017 the New South Wales Government has invested over \$130 million in emergency water infrastructure projects, water carting and emergency works projects to ensure communities have sustainable water supplies across regional New South Wales.

Over \$1.8 billion in drought assistance has already been announced. That assistance takes many forms—from subsidies and fee waivers to drilling new bores, water and stock transport and, crucially, mental and business health workshops for those most affected. The question is whether when they had the opportunity—if they were in government; on the staff of, say, State Regional Development, a utilities Minister or the staff of a Premier such as Bob Carr, or within the Federal Government—people advocated for water infrastructure. How did they use their moments when they had the opportunity?

This is a severe drought. The Bureau of Meteorology reported that the area average around the Murray-Darling Basin was 10.9 millimetres in September—the ninth lowest in 120 years of records. The vast majority of the basin received below average or much below average, and many areas in Queensland and New South Wales recorded their lowest September rainfall on record. For the Murray system there has been about 305 gegalitres of inflow, which is in the lowest 4 per cent for September months on record. That means there is an important role for dams in making sure that we can provide capacity and security to meet the demands of the communities. The long-term average inflow for the Murray system was 1,600 gegalitres for September. However, in 2018 there was approximately 400 gegalitres of inflow and just over 200 gegalitres in 2019.

I had the pleasure of being with Minister Pavey down at Barmah Choke last week with members from Rise Growers Australia, local farmers, local fishing experts and the member for Cootamundra. We saw evidence of water being managed by Federal and State environmental water holders. The water supplies support fish habitats, improve connectivity and deliver nutrients. We cannot afford to kick the can down the road and to leave the hard work. As the community calls for us to provide the infrastructure for water security where will those opposite stand?

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:28):** I welcome the opportunity once again to discuss the dire state of water management in New South Wales. I am glad that this debate will again bring the attention of this House to the crisis that the Coalition Government seems all too willing to ignore. Our State is in drought now. It needs immediate solutions and a government that will take a proactive approach to managing this drought.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member will be heard in silence.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** While we welcome any action, the reality is that the benefits of this dam will not be felt for years and years to come. We needed action from this Government yesterday, but today will have to do. The good news is that the blueprint for such a program already exists. I take a moment to remind this House of how Labor managed water during the millennium drought.

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

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** On behalf of New South Wales I ask the Government to listen up and feel free to copy us. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

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

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** During the millennium drought, under Labor level 1 water restrictions were introduced in Sydney when supply levels were just below 60 per cent. This time, the Coalition waited until they were at almost 50 per cent before commencing water restrictions. Level 2 water restrictions were introduced when Sydney dam levels dropped below 50 per cent in 2004 and level 3 water restrictions were introduced when dam levels dropped below 40 per cent in June 2005.

Despite Labor introducing a statewide water tank rebate scheme a year before Sydney water restrictions during the millennium drought, the Coalition Government has introduced no such statewide scheme. A washing machine rebate program and a smart showerhead program were introduced months and months before the Sydney level 1 water restrictions were implemented during the millennium drought, but no similar programs have been implemented today. Not only has the current Coalition Government failed to introduce adequate water restrictions; it has also failed to introduce any real and prominent water awareness programs.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Kiama will come to order.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** Need I remind this House again of Labor's "Go Slow on the H2O" campaign? Now there is no campaign to be seen. I beg the Government to make the funds available now for a proper awareness campaign and to start educating the entire State.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Northern Tablelands will resume his seat.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** Those opposite might not be aware that the technology and the legislation exists for the Government to directly message everyone with a mobile phone and let them know how bad this drought is, that water restrictions apply and what they can do to help.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Kiama that he is on two calls to order.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** The reality is that the benefits of this dam will not be felt for years to come. The Government must act now. It must make funds available now for initiatives that will have an impact today. Make funds available now for a statewide washing machine rebate program, a smart showerhead program and a statewide water tank rebate scheme so that electorates like mine—one of the very few electorates that are blessed to be getting regular rain—can do their bit for the rest of the State.

In 2019 the total rainfall for the electorate of Coojee so far has been 943.8 millimetres. The New South Wales average for the year to date is 554.5 millimetres. That means the electorate of Coojee's rainfall this year is over 170 per cent of the New South Wales State average. Because there is no water tank rebate scheme, encouraging people to capture this rainfall, many throughout the eastern suburbs are using potable water to water their gardens. This is ridiculous. Towns and communities across this State are literally running out of water to drink. The Government must act now and roll out initiatives that will have an impact today—not in 10 years' time. This is one of the worst droughts, if not the worst drought, we have seen in our country's history. Towns and entire communities across this great State are literally running out of water to drink.

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

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** The National Party, both in this place and Canberra, have only one solution. It is a one-trick pony but that pony is also thirsty. The Nationals members have not thought of investing in recycled water or stormwater harvesting—projects that would work well in my electorate and many others. They have not realised that Australia is an island and that owning a desalination plant might prove useful. They have not thought of incentivising the people of New South Wales to use less water or to capture their own rainfall. It seems they have not thought of anything.

Perhaps the Deputy Premier is too used to being told what to do by Barnaby Joyce and David Littleproud; that he has forgotten how to think for himself. In the absence of a national drought policy, the Deputy Premier and The Nationals in New South Wales have been left to their own devices and, of course, have come up short. The Federal Coalition has created a \$2 billion water infrastructure loans facility and a \$1.3 billion National Water Infrastructure Development Fund. Maybe, if The Nationals in this place could get over their egos and call up their dry-mop mates in Canberra, the people of New South Wales could start to see some action on this emergency we are all facing.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members will be heard in silence. Members who wish to engage in private conversations should do so outside the Chamber.

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (17:34):** I speak to this important public interest debate on dams. I must say, these Government motions sound like they have been written by a stand-up comedian. How on earth can this Government praise itself for being proactive on dams when the last public dam built in New South Wales was in 1987? That was under Labor, believe it or not. Since then we have had five Coalition governments. Five conservative Premiers—Greiner, Fahey, O'Farrell, Baird, and Berejiklian—and not one dam between them. When New South Wales last built a dam *The Cosby Show* was on television and *Locomotion* by Kylie Minogue was on the hits. It is a long time ago. Schools teach children about dams in their ancient history classes.

Promising dams in the third year of a drought is not being proactive. It is so bizarre that this Government is promising dams for the next decade when it will not even let our farmers in the south access their water now. Every single day a family dairy farmer goes broke. That means years of painstaking breeding are gone and dairy herds have their throats cut. We will not have a food and fibre industry by the time these mythical dams get built. The Government has killed the Darling River with its terrible water mismanagement, but along the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Lachlan rivers desperate farmers and communities are watching their water flow straight past them. Go down and have a look.

Artificial flows are flooding forests that have been standing in water for over 12 months—the Minister would have seen that on her trip out there. We are watching productive water flow out to sea. We do not have to wait decades for dams to be built. With the stroke of a pen the Government could be providing water relief to farmers now. A few simple rule changes could lift allocations for Murray farmers from zero to 40 per cent. The first thing the Government could do is to give water back to farmers and communities: their voluntary contributions, which it stole in 2002. The Government could do that immediately.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for South Coast will come to order.

**Mrs HELEN DALTON:** Right now the New South Wales and Federal governments are pushing ahead with plans to strip 450 gigalitres of up-water and an extra 2,000 billion litres from our farmers and communities under the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. The Government is supporting this. If that happens the dairy and rice industry in Australia will be finished, as well as a lot of other irrigated agriculture. Dams built in 10 years' time will be no use to them at all. I support the building of dams and long-term nation building projects. I would love to see this investment. I have called for it for years. However, we cannot trust this Government on water. Does anyone seriously believe a dam built in Barnaby Joyce's electorate will provide water security for the rest of the State? It is like building a blood bank next to Dracula's house!

It is true this Government has helped build lots of little dams over the past few years. A lot of private dams have been signed off by WaterNSW and funded under the Federal Government's Water Efficiency Program. Private dams for private use may be well and good, but where are the public dams? What about the dams we can all use? There has been nothing since 1987. In question time Deputy Premier John Barilaro was asked about dams he had built. He did not mention a single one. He started talking about pipelines.

**Mrs Shelley Hancock:** Yes, he did.

**Mrs HELEN DALTON:** He actually bragged about the Broken Hill pipeline. Well, John, there is something you have forgotten to mention: Nobody in Broken Hill wanted that pipeline; not one person. For 60 years the Menindee Lakes provided a reliable source of drinking water for Broken Hill—or at least it did, until the Government and its Federal mates drained seven years' supply of good drinking water from the lakes to send it to South Australia while the Murray River was already in flood.

**Mrs Melinda Pavey:** Thank you, Labor, for supporting the change!

**Mrs HELEN DALTON:** It has decommissioned the Lower Darling, leaving farmers and communities high and dry. You should go and have a look, Melinda. Why on earth did the Government drain the lakes to justify a pipeline? That is exactly what it did. If the pipeline was so wonderful, why did the Government keep the business case secret for three years? All this dam talk sounds like a very fast train promise. Promising \$1 billion for dams next decade means nothing when the Government does not even pay the fuel bill for people transporting water to towns it has run dry. Please, cut the dam talk and give farmers and communities their water now. [*Time expired.*]

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (17:39):** In reply: I thank my colleagues on this side of the House and Labor Party members for their contributions to this debate. In relation to the rainwater tank situation, you need rain to fill the tanks. Even the tanks that we have currently in Sydney that are supported and are part of new housing developments would actually provide three days of supply across the Sydney network. It is also important to understand that level 1 water restrictions now are the equivalent

of level 2 during the millennium drought—just to help members when they have further conversations with members of their communities. In relation to the Tillegra Dam, a press release of Sunday 28 November 2010 stated:

After a merit-based assessment process, the NSW Government has refused the planning application for the proposed Tillegra Dam near Dungog. No further plans for a dam in the Hunter will be considered.

That was press release from the Premier of the time, Kristina Keneally. The saddest part—

*[Opposition members interjected.]*

Interestingly, the Government of the day spent around \$100 million, the equivalent in today's terms of the \$130 million that we are spending on emergency provisions to keep town supplies going across New South Wales. That Government spent—

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

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** They squandered the money. They squandered the opportunity—

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

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** They squandered the opportunity and the taxpayer dollars to ensure that dam did not happen. I appreciate the comments of the member for Lismore, as always.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Maitland that she is on two calls to order.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** They were very fair comments. It is also important to acknowledge that the wonderful community of Tenterfield is having a very important conversation around recycling. That is something that we support. We do it very well in regional New South Wales, unlike Sydney. In regional New South Wales we have tertiary treatment and we properly respect that water—whether we are irrigating crops and lucerne paddocks or putting it back into the river system. We should be proud of ourselves in regional New South Wales. I am very proud of the 40 new sewerage systems across New South Wales and the new water treatment plants that we have funded as a Government. The situation is that Dungowan is a new dam. I think that should be considered. You cannot dismiss another 650 gegalitres to the Lachlan Valley to ensure greater water security for those farmers and those communities. *[Time expired.]*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....38

Noes .....45

Majority.....7

#### AYES

Aitchison, Ms J  
Barr, Mr C  
Catley, Ms Y  
Crakanthorp, Mr T  
Dib, Mr J  
Harris, Mr D  
Hornery, Ms S  
Lynch, Mr P  
Mehan, Mr D (teller)  
Parker, Mr J  
Scully, Mr P  
Voltz, Ms L  
Watson, Ms A (teller)

Atalla, Mr E  
Butler, Mr R  
Chanthivong, Mr A  
Daley, Mr M  
Donato, Mr P  
Harrison, Ms J  
Kamper, Mr S  
McDermott, Dr H  
Minns, Mr C  
Piper, Mr G  
Smith, Ms T.F.  
Warren, Mr G  
Zangari, Mr G

Bali, Mr S  
Car, Ms P  
Cotsis, Ms S  
Dalton, Mrs H  
Finn, Ms J  
Haylen, Ms J  
Lalich, Mr N  
McKay, Ms J  
O'Neill, Dr M  
Saffin, Ms J  
Tesch, Ms L  
Washington, Ms K

#### NOES

Anderson, Mr K  
Berejiklian, Ms G  
Conolly, Mr K  
Coure, Mr M  
Dominello, Mr V

Ayres, Mr S  
Bromhead, Mr S  
Constance, Mr A  
Crouch, Mr A (teller)  
Elliott, Mr D

Barilaro, Mr J  
Clancy, Mr J  
Cooke, Ms S (teller)  
Davies, Mrs T  
Griffin, Mr J

## NOES

Gulaptis, Mr C	Hancock, Mrs S	Hazzard, Mr B
Henskens, Mr A	Johnsen, Mr M	Kean, Mr M
Lee, Dr G	Lindsay, Ms W	Marshall, Mr A
McGirr, Dr J	O'Dea, Mr J	Pavey, Mrs M
Perrottet, Mr D	Preston, Ms R	Provest, Mr G
Roberts, Mr A	Saunders, Mr D	Sidgreaves, Mr P
Sidoti, Mr J	Singh, Mr G	Smith, Mr N
Speakman, Mr M	Stokes, Mr R	Taylor, Mr M
Toole, Mr P	Tuckerman, Mrs W	Upton, Ms G
Ward, Mr G	Williams, Mr R	Wilson, Ms F

## PAIRS

Doyle, Ms T	Evans, Mr L.J.
Hoenig, Mr R	Petinos, Ms E
Park, Mr R	Gibbons, Ms M

**Amendment negatived.**

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

**Motion agreed to.**

*Visitors*

## VISITORS

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I welcome to the public gallery the Joint Committee of Iraqi Organisations, guests of the member for Fairfield.

I remind members they are not to converse with those in the public gallery.

*Private Members' Statements*

## CANDO CANCER TRUST

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:51):** I acknowledge the CanDo Cancer Trust on its 10-year anniversary of assisting cancer patients on the Coffs Coast and Clarence regions. Cancer is a terrible disease that will unfortunately touch most, if not all, families at some point. The CanDo Cancer Trust was formed by a small committee led by local businesswoman Julie Jardine and assisted by the Coffs Coast Freemasons Association. The aim of the trust is to assist local cancer patients and their families with the financial burden often associated with cancer. CanDo is unique as our region's only locally based cancer charity and is administered 100 per cent by volunteers, ensuring that every cent that is raised or donated goes directly to assisting local cancer patients and their families. Being small, local and personal, the social workers at the North Coast Cancer Institute who identify a patient in financial hardship have the opportunity to assist immediately by issuing a \$750 essentials card at their professional discretion.

Further assistance can be offered on a case-by-case basis on the professional recommendation of the cancer institute's social workers. The ability to offer immediate financial assistance without the delays in approval and delivery of funds is unique and the envy of other cancer institutes. With all of the stress of a cancer diagnosis it means that immediate financial needs can be met. Over the 10 years CanDo has operated it has assisted over 1,000 local cancer patients and distributed in excess of half a million dollars. Each year demand for assistance has increased, but the CanDo committee has continued to raise funds and attract donors to meet it. As costs rise it has also increased the value of the pre-loaded essentials cards that are given to patients in need immediately.

CanDo's funds come from ongoing support from the Coffs Coast Freemasons and community donations, from as small as the funds from a morning tea, to a considerable donation from a local cancer patient who wished to assist less fortunate cancer patients. However small or large a donation may be, it is greatly appreciated by both the CanDo trust and the cancer patients who receive assistance. In addition to locals running events and fundraisers on their behalf, CanDo's fundraising ventures include the Woolgoolga Bowls Day; the Sawtell Bowling Club Kerry Hines Memorial Bowls Day, named in honour of one of its founding committee members; the Annual Wayne Glenn Memorial Fund Beach Party, named in honour of a local businessman and supporter; swimming relays; and its recent inaugural degustation dinner with celebrity chef Colin Fassnidge.

I am happy to inform the House that the New South Wales Government through TAFE NSW assisted the inaugural degustation dinner held at TAFE's Osprey Restaurant financially by covering the cost of local ingredients and produce, and with teachers and students donating their time to make this dinner an enormous success. The theme of the night was locally produced food prepared by local apprentices to showcase food that was truly world class. The success of this event was far reaching, not only for the significant amount of money raised on a single night, but also in showcasing TAFE, local students and local produce. I thank Colin Fassnidge for donating his time to lead the event as head chef and mentor, Carla Jones and Richie Dolan from The Hilltop Store as assisting chefs, Phil Caldicott and Kylie Waghorn from TAFE, and Nicole McLennan from Coffs Coast Harvest in coordinating local producers to keep the menu locally based.

Our local apprentice chefs experienced the pressure, the prestige and a huge boost in self-confidence in being part of a world-class event that they may not have otherwise experienced in a regional centre. Over \$20,000 was raised on the night. Local food and produce were prepared to a world standard, and were professionally filmed and produced into a promotional video that will be made available to TAFE, local food producers and Coffs Coast Harvest to further promote our region. In keeping with CanDo's wish to support as many people as possible, its next fundraiser will be an Op Shop Ball on 25 October. Other charities will also benefit as ball goers purchase their formal op shop attire at local op shops, with many of these outfits donated back to the op shops after the ball. Funds raised on the evening will enable CanDo to continue to assist cancer patients in need. I thank Julie Jardine and the committee members Wayne Edwards, Tony Walsh, Chris Hines, Loretta Rigby, Helen Dwyer, Christine Clarke, Neil Manson, Dr Karen Briscoe and Carolyn Boyden for their assistance to the communities of the Coffs Coast and the Clarence. I wish them every success in the future.

### IRAQ CIVIL UNREST

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (17:55):** Before I begin this private member's statement I thank the numerous Iraqi community leaders, advocates and associations present in the gallery this evening. Today on behalf of the Iraqi community, both in Fairfield and across Australia, I bring attention to the civil unrest that remains ongoing in Iraq and the impact it is having on our local community. The protests in Iraq began on 1 October 2019 as protestors took to the streets to voice their dissatisfaction over the quality of life, the extreme levels of unemployment and the withholding of vital public services from many of the poorer people living throughout Iraq.

Curfews were imposed in a number of cities while authorities shut roads into the capital; bonfires were the only source of light for protesters who were gathering en masse. But in their fight for jobs and bare essential services, protestors were set upon by Iraqi security forces in scenes of escalating violence and atrocities against civilian protestors. A large number of these protestors were young Iraqi men, who have remained undeterred by the threat of violence and continued to protest for improved essential services and employment. Protesters have continually raised the fact that Iraq generates billions of dollars year upon year through its oil exports, yet it fails to provide the bare public essentials to its people, including hospitals, schools and clean drinking water. To top it all off, the youth unemployment rate is spiralling upwards in excess of 25 per cent.

The demands for change have been continually met with the use of force by security forces, resulting in widespread panic and civil unrest engulfing the region. Over the past two weeks of protests, we have seen a steady stream of reports indicating the unrest has continued to escalate. If people have been following this issue online, strewn throughout the various mediums they will discover a plethora of graphic and confronting imagery, videos and accounts from those on the ground amidst this chaos. Amidst the protests, civilians have been shot dead by security personnel, with a number of individuals allegedly being targeted by snipers on rooftops. A majority of these events have been covered by the various news outlets throughout the world that have captured live the disturbing scenes showing civilians being gunned down while in the vicinity of the protests.

The blatant disregard for human life has run rampant in recent weeks, with live ammunition being shot into crowds of people protesting in the streets. Irrespective of what actions have or have not been sanctioned by the government, it is clear that excessive force is being used against Iraqi protestors whose lives have been placed in grave danger over the past two weeks. Last Wednesday, 9 October 2019, I joined in solidarity with the Fairfield and south-western Sydney Iraqi community at a community gathering to discuss the unrest in Iraq and weigh in on the impact it is having on the broader Iraqi community in Australia. Present at the gathering were local community, political and religious leaders who stood together with the aim of raising awareness in solidarity with those being persecuted in Iraq.

Recently the Joint Committee of Iraqi Organisations in Australia, many members of whom are present here this evening, issued a memorandum of condemnation against the use of force during civil demonstrations in Iraq. This committee comprises 26 different associations that come from a diverse mix of ethnic and religious backgrounds. Since the protests began two weeks ago in Iraq, over 100 people have been killed, more than 7,000 people have been injured and hundreds of protestors remain detained by security forces. These individuals

have suffered tremendously while attempting to advocate for long-term economic and social reforms and improved living conditions, particularly for the poor. Many of them have paid the ultimate price fighting for their fellow man.

The devastation, grief, anger and frustration this has unleashed on the Iraqi community, both locally and abroad, are insurmountable as their friends, family and countrymen continue to suffer in the fight for their basic human rights. The Fairfield community includes a high prevalence of Iraqi families, many of whom still have relatives living in Iraq during this difficult time. As the State member for Fairfield, I stand alongside my constituents during their time of need and I will continue to do all that I can to support our local community. On behalf of the Fairfield electorate, I extend my deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones, and those who have friends and family who remain amidst the turmoil and conflict in Iraq.

### **DUNGOWAN DAM**

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (18:00):** Build it and the rains will come—\$480 million for Dungowan Dam. The first new dam since 1987 to be built in New South Wales will be at Dungowan near Tamworth. This is brilliant news for the Tamworth region and communities. We need to increase our water storage so our communities can feel safe that we will have the water we need to get us through the dry times. The plan says that it will take four years to build, but if we can finish it early, we will. The project is a critical infrastructure project. I want to ensure there are no hold-ups with this project. I want to bust through the red tape. My message is very clear: Everyone needs to get behind the Dungowan Dam project. If you want to obstruct it, get out of the way. The same people who are complaining that we do not have enough water better not complain about building a new dam.

It has taken a lot of work to get this far and I plan to keep the momentum going. State, Federal and local government, as well as the community, have come together. Everyone needs to be part of this and put their shoulder to the wheel. I will be working hard to push this project to start as soon as possible; I cannot wait to see the earthmovers and bulldozers firing it up. This \$480 million project will not only result in secure water for the city and our region for the future, but it will give confidence to our agribusinesses and food processing sectors. I thank Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Prime Minister Scott Morrison, along with Deputy Premier John Barilaro, Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack and the local Federal member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, for coming to Tamworth and visiting the site of the proposed new dam. I also congratulate Tamworth Regional Council on its foresight in acquiring the land in the valley for the proposed dam. This will help kick along the pre-construction planning.

In addition to the Dungowan Dam project, a significant amount is being spent already on infrastructure in the Tamworth area. We said all along that we would put in emergency infrastructure while continuing to work on longer-term water security. That is exactly what we are doing. The projects locally include \$40 million to deliver long-term water security solutions at Tamworth. This involves constructing a pipeline from Chaffey Dam to the existing Dungowan Dam pipeline.

In addition to that is \$3.4 million for the Tamworth drought response to construct a temporary weir to allow water to be piped to Tamworth and reduce transmission losses; \$3.5 million to accelerate detailed option analysis to secure town water for the Upper Namoi, including the communities of Barraba and Manilla; \$1.45 million for off-stream storage infrastructure at Tamworth Regional Council's Calala Water Treatment Plant; and \$1.5 million for the detailed planning for Walcha's long-term water security, which will be backed up by the Safe and Secure Water Program. These important drought infrastructure measures have extended Tamworth's water supply in the face of an unprecedented drought. The Dungowan Dam will be jointly funded by State and Federal governments and will build on these water security projects to ensure Tamworth has a secure supply of water for the future. I go back to where I started: Build it and the rains will come.

### **BATE BAY SURF LIFE SAVING CLUBS**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:05):** In light of the recent commencement of the beach patrol season I acknowledge the amazing and dedicated volunteers from the four Bate Bay surf lifesaving clubs who continue to keep our community safe. The capable and committed team of volunteers at Elouera Surf Life Saving Club have made it their goal to protect and save lives, to continue to build a strong and well-structured education unit and to provide a dedicated, qualified and skilled water safety team. The club's unwavering dedication to these goals meant that last season it achieved its primary objective of, "No lives lost at Elouera Beach during an Elouera Patrol". This is a goal that will undoubtedly guide the efforts of surf lifesavers in the months to come.

I particularly acknowledge the club's board of management, including patron Brian Thompson, executive director Darren Galea, deputy executive director David Kowald, director of administration Peter Carney, director of finance Rory Gillespie, deputy administration and finance officer Ron Hegarty, director of surf sports Peter

King, deputy director of surf sports Andrew Evans, director of education Amber Garcia, assistant of education Leah Byrne, director of lifesaving Andrew McKellar, deputy director of lifesaving Cameron Simpson, director of youth Alyson Scott, director of junior development Mark Summers, director of major events Paul Ingram, and office and functions manager Karlene Hughes.

Since its establishment in 1946 by a group of returned servicemen, the family-oriented Wanda Surf Life Saving Club has grown its current membership to over 1,000 male and female members, ranging from the five-year-old nippers to the original founding members. The primary focus of the club is to deliver surf lifesaving services that ensure the safety of the swimming and surfing public. Wanda's reputation across branch, State and country is evident for its dedication, professionalism, competence and legacy. I particularly acknowledge the club's board of directors, including president Todd Lester, deputy president Nathan Spinner, club captain Michael Bonnici, director of administration John De Cean, director of education Ben Vincent, director of facilities Michael Jay, director of finance Anne Caterson, junior activities group [JAG] chairperson Fiona Sutton, director of lifesaving Mikaela Sutherland, director of member services Natalia Buckley, director of surf sports Greg Pierce and outgoing president Mark Sargeant, whose years of service have left a lasting impact on the club's members and volunteers.

Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club has been ensuring community safety and providing patrols at Cronulla Beach for over 100 years. In a typical season club members provide over 13,000 volunteer hours, perform over 100 rescues, tend to over 200 first aid cases, undertake over 1,000 preventative actions and care for numerous lost children. This selfless dedication to swimmers and beachgoers remains the club's core responsibility. Volunteers should be proud that no lives have been lost while on patrol. I particularly acknowledge the club's officials, including patron Geoff Forshaw; vice patrons Ian Goode, John Bently, Ken English and Kevin Neilson; president Richard Pinker; deputy president Daniel Wood; senior vice-presidents Robert Johnson, Kieran Day, Darryl Ward, Robert Short and John Zagame; life committee members Richard Garnsey, Gregory Holland, Neale Johnstone and Chris Gough; honorary secretary Emma Larssen; honorary treasurer Chris Giles; club captain Chris Barber; vice-captain Darryl Easton; and assistant secretary and treasurer Denise Rayner.

North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club proudly considers lifesaving its core duty and responsibility. This is evident in the club's legacy of providing patrols and beach management duties for over 94 years, with its first patrol taking place on 19 December 1925. Last season alone the club's dedicated volunteers performed over 12,800 hours of patrol duties, made over 60 rescues, recorded over 2,000 preventative actions and hundreds of first aid cases, and cared for lost children, resulting in no lives lost at North Cronulla Beach. I particularly acknowledge the club's board of directors, including patron Warren Rennie, president Geoff Budd, deputy president Craig McKinnery, club captain Linda Hawkins, administration secretary director Donna Hargreaves, finance director Ben Smollett, JAG director Colin Bulloch, youth development director Monika Di Maio, lifesaving director Jamie Primmer, training and education director Mark Anders, competition director Peter Moyle, marketing and communications director Barb Maythers, club operations director Geoff Streater and life members Ian Wallace and Barry Schuettrumpf.

I thank the dedicated volunteers and executive committees at all four Bate Bay surf life saving clubs for continuing to put our community's safety before their own and for ensuring that swimmers and beachgoers across the shire can make the most of our beautiful beaches. They perform an invaluable community service and I know that everyone who enjoys our area truly appreciates their ongoing efforts. The tireless work of our lifesaving volunteers not only makes our shire the best place to live, work and raise a family, but also embodies the true Australian spirit of giving back. I thank the lifesavers for their incredible contribution to our community, extend my best wishes for this season and trust that they will ensure there are no lives lost on Bate Bay this season.

### **IRAQ CIVIL UNREST**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (18:10):** The electorate of Prospect is home to a large and vibrant population of Australian Iraqis who love their adopted homeland, but also care deeply about their birthplace of Iraq. They wish to see Iraq as a beacon of democracy, free of civil and religious strife and sectarianism so that all Iraqis and their families can live a safe, secure and fulfilling life. Recently I was honoured to meet with representatives from the Joint Committee of Iraqi Organisations in Australia, a group made up of 23 Iraqi community and media groups in Australia covering all religious and ethnic affiliations. The committee raised concerns about the excessive force used by the Iraqi Government to suppress civil demonstrations.

According to the Iraqi Human Rights Commission in excess of 100 people have been killed and 4,000 injured during demonstrations since the start of October. These demonstrators have been marching and dying for their basic civil and human rights, for a government free of corruption, and for positions and appointments to be decided on merit rather than sectarianism or sectarian favours. The people of Iraq are not asking for anything more than what Australians want and expect from their government. They want better employment opportunities and basic services like working electricity and water supplies. The current protests are

a continuation of the peaceful demonstrations and assemblies that were held between 2011 and 2015. These protesters are fighting for the same basic services and reforms that all Iraqi people deserve.

The difference between these previous demonstrations and now is the Iraqi Government's response, which has been excessive. For example, Human Rights Watch has reported that a video published on 8 October shows a solitary, unarmed protester waving an Iraqi flag and then being struck down by an apparent gunshot from security forces. It is deplorable that a single protester who was waving a flag and posed no threat has been gunned down. This is only one of thousands of casualties among the protesters and is only one illustration of the brutal response towards unarmed civilians. The Iraqi Government must show restraint and must respect the rights of protestors to gather peacefully and demonstrate.

It is not just the protesters who the Iraqi security forces have targeted. There have been reports of security forces firing tear gas at ambulances and arresting medics attempting to help injured protesters. Iraqi community leaders in western Sydney have expressed that they have no faith in the Iraqi Government to mount a credible investigation into the excessive force used by security forces. Over the last decade the Iraqi Government has promised time and time again that there will be an investigation and that security forces will be held accountable for their use of force. But according to Human Rights Watch and local Iraqi community leaders this has not happened.

In order to resolve these demonstrations peacefully and restore the Iraqi people's faith in their elected government, which is critical to a well-functioning, non-sectarian democracy, the Joint Committee of Iraqi Organisations in Australia has made the following demands of the Iraqi Government: First, identify offenders who have shot civilians and bring them to justice; secondly, enforce the law to prevent the violation of human rights, guarantee the right to demonstrate and restrict the ownership of arms with the Iraqi Armed Forces; thirdly, respond to the demands of protesters with an agreed schedule to provide employment opportunities and improve the basic services of water and electricity supply; and, fourthly, recognise the casualties in the demonstrations as martyrs and immediately release detained individuals.

I stand with the Iraqi people and their community leaders in the electorate of Prospect, and across Australia, who have banded together to demand that the Iraqi Government be held accountable for these abuses of civilians by security forces. I call on the members of the Parliament of New South Wales to support the Iraqi people and their rights. The Joint Committee of Iraqi Organisations has made a series of reasonable demands. It and the Iraqi people are not asking for a revolution. All they want is to be given the opportunity to live, work and be secure, and to be represented by a democratic government free from corruption, cronyism and sectarianism. Let the people of Iraq know that this Parliament supports their struggle and I, as their member of Parliament, stand with them. I thank the House.

#### **NORTHERN SYDNEY TAFE COOKERY STUDENTS**

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (18:15):** It is with immense pride that I update the House on the success of students from the cookery section of Northern Beaches TAFE who won the prestigious 2019 Johnson's Club Chef Cookery Challenge. In winning this award they beat all other leading TAFE cookery campuses in New South Wales. Students from TAFE NSW Northern Sydney took out the winning trophy at the 2019 TAFE NSW Johnson's Club Chef Cookery Challenge. The challenge promotes excellence and encourages achievement within the New South Wales commercial cookery students community. It provides an opportunity for TAFE NSW students to come together and use the skills they have learned to engage in friendly competition with their peers.

The winning team's manager was Craig Whitting, who is a longstanding constituent with a proud record of service to the Manly community. I had the privilege of catching up with Craig when I visited the TAFE recently with Minister Lee. The winning commercial cookery students included Gabriella Bombara, Spencer Abbott, Jurwan Phumpant and Nathan Gadsby. Those students would be at home in any hatted restaurant or well-regarded dining institution. They participated in a mystery box style cook-off as part of the challenge that was held at TAFE NSW Ultimo. Participants from across the State were organised into teams that were then tasked with preparing four courses in a limited time frame for a panel of esteemed industry judges. I note that all dishes were prepared from the ingredients supplied in the mystery box and the participants were judged on food presentation, culinary skill, knife skills and workflow.

I thank Johnson's Club Chef General Manager in New South Wales, Anthony Gatley, who I know is proud of the high standards of the students. My sincerest thanks go to Craig Whitting, someone who I know is very passionate about ensuring that his students have the best learning experience possible. I thank him for his ongoing service. The wonderful students should be immensely proud of their achievements. On behalf of all members of this place, I express my sincerest congratulations.

### NEPEAN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (18:17):** The Nepean Football Association [NFA] held its annual awards dinner last Saturday, 12 October. The dinner was a resounding success: a night of highlighting the achievements of players, coaches and other significant individuals who have excelled in a variety of areas. The night also centred on acknowledging the amazing contributions of the volunteers who are the foundation of the football community within their district. Without them, the NFA would not be the organisation it is today.

The NFA was established in 1961 with the aim of bringing together clubs from all over the outer west of Sydney to promote, develop and grow football in western Sydney, encouraging people of all ages and abilities to get involved. With a district that covers four local government areas—Penrith City Council, Blue Mountains City Council, Hawkesbury City Council and Wollondilly Shire Council—they have a staggering 11,656 registered players belonging to 30 affiliated football clubs. This year alone, the NFA has 1,035 registered teams. The association also owns the Nepean Representative Football Club, Nepean Referees Group and Nepean Dragons Special Needs Group.

Over the past 58 years the NFA has appointed and honoured 17 life members who have shown outstanding dedication to the association and have played a large role in the development of the NFA. Those life members include Mrs Judy Conn, Mr David Morgan, Mr William (Bill) Morris, Mrs Judy Morgan, Mrs Pam Palmer, Mr Ernie Ness, Mr Jim Bradley, Mr Ron Stonestreet, Mr Jim Harwood and Mr Peter Budd. Sadly, seven other life members have passed away over the years, yet their contributions, service and passion for our region is still worthy of acknowledgement. Past life members include Reverend F. Bendeich, Mr J. Oatley, Mrs Barbara M. Horley, Mr George Churchward, Mr H. Hoff, Mr J. Clark and Mr L. Kol. I thank and acknowledge those incredible people for their service and dedication to the Nepean Football Association, but also more broadly to our wider community, particularly our young ones.

The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government is committed to increasing participation in sporting communities, and over the past year eight clubs within the NFA have received funding for much-needed improvements. Thanks to Federal, State and local funding, the NFA has received approximately \$8.2 million spanning 12 different projects that will improve club amenities and facilities, as well as the clubs themselves. In my own electorate early this year I had the pleasure of announcing \$1.3 million for new amenities at Mark Leece Oval for St Clair United Football Club, co-funded by Penrith City Council, which will also benefit the St Clair Netball Club, whose members play and train at the same facility, and \$670,000 for extended amenities and new barbecue facilities at the Mulgoa Rise oval for Glenmore Park Football Club.

Across the NFA, nine member clubs also received \$12,500 through the State Government defibrillator grant program to purchase automated external defibrillators. Through State local sports grants, seven member clubs across the NFA received a total of \$26,000 for resources, such as coach training, fencing, playing equipment and facilities maintenance equipment. This funding will ensure that the football community of outer western Sydney will continue to grow, encouraging greater access and participation in sport across the district. No program is encouraging greater access and participation than our Active Kids rebate program, which has been a resounding success. It has been so successful that the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government last year announced that two vouchers will be made available in a single year for each child.

This program is helping children not only to begin participating in sport but also to continue participating throughout the year, enabling them to join in winter sports and summer sports. I know that in many communities across western Sydney the cost of living is biting, so when the State Government announced the Active Kids rebate program it was taken up with great enthusiasm. It has had an incredible uptake, particularly in my region in western Sydney. I extend my congratulations to the Nepean Football Association and all the clubs involved in the association on promoting, developing and growing football across western Sydney. Once again, I congratulate all the award recipients at the NFA's annual awards dinner and thank everyone who made the night possible. Congratulations to everyone involved.

### MINEWORKER SAFETY

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (18:22):** Last month I spoke about the CFMEU Northern Mining & NSW Energy District Annual Memorial Service Day, at which we remembered those workers who have tragically lost their lives in the northern district coalfields since 1801. The Jim Comerford Memorial Wall, which names each of those workers, opened in 1996—the same year as the Gretley mine disaster and an horrific year of fatalities for the Northern Mining District. In the early hours of the morning on 14 November 1996 a team of eight employees of the Newcastle Wallsend Coal Company were working night shift. Four men were operating a continuous mining machine and the remaining four members of the team were in a crib room a short distance away. Suddenly, and with tremendous force, water rushed in from a hole in the face made by the continuous miner. The machine was swept more than 17 metres back down the heading and jammed against the sides.

The four operators were engulfed in water, swept away and drowned. Those men were Edward Batterham, aged 48; John Hunter, aged 36; Mark Kaiser, aged 30; and Damon Murray, aged 19. The remaining employees in the crib room survived, though it too was flooded by the inrush. A two-year inquiry found that the plan the miners were working from was in fact wrong. It had incorrectly identified the old workings of Young Wallsend Colliery to be about 100 metres from where this team was operating, when in fact it was only seven metres away. This error stemmed from a failure to conduct due diligence and identify uncertainties in the mapping of the Young Wallsend Colliery. A string of oversights and professional failures ultimately cost four men their lives. Their deaths were preventable.

Then Labor Attorney General Jeff Shaw announced that criminal charges would be laid against eight individuals and the Newcastle Wallsend Coal Company three years after the mining disaster, stating that the Government was determined to see justice done. The company was successfully convicted five years later. It was fined \$1.47 million and the mine managers were fined \$102,000. Since that time the labour movement has fought long and hard for changes to mine safety regulations, with the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union leading the charge. Sadly, but thankfully, Gretley acted as a catalyst to improve mining safety right around New South Wales and we have seen significant reductions in mining fatalities since then.

However, as I noted recently in this place, yet another young man's name was added to the memorial wall at this year's service. Clearly more work is needed. I am proud to be a part of a movement that stands up for workers and their rights, especially the right to come home alive and uninjured at the end of a fair day's work. In Victoria a workplace manslaughter task force has been assembled to examine new laws that would apply criminal penalties, including jail time, for individuals whose actions result in a workplace death. Similar laws exist in Queensland already. This should be the next step for New South Wales, but this Government remains unrelenting in its pursuit of the anti-worker agenda.

I hope that on this year's anniversary of the Gretley mining disaster those opposite can reflect on their own policies with a view to ensure that every worker comes home safe and sound at the end of every work day. In the meantime, I stand by our trade union leaders in the mining industry and other industries where workplace safety is lagging. We will continue to work towards zero deaths. I have said it before and I will say it again: One death is too many.

#### NORTH SHORE SAILING CLUBS

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:26):** North Shore is home to some outstanding organisations that bring people together through a shared love of sailing and appreciation of our magnificent harbour. Sydney Flying Squadron is one such organisation. Through its operational replica fleet the squadron is keeping alive the history of the early 18-foot skiffs that sailed our harbour over a century ago. Founded in 1891 by department store-owner Mark Foy, the Sydney Flying Squadron challenged conventional sailing practices by using vibrant-coloured sails and handicapped starts to make competitions easier for spectators to follow and enjoy.

Having supported the Sydney Flying Squadron with a grant to improve accessibility in the past, on the weekend I was proud to join its members to officially open its new boat ramp, which will give my community easier and safer access to the harbour. The \$420,000 project—which received \$332,000 from the Berejiklian Government's Boating Now program and \$90,000 from North Sydney Council—is ready just in time for the peak boating season. As the old ramp was too steep, short and narrow to easily launch and retrieve vessels, the completion of the new ramp will offer safer and more reliable access to the harbour for the Sydney Flying Squadron and other recreational vessels coming off Nielsen Park.

I thank former Sydney Flying Squadron Board Director Peter Jackson and Adrienne Jackson, who advocated strongly for the construction of the ramp. They have been closely involved in the project since the beginning. Peter is a long-time club member and his passion for sailing and commitment to the squadron are to be admired. With the ability to launch non-powered water craft, the new boat ramp is easier and safer to use and ensures that everyone can take advantage of the improved harbour accessibility. It will benefit kayakers, paddle boarders and the broader community. It also incorporates a stunning compass rose to help sailors settle any unruly arguments about which way the wind is blowing. The ramp was officially launched by a replica of the historic 18-foot skiff *Britannica*, recognising the centenary since the original vessel was built. It was a proud moment for skipper and Sydney Flying Squadron life member Ian Smith.

Sydney Flying Squadron has had many famed sailors in its ranks, including the late Ian Kiernan, AO, who took particular interest in the club, having specialised in restoration as a builder. Ian treated the Sydney Flying Squadron as a home. I know it was home to many members of his family as well, as they lived just one street away. It was a great treasure to join members of his family, including Judy Kiernan; daughter Pip, who is now the Chairperson of Clean Up Australia; and a number of their children and grandchildren, including Saskia, to unveil the beautiful bronze Ian Kiernan memorial plaque in the centre of the compass rose. As a sailor and a patron of

Sydney Flying Squadron, Ian had a significant impact on our seas and it is fitting that his plaque sits alongside our harbour, recognising his legacy. At the unveiling it was noted that he is facing the harbour, keeping an eye on the sailors and the waterways, which for so long he championed keeping clean.

I acknowledge Commodore Billy Loader, who worked on the Ian Kiernan memorial. He put his heart and soul into the design and execution of the plaque. He is an exceptional leader of Sydney Flying Squadron, ensuring that it remains the notable and successful community club that it is today. I have always loved getting out and about with the Sydney Flying Squadron. Last year I joined members of the club on their spectator ferry, which follows the boats to get an up-close view of them in action. Sailing the skiffs, which are replicas of the original historic skips, takes an enormous amount of skill and it is not uncommon to see the crew hurling buckets of water out of the boats as they have a tendency to capsize during the races. When I was out there last a mast snapped on *Yendys*. It is an interesting and thrilling sport. I thank Commodore Billy Loader, President John Winning and former Board Director Peter Jackson for their ongoing commitment to the squadron.

Another fantastic club in my electorate is the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club. Recently I was pleased to join the club's members at their annual flag officers' dinner. I congratulate John Crawford, Maurie Evans, John Jeremy, Tom Moul, David Salter and John Sturrock on their elections as the club's new directors. I thank Commodore Bruce Dover, Vice Commodore Sean Kelly, Rear Commodore Peter Scott, Captain Chris Manion and Treasurer Charles Davis for their continued dedication to the club.

I have spoken before about the achievements of Middle Harbour Yacht Club, which brings together people young and old to be active and stay active on the harbour. I look forward to seeing the club's members this Friday when the Minister for Energy and Environment, who is in the Chamber, and I attend their upcoming Renewable Energy Cup yacht race. I congratulate Commodore Peter Lewis and Chairman John McCuaig, and wish them well with their race this week.

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (18:31):** I acknowledge the private member's statement of the member for North Shore. As the Minister for Energy and Environment, I acknowledge the significant contribution that Ian Kiernan made not only to our country but also to our planet. Ian is a legend of this country. He started off as a sailor, property developer and philanthropist, but the thing he is best known for is his work as an environmentalist and conservationist. He started Clean Up Australia Day in 1989 and inspired approximately 40,000 Australians to join him in cleaning up our waterways. He was so appalled by what he saw out in our seas and by the pollution choking our waterways. In recent times up to 35 million people participate annually in not only Clean Up Australia Day but also cleaning up the world. He has made a tremendous difference and we need to build on his legacy by tackling plastics pollution, which we will do very soon.

### HUNTER MANUFACTURING AWARDS

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (18:33):** Manufacturing has changed the world, and today the manufacturing sector is in a process of change and transformation. In fact, we know that the changes taking place in the manufacturing sector now are more challenging and more fundamental than at any time since the industrial revolution. Against this backdrop of challenge and change both here in Australia and around the world, I am proud to represent an electorate that is intimately connected with the manufacturing industry of the Hunter. It is true that, whilst manufacturing jobs nationally dropped by 24 per cent between 2011 and 2016, manufacturing jobs in my electorate dropped by 36 per cent in the same period.

It is true that manufacturers continue to struggle with high energy input costs. It is true that manufacturers are being constrained by ongoing tighter credit conditions. It is true that manufacturers are continuing to grapple with the high costs of other inputs due to a low Australian dollar, the drought and high commodity prices. The good news for New South Wales, particularly the people of the Hunter, is that manufacturing is fighting back. Thanks to the combined Federal and State policies of the Morrison and Berejiklian governments the manufacturing sector in the Hunter may be down, but it is certainly not out!

On Friday evening I was privileged to be present at the 2019 Hunter Manufacturing Awards [HMA] in Newcastle. The awards highlight, showcase and champion the extraordinary resilience and adaptation that are hallmarks of the Hunter manufacturing sector, making it the country's leader in manufacturing innovation and transformation. They highlight the combined contributions of men and women from my electorate and from across the region who continue to be committed to making "things", even when it seems somehow old-fashioned to do so. I am talking about leaders such as the workforce at the Chamberlain Group in West Gosford, a local business that began in 1914, which was recognised by the HMA as Manufacturer of the Year and which also received the award for Excellence in People and Skills Development.

I congratulate the workers at the Chamberlain Group, who have been involved in long-term occupational health and safety reform to create a workplace in which the safety of workers is the cornerstone of all that they

do. I am talking about leaders such as Kara McDonald, who was recognised with the award of Apprentice of the Year; and Megan Crowfoot, who received the Rising Star Award. I congratulate Kara and Megan, who are reminding us all that the manufacturing workforce is changing. I am talking about leaders such as the longstanding Newcastle-based steel maker Molycop—winner of the award for Environmental Excellence. Molycop traces its history back to the original Comsteel site in Waratah, Newcastle. Today Molycop is a pioneer in "green steel" technology and innovation—a process that involves using old rubber tyres as a replacement for coking coal, diverting millions of tyres from landfill and working towards greater environmental stability. I congratulate Molycop.

In the Hunter, innovation, adaptation and transformation are hallmarks of a sector that is preparing itself for the future. But on Friday night, as I met with nominees and celebrated with award winners, I also heard stories of the challenges that the sector is facing: the challenge of energy prices that are, on average, 91 per cent higher than they were a decade ago; the challenge of workforce skills shortages, thanks to a lack of government investment in TAFE and apprenticeships; and the challenges posed by global competition. It was clear to me, as I listened to those stories, that the manufacturing sector in the Hunter is forging its new future in spite of, not because of, the policies of this Government.

To all the Hunter Manufacturing Awards nominees and award winners who were recognised on Friday night, I express the thanks and congratulations of members on this side of the House. I do so proudly because we are committed unequivocally to a strong manufacturing sector; we are committed to excellence in the standards of safety in the workplace; we are committed to the environmental revolution that needs to take place across all our industries; and, most of all, we are committed to strong and secure jobs so that workers and their families, like the workers and their families in my electorate of Charlestown, can succeed and thrive. The manufacturing sector in the Hunter is fighting back, despite the challenges that it is facing. This evening I recognise and celebrate that fightback.

#### **PARRAMATTA WALK 4 HOPE**

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (18:38):** I bring to the attention of the House the sixth annual Walk 4 Hope, which is a community event to raise awareness and funds for Huntington's NSW ACT. Huntington's NSW ACT has a strong tie with the Parramatta community because of the close proximity of the Huntington's unit at Westmead Hospital. The Walk 4 Hope in Parramatta was the fourth and final walk in September for Huntington's. I welcomed over 350 people to Parramatta Park for this event and was pleased to see so many people with Huntington's disease and their families participate. It was wonderful to see Bob Montgomery and his 11-year-old grandson lead the walk on their bikes. Bob and his grandson will ride from Sydney to Barwon Heads in Victoria to raise funds and awareness along the way.

Huntington's has been described as a combination of Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease and schizophrenia, in slow motion—possibly the worst disease known to man, with no treatment and no cure. It is even worse living with the knowledge that you may have passed it on to your children. Each child of a person with Huntington's has a 50 per cent chance of inheriting the disease. Around 2,000 people across Australia have the disease, with maybe 6,000 at risk and many more affected family members, friends and carers. Due to the inherited nature of the disease, it is a family-centred condition, with few outside the inner circle knowing or caring about it. Now there is a simple test available for those who choose to know if they are gene positive. It can only be undertaken with support from a genetic counsellor.

There is some hope ahead, with a number of genetic research projects underway—including at Westmead Hospital, which is currently participating in two international drug trials. At the same time, people with Huntington's disease are looking for the wider community to understand and empathise with their catastrophic predicament. Huntington's NSW ACT is a small consumer charity working to support the needs of people with Huntington's disease. The association supports people affected by Huntington's disease to live their best possible life while striving to eliminate the factors that make the organisation necessary. It provides information, referrals, support groups and social clubs for affected people and their carers, as well as a youth connection program for kids and young people at risk.

It has recently started providing NDIS support and coordination. It has a vision that everyone with Huntington's disease will be supported and cared for in their own homes and eventually in Huntington's-specific residential care with well-trained staff who understand their particular needs. I recognise Huntington's NSW ACT as a valuable and hardworking community organisation, and acknowledge all the board members for their hard work. They include Brian Rumbold, Dr Therese Alting, Katy Clymo, Stephen Guthrie, Craig Dalli, Stephen Garrard and Allison Hill. I also recognise all the staff for their hard work and commitment, including Lewis Kaplan, Amanda Dickey, Amy Hale, Giselle Beaumont, Pauline Keyvar and Stewart Swales. Finally, I thank all the volunteers who helped and supported the walk and the association.

## STOCKTON BEACH

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (18:41):** It is an iconic Christmas image for many Aussie families, including mine: gathering the kids, putting on the swimmers, sunscreen, hat and sunglasses, and spending some quality time down at the beach with the family. Thousands of Newcastle and Hunter families will be heading to our gorgeous beaches this summer: Nobbys, Newcastle, Dixon Park, Bar Beach, Susan Gilmore, Merewether—all of them, except for Stockton. Why? It is because there is no beach left. While the 500,000 tonnes of sand needed to replenish the catastrophically eroded beach in the short term may be a little too much for Santa to fit in his sack, there is one small gift that the 4,100 people of the Stockton community are hoping to find under the tree: a completed coastal management program from Newcastle council, outlining the ideal long-term solution for Stockton's erosion crisis.

That is something the Minister for Local Government would also like to see. On 2 October she told ABC Radio that she wants to hear from council what the solution is by the end of the year. I hope that the Minister also funds Newcastle council adequately to allow the solution to be expedited so it occurs by the end of the year. That prerecorded interview aired two days after the Minister visited Stockton for the first time. She was joined by environment Minister Matt Kean. They were invited by me and the people of Stockton—a showing much appreciated by the community. Some important developments were announced during the community meeting, the most notable of which was the declaration of Stockton as a Significant Open Coast Location—one of 16 around the State—which allows the assessment of Newcastle council's funding applications under the \$83.6 million Coastal and Estuary Grants Program to be expedited.

This means that application assessments that ordinarily would take months can now be decided on in only weeks or even days. That kind of fast-tracking is more than necessary. The people of Stockton live in fear that the next storm swell to hit the beach could be the final straw. With the east coast low season just six months away, that final straw could land very soon. It was heartening to hear that both Minister Hancock and Minister Kean are keeping open minds about what the long-term solution could be, including the possibility of using sand from offshore sources for beach nourishment. While that does require intervention from the Deputy Premier, Minister Hancock said that both she and Minister Kean were prepared to go back to Deputy Premier John Barilaro to highlight the erosion as an urgent situation where sand nourishment is needed and ask the question about using offshore sand.

The consideration of the use of offshore sand was backed up by the Deputy Premier on 3 October 2019 when he spoke to Paul Turton on ABC radio. Mr Barilaro said, "The concept that we may dredge the ocean there to replenish the beach with sand is an option on the table", and it is one that he is happy to consider. He went on to say, "I think it is possible. They do it in Queensland, it's been done elsewhere, we just haven't done it in New South Wales but I'm more than happy to work with council." He went on to add that the Government was able to put money aside to deal with the erosion. These are welcome words to a community that has been ignored for far too long but they need to be backed up by action.

I acknowledge several people who have worked hard for action. Lucas Gresham's shocking drone footage of the beach initiated a fresh wave of activism within the community, bolstering the efforts of the Stockton Community Liaison Group whose members are Barbara Whitcher, Simon Jones, Andrew Smith, Sean Shotter, Keith Craig, Callan Nickerson, Brian Hunt, Ron Boyd, Amanda Plumsted and Kate Johnson. *Newcastle Herald* journalist Donna Page has been instrumental in putting this disaster on the agenda of national media. Her efforts are testament to the commitment that she and the newspaper have to standing up for their community. There are only 10 weeks until Christmas. Let us get a finalised coastal management program under the tree, decide our solution and get to work. Let us get it done.

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (18:47):** I thank the member for Newcastle for his advocacy on this very important issue. Stockton Beach is an incredible beach and we want to ensure that remains the case. Right now coastal erosion is having a devastating impact, not only on the beach but also on the entire community. I was thrilled to attend the beach and see firsthand the devastating impact of that erosion. I acknowledge the outstanding work of the Minister for Local Government in agreeing to fast-track or making sure the council is able to access the \$1.5 million in emergency, long-term funding by declaring the area a special disaster zone. Is that correct?

**Mr Tim Crakanthorp:** Coastal management hotspot.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** A coastal management hotspot. To reiterate the comments of the member for Newcastle, all options are on the table as to how we can remediate the site, including sand extraction, but we will take the advice of experts when making any decisions.

## REGIONAL WATER SECURITY

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (18:48):** As members of the House know, I have spoken many times about the impact that the disastrous drought is having on the communities of my electorate of Northern Tablelands. Certainly the word "drought" and the phrase "water security" go hand-in-hand and have done for the last 12 to 18 months. Last Tuesday was a historic day for our region near the Guyra community at Malpas Dam with the official opening and switching on of the Malpas Dam to Guyra pipeline. This 20-kilometre pipeline, connecting the vast water supply of Armidale to the community of Guyra, is an absolute saviour for that community. For the past two months before this opening, the Government has been paying Armidale Regional Council to truck water into the Guyra community of some 2,500 people because its small 277-megalitre dam reservoir had run almost completely dry.

Guyra's annual water usage is around 473 megalitres, far exceeding its water storage capacity. Guyra's normally plentiful and regular rainfall each year has always got it through by topping up the reservoir as the community drew down on it. Unfortunately, as every member of this House knows, we have not had the rain. That has highlighted some significant vulnerabilities in many of our communities. As the Deputy Premier said on the day before the pipeline was switched on, the six big pumps at Malpas Dam, that pump the water all the way up the hill to Guyra, are six guardian angels protecting the Guyra community. I thank the local community and Armidale Regional Council for their enormous effort. We only turned the first sod of soil on the project in February this year and it was completed and opened some seven months later. It was incredible work to get that done so quickly to save the community.

While talking about water security, I think it is now time for us to have a mature and sensible conversation, particularly in regional New South Wales, about a topic which has been a little bit taboo to discuss in connection with water and water usage, and that is about water recycling. A number of councils currently put their greywater through treatment plants. The treated water is used to irrigate crops that are grown and sold, to fatten cattle which are then sold, is sold to irrigators and used to water crops that are then sold, or the councils simply pay a fee to the Environment Protection Authority and discharge the treated water into the local river system.

For instance, Inverell Shire Council discharges treated water into the Macintyre River and Moree Plains Shire Council does the same into the Mehi and Gwydir rivers. Armidale Regional Council irrigates lucerne paddocks and other councils have different methods. But no-one in our neck of the woods—in the Northern Tablelands and the New England north-west—has tackled the issue of investing in major treatment facilities to treat wastewater to a much higher standard and either use it for drinking water or, at the very least, use it to water our numerous playing fields or use it in horticultural or concrete businesses, both of which are large water consumers. We do not do that at the moment. Now is the time to have a conversation about doing that.

I commend Tenterfield Shire Council, Mayor Peter Petty and General Manager Terry Dodds, for having the courage to say, "We are going to do this at Tenterfield." That community has had to look down the barrel of having no water whatsoever. Armidale Regional Council is also thinking seriously about going down that path. I put on the record my commitment that if councils and their communities want to go down that path, I will walk that path with them, side-by-side, and lobby this State Government to provide the necessary funding to build that infrastructure.

Armidale Regional Council estimates that in the city of Armidale alone—a city of 23,000 people—treating wastewater an extra three times to the standards required, reusing greywater and pumping it back into the town supply will halve the city's annual water consumption. If that is not a brilliant water security measure then I do not know what is. How do you not seriously look at that and discuss it? I know there has been stigma around it in the past but if the drought has taught us anything it is that we must look at all measures to secure water for the future of our communities.

## WATER RECYCLING

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (18:53):** It was interesting to listen to my colleague the member for Northern Tablelands speak in his private member's statement about his electorate's need for water security and water recycling. I raise the same issue in relation to my beautiful coastal electorate of Pittwater. While we have very different water challenges to those of the Northern Tablelands, we also need to do our bit to find new and sustainable ways to ensure that we use and conserve our water resources wisely and sustainably and find ways to ensure that our open and green spaces are maintained in the current drought climate. That is not only the case in my community of Pittwater but also in all communities across New South Wales.

With 98 per cent of the State in drought and towns and cities across New South Wales doing it tough, we must take this opportunity to be creative in the way we plan for long-term water supply—not just drinking water but for industry, agriculture, household and community use. With the State in drought, it is hard to justify that important and precious potable water is used to maintain open spaces. But we also recognise regional communities have just as much right to parks and playing fields as residents in my amazing and generally well-watered coastal seat of Pittwater. There are plenty of ways we can plan, re-use and recycle our water to save drinking water while still caring for the environment.

In my community of Pittwater we have come a long way. It was only 30 years ago that large parts of the community were on septic systems and personal rainwater tanks were illegal. So we have come a long way in regarding water as a precious resource in my community. I would like to give a shout-out to community clubs and groups in Pittwater that are constantly proposing new ways to preserve and manage their water use. Golf clubs are often at the forefront of this, given the large costs of watering their courses. The Mona Vale Golf Club is installing state-of-the-art technology to manage stormwater and floodwater run-off on the course and improve capture of stormwater for re-use. I recently received a request from the sprightly president of Palm Beach Golf Club, Daniel Hill, who is considering how best to incorporate water recycling on that course. Northern Beaches Council is also championing water-sensitive urban design on council-owned properties to catch unused rainwater and increase drought resilience.

With water recycling in general, some commentators and politicians see the merit in water recycling. Others sadly do not. It is important to point out that all water is recycled under natural processes. Saving water by recycling means we have extra water—both potable and non-potable—available during times of drought. We know that recycled water can do jobs like flushing toilets, watering sporting fields and irrigating farms just as well as potable water. Previously there has been a nervousness in the community about recycling water and what it can and cannot be used for. But the current drought has focused our attention on promoting water conservation and water recycling. The Government is already maintaining a number of water recycling plants across Sydney.

Rouse Hill is a world-leading example. The water recycling plant provides 32,000 homes and businesses in the area with water for gardens and flushing toilets. In St Marys, recycled water is produced for irrigating the local golf course. The recycling plant at Penrith provides water for Penrith's sporting fields. In Wollongong, the water recycling plant provides water for both the local golf course and sporting fields, as well as for dust suppression for the nearby coal terminal. BlueScope Steel at Port Kembla uses about 20 million litres of recycled water every day to make iron and steel, cool the plant and reduce dust.

Water conservation targets can also be an important driver for investment in water efficiency projects that manage demand. I remain concerned, as I was at the time, when the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW [IPART] in 2016 ruled on pricing arrangements that effectively undermined the feasibility of water recycling schemes promoted by councils and developers such as at Barangaroo and Central Park. We need to do all we can to use pricing as a lever to drive investment in water efficiency projects. I am pleased that IPART is looking again at those matters, particularly as we look to the creation of a new aerotropolis around the Nancy-Bird Walton Airport.

We need to be more innovative, visionary and open-minded in how we ensure greater water-sensitive urban design to create a green, shaded and pleasant city with great access to affordable and sustainable water supply systems. With no end to the current drought in sight, we must start the conversation about increasing water recycling for non-potable uses and have a broader conversation with councils and communities about the future of water recycling. Communities across New South Wales, including my community of Pittwater, can benefit from using recycled water and preserving our precious potable water supplies.

#### ANTI-POVERTY WEEK

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (18:58):** I wish to speak on Anti-Poverty Week. Earlier today, I had the privilege of attending and opening an anti-poverty forum in my electorate of Cabramatta. The forum was organised by the Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW and comprised of many organisations such as Service NSW, NSW Health, Transport for NSW and many other vital organisations. Forums like this are important and play a pivotal role in aiding those in my community, especially those who do not speak English as a first language. They help them better understand how to access support services when they need them. Those who do not speak English as a first language in my community are often the ones who are most vulnerable to living in poverty. With the help of forums like these, constituents in my electorate are able to get to know these services and what they offer.

I would like to congratulate Joanna Quilty, Janine Young, Dr Carly Copolov, Andrew Lewis, Margaret Crothers and other dignitaries present at the forum for allowing me to share my story and those of the people I represent in this place. As I mentioned earlier, as a refugee myself, I know all too well how hard things can be when you are pondering whether you want to put fuel in your car to get to work or to put food on the table

for the kids. I was one of the very few fortunate ones in my family to have the opportunity to come to Australia and I remember very clearly the support that community groups gave to me and my family as a kid growing up.

The issue of poverty lurking within our communities is very real. Many families are struggling and the Government should be doing more to help them. Kids should never be subjected to poverty nor should they be blaming themselves about why they live in poverty and have very little. I urge fellow members and people in New South Wales, if you can spare a few dollars or a bag of groceries, donate it to someone who is in need. Volunteer some time with organisations who assist the most vulnerable in our communities and check on your fellow neighbour. If we are going to eliminate poverty altogether in New South Wales, we must do so by working together. And to all the support services out there, whether you are a Government organisation or a not-for-profit organisation, keep up the good work and thank you for the tireless hours you have invested into eliminating poverty in communities like mine. The job that you do is thankless most of the time but rest assured that the work you all do will change so many lives for the better.

### REGIONAL MEDICAL SERVICES

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:01):** It is well known that regional communities show great resilience in the face of a challenge. One such challenge is attracting and retaining doctors in small towns. While we have more Australian graduate doctors coming into our system, fewer are choosing to become general practitioners and even fewer are coming to work in rural areas. We are certainly not alone in this challenge but it is something that country people, quite rightly, do not accept. Few things are more important to us than the availability and quality of local health services.

Country people also want to see their local general practitioners, nurses and paramedics—those who serve their community tirelessly—adequately supported. We do not want them burning out. This is why I have been working extremely hard to support the township of Cootamundra which is currently experiencing a doctor shortage. The number of general practitioners is down at the Cootamundra Medical Centre and the flow-on impact of this is reduced doctor access at Cootamundra Hospital during weekdays. While GPs are ultimately the responsibility of my Federal colleagues, I have been working behind the scenes to ensure concerns raised with me on this important issue are addressed. I have consulted with local doctors, who are doing their best under difficult circumstances, to hear where efforts need to be focused.

I have met with Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council, which is understandably concerned for the welfare and wellbeing of its residents but also the town's medical reputation. The council is absolutely to be commended for its advocacy on this matter on behalf of Cootamundra residents. I have also been contacted directly by many members of the Cootamundra community expressing concern about the current situation and I thank them for getting in touch with me. I have written to the New South Wales health Minister and been in constant contact with Murrumbidgee Local Health District [MLHD] over its recruitment drive for a locum to cover weekdays in the emergency department and a nurse practitioner to provide additional support for emergency patient presentations.

In the meantime, MLHD is urging local residents to continue to present at the Cootamundra Hospital emergency department for assessment and treatment by highly-trained registered nurses. The Critical Care Advisory Service also provides support to those on the ground through telephone and remote telehealth cameras. Of course the current doctor shortage does have a flow-on impact for broader health services in the town, particularly where patients are being transported by ambulance to Wagga Wagga Base Hospital for treatment. I thank local doctors, nurses and paramedics for their professionalism and dedication as the situation is worked through. At the root of the problem is the inability to attract general practitioners and registrars to the town. If our regional location was not enough of a hurdle for prospective doctors, I understand Cootamundra Medical Centre has been allocated reduced numbers of GP registrars through GP Synergy. As such, GPs at Cootamundra Medical Centre have had to withdraw services to Cootamundra Hospital at some times to maintain services at the centre.

I am advised that two years ago Cootamundra was allocated four GP registrars, which has since been reduced to a maximum of two with the potential to drop further, despite the town having a great reputation as a supportive training ground. There are currently 5½ full-time equivalent practitioners, when nine are required to adequately and fairly service the community. The current experience in Cootamundra is an example of why metropolitan-centred GP training schemes are not as effective for regional communities. That has been an area of focus for Dr Paul Mara of Gundagai. In partnership with the University of New South Wales' Murrumbidgee Regional Training Hub and Murrumbidgee Local Health District, Dr Mara has initiated the Murrumbidgee rural training and workforce support initiative to support sustainable models of practice in regional towns.

The locally integrated rural training pathway presents an alternative solution to addressing cyclical rural doctor workforce shortages. I also believe it is necessary for my Federal colleagues to address red tape as part of the mix. Bureaucracy is holding up overseas-trained doctors, who have a keen interest to relocate and practise in

regional areas. I have written to my Federal colleagues to express the concern. In the meantime, while we work to find our locum doctor and our nurse practitioner, I will continue to work hard to ensure that the doctor shortage at Cootamundra is resolved, leaving no stone unturned in my pursuit of a long-term solution. I am confident that with the help of my Federal counterparts, we can meet the needs of Cootamundra now and into the future.

### FOODBANK

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (19:06):** In December last year I had the pleasure of volunteering at Foodbank in its Glendenning warehouse. When Foodbank came into being in 1992, the overriding aim was to ensure good food did not go to waste. In the 27 years since the foundation, Foodbank has evolved and matured into the largest hunger relief organisation in Australia, providing food for 183,000 meals a day to over 2,400 charities nationally. It also provides regular breakfasts to over 116,000 students in 1,750 schools around the country. Foodbank's purpose is to fight hunger by providing quality food to people in need. It was interesting to gain an insight into Foodbank's operations and processes. We hear about the incredible work of charities, churches and not-for-profits for the wider community but, oftentimes, we are not aware of what goes on behind the scenes for them to get their resources and food to begin with. Visiting the Foodbank warehouse showed us how food gets from A to B—from supermarkets to soup kitchens.

Foodbank's model is simple and effective. First, surplus food is donated by farmers, manufacturers and retailers. Foodbank then collects, sorts and stores the food. Agency partnerships and schools receive and distribute the food and, finally, people and communities are fed in times of crisis. The process saves millions of kilograms of edible food from landfill. People do not realise that often hunger is not just a food problem; it is a logistics problem. Each year, millions of kilograms of food goes to waste in Australia while 3.6 million Australians have experienced food insecurity in the past 12 months.

Food banking captures surplus food and delivers it to the people who need it most. Without Foodbank's food sourcing and distribution work, many hungry individuals and families across the State, particularly in country and regional New South Wales, would miss out on food that would otherwise just go to landfill. In addition to food storage and distribution, Foodbank also has the School Breakfast Program, which delivers healthy breakfasts to some of the most disadvantaged schools across the State. More than one in five Australian children have experienced food insecurity in the past 12 months. It is more likely for a child than an adult in Australia to experience food insecurity. That is why such a program is important. I am grateful that Foodbank is providing practical solutions to combat the issue of hunger in our communities.

The School Breakfast Program has provided breakfast to over 40 schools in New South Wales. It has provided fresh produce and pantry staples to low socio-economic schools for their students to take home. With the help of Kellogg's, Foodbank provided over 35,000 healthy breakfasts to Sydney students last year. The results of the program are outstanding. Parents reported the following improvements in their children as a result of receiving food assistance: a total of 34 per cent felt less hungry, 33 per cent were happier, 20 per cent had more energy, and 20 per cent had their behaviour improved. Programs such as the School Breakfast Program are possible only because of the volunteers who commit their time and energy to ensuring those kids are properly fed. I thank the regular volunteers, staff and directors for their dedication and support because without their combined efforts, Foodbank could not possibly operate.

A special thank you must also be extended to CEO and Company Secretary Gerry Andersen, Chairman Peter Kelly, Executive General Manager John Robertson—a friend to all of members of the House—and Volunteer Coordinator Luke Chesworth. I also thank the New South Wales Government Department of Family and Community Services, as well as the Environment Protection Authority for its support and sponsorship over several years. As the Liberal-Nationals Government, we do what we can to ensure that our support and sponsorship of the outstanding operation continues far into the future. I conclude by congratulating Foodbank on 27 excellent years. It is placing dignity back into the lives of many individuals who feel ashamed or embarrassed because of their inability to provide for their family. For that, we congratulate and honour Foodbank today.

### FARMING INDUSTRY SUPPORT

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (19:11):** In the past few weeks I have been in meetings in my electorate and outside with a lot of people in the farming industry. A couple of weeks ago I met with NSW Farmers Association when it had its poultry meat association meeting in Beresfield, next to my electorate. I went to Scone and Rouchel Brook to visit the newly re-formed NSW Farmers Association branch. I also met with dairy farmers in the Gloucester area, in addition to some visits in the North Coast. I put on the record my absolute admiration for our farmers. As a former business owner, I could see the difficult restructuring that farmers in our community are having to make in their businesses, often with little support from the Government or even from those further up the supply chain. Many of those are intergenerational family farms that must be continued.

A lot of succession planning issues are common to any small family business. For example, a lot of young farmers told me that the issue with trying to buy property from their parents or probably even grandparents is that it is worth far more than what they would have paid for it when they were younger, which creates a lot of issues. Farmers tell me that it is a disincentive for them to go into the farming sector. It is not just the drought that farmers are having to contend with; it is also things like natural disasters such as bushfires that are wiping out things. Four years ago, in April 2015, my electorate of Maitland witnessed super storms, which had a devastating impact on our local farmers.

I know of two farmers in my electorate who had just started their farming enterprises. One was a young couple who had been doing work off-farm. They were not even eligible for assistance from the Government at the time because they had too much off-farm income—it was not about too much off-farm income; it was no on-farm income. The same happened with another family. The reality is that those rules are based around stopping an investor who makes a lot of money off a citified kind of enterprise from taking advantage of assistance that is meant to be given to 100 per cent farmers. In reality these people were farmers 100 per cent of the time. When they were not working on their properties they were gaining income through fencing and doing contract work for other farmers. Particularly some older farmers need help to do that.

The other issue is succession planning and how farmers transition out of farming. When they hit really difficult times and when natural disasters occur and assistance is offered, if the farmer is getting money from superannuation or something like that they are not able to access appropriate assistance because they might be getting more superannuation than income from their farm because their capacity to work the farm has reduced. But that means that, even though they have been affected by the same natural disaster as everyone else, they are not able to get back on their feet as quickly.

There are a lot of issues in providing support. There has also been a lot of discussion about the income support and other subsidies. The Government has talked a lot—as we heard in the estimates hearings—about the support that it gives to farmers but a lot of farmers are not eligible for the support. Today we heard about some of the issues of farming with water, having to pay for fuel and not being able to afford that. It is really difficult for farmers. The Opposition wants to work with the Government, and I think it has shown over time that it will work with the Government on good, positive policies for farmers. Opposition members just want the Government to be able to work with us as well. I pay tribute to farmers in local communities. I have spoken about the conversations that I have had with the members of the Poultry Industries Association, the farmers at Scone and in the North Coast and Gloucester areas. They are really doing it tough and we all need to make sure that we have policies that are effectively assisting them.

### FAMILY FARMS

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (19:16):** Today I will address the annihilation of small family farms across New South Wales, and to explain why this is driven by government policy, not by drought or market forces. For years I have heard rumours of a plot to wipe out family farms in this State and to import all our food cheaply from Asia. I used to think this was just paranoia and conspiracy but lately the plot has thickened. In the past few weeks we have heard some extraordinary statements from prominent National Party members of Parliament. That is the party that is supposed to represent regional Australia.

Last month, Federal Minister for Agriculture Bridget McKenzie said that struggling farmers should consider selling up and leaving the land. Last week former Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce said the same thing on Sky News, telling farmers to get another job. After decades in which their own Government's policies have seen a transfer of hundreds of billions dollars away from family farms and communities, and into the hands of giant, often foreign-owned corporations, these politicians are now telling the remaining Aussie small-town survivors to shut up shop.

If only getting another job were that easy for farmers, for their families and for their communities. Getting another job, for a farmer, is not like moving from a bank job to a marketing job in Sydney. I have lived on a farm all my life, as did my father and his father before him. This is the case for many of my neighbours in Binya and Rankin Springs. Selling your farm is a traumatic experience. It is like selling your heritage, your identity, your home. In rural New South Wales you cannot just walk into another job down the road. Every time a farming family leaves the bush, the flow-on effects for small towns are enormous. It means less money going into corner shops, fewer kids going to the local schools and less demand for the local businesses. More people lose their jobs and more families move to Sydney. Government bureaucrats use this as an excuse to cut funding for schools, hospitals and services, and the multiplier effect—or the minus effect—just continues.

Last month, SunRice announced the loss of 32 jobs in Leeton and Deniliquin, taking the total number of jobs lost in the company to 130 in the past year. What people do not realise is that 130 jobs lost in Leeton and Deniliquin is the equivalent of 33,000 jobs lost in Sydney, when you compare the populations. If a big employer

were forced to retrench 33,000 workers in Sydney, there would be mass protests, rallies and front-page stories. The Government would initiate a rescue package. But in Deniliquin and Leeton, the Government just turns the knife. The Government is still pushing ahead with plans to flush 450 gegalitres of our productive water and another 2,000 gegalitres of so-called planned environmental water to South Australia. That will wipe out entire industries.

It is the Government that has killed these jobs, not the drought. There is plenty of water being wasted in the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Lachlan rivers. Water Minister Melinda Pavey can give back farmers' voluntary water contributions right now, with the stroke of pen, to save jobs and families in our regions. The Federal Senate recently had a motion before it to release 200 gegalitres of water for farmers for disaster relief. The extraordinary thing is that the National Party's own Deniliquin Senator Perin Davey voted against it.

Dairy, which used to have a major presence in Davey's home town, is another industry sunk by bad water and agricultural policy. The number of dairy farms in Australia has gone down 400 per cent over the past 40 years. When water is now more expensive than milk, how can this industry possibly survive? If city people do not care about job losses, suicides and the demise of country towns, the death of dairy will make them take notice, especially when they have to use Chinese-produced long-life milk for their morning coffees.

The average age of a farmer in Australia is about 56. As farmers age and die, their children are not taking over their businesses. They are moving to the city, and I do not blame them. It is up to us in Parliament to show our children that there is a future in farming, to show them that we want to grow our own food, not import it. We should show them that we want diversity in agriculture, not domination by multinationals, and that we want people living in regional towns, not moving to Sydney and Melbourne. I call on this Government to publicly commit to supporting irrigated agriculture in this State. It is time that this Government invested in family farms and rural communities, and stopped destroying them.

#### **NORTH WEST PRIORITY GROWTH AREA**

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (19:21):** I wish to talk about the North West Priority Growth Area as much of it overlays and affects the electorate of Riverstone. Some of it is in neighbouring seats but there has been an immense impact on that electorate as a result of this long-planned bipartisan program to address the housing needs of Sydney's population. Before this Government was elected in 2011 the previous Labor Government rezoned the Alex Avenue Precinct, Riverstone Precinct, Colebee and the Riverstone West Industrial Precinct as the first precincts within the identified North West Priority Growth Area, which, it was anticipated, would continue to be developed to meet the housing needs of Sydney into the 2030s. I should add that the development of suburbs like Stanhope Gardens, Kellyville Ridge and The Ponds commenced in those years.

Since 2011 the Government has rezoned the Tallawong Station Precinct, formerly called area 20, Schofields, Marsden Park, Marsden Park Industrial, Vineyard stage one, Riverstone East stages one and two, North Kellyville, Box Hill, Box Hill Industrial and Townson Road. Members can infer from the length of that list that the Government has upped the tempo quite significantly in terms of releasing land in Sydney to make up for what was a shortfall in housing supply in the earlier years and to bring housing affordability back within reach of ordinary people. It was a conscious decision to accelerate the release to meet the needs of people and to bring housing back within reach of ordinary citizens of New South Wales. Last year a couple of extra precincts went on exhibition at Schofields West and Marsden Park North precincts, and we had a particular focus on Schofields town centre. Beyond that there is still the Shanes Park precinct and later stages of Vineyard and Riverstone East. The development process will continue for some years. It may well, however, be before 2030 that we conclude this process.

I comment particularly on the planning principles as they relate to flooding in this region because it has been an issue. As members would know, the first principle for the release of land that might be subject to flooding is that you only release land above a flood planning level which is based, typically, across New South Wales on the one-in-100 flood event. That is defined by what they call the 1 per cent annual exceedance probability—that is, there is a 1 per cent chance of that level being reached in any given year. On average you would expect that to be one in 100 years, but of course we know averages do not work like that. There could be two such floods in quick succession and then a couple of centuries without one. Currently at Windsor that level is 17.3 metres Australian height datum [AHD]. However, when I moved to the region in the 1980s it was only 16 metres AHD. In earlier decades there were still lower levels being used as the official standard. As we have learnt more about the flood plain the line has been raised. The best expert advice has been used to determine that planning level over time.

Prior to World War II there were no official planning levels in many parts of western Sydney. Thousands of homes are built on land well below the current 1 per cent AEP because those blocks of land were developed under previous controls or when there were no controls at all. Floods bigger than 1 per cent AEP are possible, though of course these are by definition quite rare. The level of the highest flood that experts believe to

be possible in the catchment is known as the probable maximum flood [PMF] and is estimated at approximately one chance in 100,000 of occurring in any given year. Flood evacuation capacity is being calculated for growth area precincts so that in the event of a flood higher than the 1 per cent AEP, including at levels all the way up to the PMF, residents can be evacuated from their homes to higher ground. The rezoning process will result in only as many dwellings being approved as the road network has capacity to evacuate in that most extreme of circumstances. This will provide a higher level of safety to residents of new dwellings than has been available previously to existing residents of western Sydney.

Both new residents living above the modern flood planning level and those living in existing homes built at lower levels will benefit from the additional evacuation time that will be made available by the proposed raising of Warragamba Dam to slow down the rate at which water exits the dam. The raised wall would also mean that the peak height of a major flood would be less than it would have been without the wall raising. This means that any homes, private businesses, public buildings, utilities, infrastructure items and other structures located at a height that would have been at the upper end of those areas inundated by the flood could now be spared from damage. The benefit provided by this proposal will protect many thousands of people across western Sydney.

### NSW POLICE FORCE

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (19:26):** National Police Remembrance Day was held on Sunday 29 September 2019. On this day we remember and pay respect to the memory of those NSW Police officers and officers from other jurisdictions who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of protecting our community. We also remember their loved ones, who are and always will be part of the blue family. This event is especially pertinent in the electorate of Prospect, as it comes just one day before the anniversary of the tragic deaths of NSW Police sergeants William Riley and Maurice McDiarmid who served with what is today the Blacktown Police Area Command [PAC], which is one of three area commands—the others being Cumberland PAC and Fairfield PAC—that serve to protect our community in the electorate of Prospect.

On 30 September 1971 sergeants Riley and McDiarmid attended an incident in Toongabbie. Earlier that day a woman had arrived at the Blacktown Police Station to report that she had been raped and kidnapped by a man named Ronald Clark, who had then driven her around the Blacktown area for several hours. She informed the police that Clark had already shot his own brother Warren Clark. Sergeants Riley and McDiarmid left the Blacktown Police Station knowing that they faced an incredibly dangerous situation. They were officers of the NSW Police Force and they knew that they had a duty to protect our community, despite the risk to their own safety. When sergeants Riley and McDiarmid arrived at Ronald Clark's house in Toongabbie they spotted Clark, who ran to the back of the house. Sergeant McDiarmid followed Clark to the back of the house to apprehend him. As Sergeant McDiarmid entered the house Clark opened fire with a shotgun, killing him. Clark then moved to the front of the house, shooting and critically injuring Sergeant Riley, who was covering the front door and bravely attempting to help his colleague and close friend. Tragically, Sergeant Riley passed away shortly afterwards en route to the hospital.

Following the murders of sergeants Riley and McDiarmid, New South Wales Police began a massive operation in search of Clark and attempted to apprehend him. Two New South Wales police officers, constables Gregory and Crawford, spotted Clark near a service station. Without consideration for their own safety they rammed his car with their police van. Despite attempts and calls for Clark to surrender, the constables were forced to shoot the suspect after he threatened them and raised a stolen pistol. These two officers knew the risk that they were taking. They also knew the danger that Clark posed to our community. They acted to ensure community safety at risk to their own lives. The State Coroner, who investigated the shootings and Clark's death, later commended these two officers for stopping Clark.

Sergeants Riley and McDiarmid were commended for their bravery, being posthumously awarded the Peter Mitchell Trophy and the George Lewis Memorial Trophy for the most courageous act by a member of the NSW Police Force. Some 48 years later the deaths of these two outstanding New South Wales police officers remind us of the bravery of our NSW Police Force and the sacrifices that they have made and continue to make every day to protect our families. The NSW Police Force honour roll is too long and our police receive too little gratitude for their dangerous work. However, they continue to serve day and night to ensure the safety of our community.

I express my personal gratitude to every New South Wales police officer, serving and retired, for all that they have done and continue to do for our State and our families. In 2017 a memorial was built between the Blacktown Police Station and the Blacktown courthouse to honour sergeants Riley and McDiarmid. If members are ever in the area or near any other police memorial I encourage them to take a moment to reflect on the bravery and sacrifice of our New South Wales police, especially those officers I have mentioned today, sergeants Riley and McDiarmid and constables Gregory and Crawford. Today I give my sincere thanks to all the New South Wales

police officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our community. Your service and your name will never be forgotten.

### NSW BUSINESS CHAMBER REGIONAL BUSINESS AWARDS

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:31):** On Friday night I had the pleasure of representing the New South Wales Government at the NSW Business Chamber Regional Business Awards at the Crowne Plaza in the beautiful electorate of Terrigal. In all communities, particularly ours on the Central Coast, business chambers play an important role. Local business owners may feel isolated on their own, but chambers provide the opportunity to have a stronger voice and network to connect with the Government. We have a number of local business chambers across the Central Coast. I mention each of these and highlight the great work of their presidents, who all do this in a voluntary capacity: the Peninsula Chamber of Commerce and its president Matthew Wales; the Gosford/Erina and Coastal Chamber of Commerce & Industry and its president Rod Dever; The Entrance Chamber of Commerce and president Bob Diaz; and the Wyong Regional Chamber of Commerce and its president Matthew Lusted.

The awards evening was an opportunity to recognise outstanding local businesses and employees, all of whom are making the Central Coast a better place to live, work and raise a family. In the Outstanding Business Leader category I congratulate the winner, Matt Kelly, from Gosford Private Hospital, and finalists Michael Sandys from Oddball Marketing, Tim Faulkner from the Australian Reptile Park, and Richard Eifler from Next Step Incorporated. In the Excellence in Small Business category I congratulate the winner, Coastal Gourmet 2U, and finalists Oddball Marketing, Ryan and Seton Lawyers, Bohemian Holdings, and The Glen Drug and Alcohol Rehab Centre. In the Outstanding Employer of Choice category I congratulate the winner, Peninsula Villages, and finalists Gosford Private Hospital, Inspired Techs, and Nurses Now. In the Outstanding Young Employee category congratulations go to the winner, Zachary Bower from the Australian Reptile Park—who every day milks venomous snakes for a living—and finalists Mitchell Manson from Brisbane Water Private Hospital, Jared Keens from Oddball Marketing, Kristina Ayton from The Entertainment Grounds and Tim Oliver from Australia Post.

In the Excellence in Social Enterprise category congratulations go to the winner, The Opportunity Collective, led by the extraordinary Suzy Miller. The finalists included Lasercraft Australia, Brisbane Water Legacy and East Gosford & Districts Community Bank. In the Excellence in Micro Business category congratulations go to the winner, LEP Digital, with finalists Jigsaw Autism Services. In the Excellence in Sustainability category congratulations go to the winner, Gosford Private Hospital, with the finalist being Solair. In the Excellence in Innovation category I congratulate the winner, Life Health Foods, with finalists being Koala Publishing, Gosford Private Hospital, and Laughing Mind.

I congratulate the winner in the Excellence in Business category, the Australian Reptile Park. Finalists included Gosford Micrographics and Scanning, Gosford Private Hospital, and H&H Catering. In the Outstanding Young Entrepreneur category, I congratulate winner Brendan Cooke from BCMC Safety Solutions. In the Start Up Superstar category I congratulate winner Jana-Marie Hobourn from Link Legal and Conveyancing, and finalists Blake Zibara from Happy Hippo Media, and Keiron Donohue from Reflect Glass. Finally, I congratulate the winner in the Excellence in Local Chamber of Commerce category, the Wyong Regional Chamber.

Two years ago the Premier attended a business breakfast in Mingara. It was at this breakfast that she strongly committed to ensuring that every region in New South Wales will get its fair share of funding from this Government. Every day it is my mission to ensure that this Government delivers on that promise. We are delivering almost half a billion dollars towards State roads across the region; almost half a billion dollars towards health infrastructure; a new school at Warnervale and major upgrades at Terrigal, Wamberal and Brooke Avenue—record levels of funding; as well as millions of dollars for tourism and environmental projects, sports clubs, community groups and organisations. Last week we made a commitment of almost \$7 million to upgrade the Mardi Water Treatment Plant. This infrastructure investment is absolutely essential because 75,500 extra people will call the Central Coast home between now and 2036.

Last week we also announced a review of the Warnervale Airport (Restrictions) Act to secure the future of the airport and the Central Coast Aero Club. This Government can work hard but it is local businesses that create jobs and opportunities to make the Central Coast the great place it is. I congratulate each of the finalists and the winners of this year's regional business awards and wish them every success at the State awards. They have worked hard. They are bold and brave and are exactly the sort of business leaders the Central Coast needs. Once again, I congratulate them all.

### *Community Recognition Statements*

### SPRING CYCLE

**Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (19:36):** On Sunday John Grinsell, Grant Heslop and Simon and Sam Tall lined up with their bikes at North Sydney for a very early 7.00 a.m. start to cycle the 50 kilometre Spring

Cycle. Spring Cycle has been going for 36 years and is a way for cyclists of all abilities to participate in Sydney's largest recreational ride. It took Grant, John, Simon and Sam 3½ hours to complete the ride, travelling from North Sydney, through the inner west and finishing at Sydney Olympic Park at Homebush. Their aim was to raise much-needed funds for Padstow Community Care, which supports struggling families that are in need of emergency relief support. Padstow Community Care is a not-for-profit organisation that has provided services in my local community since 1983 and is a community-focused project of the Padstow Baptist Church. Despite their tired and sore legs the boys said they thoroughly enjoyed the ride. The difference their efforts will make to many families in the community is extraordinary. I commend them for their efforts of raising over \$3,000 for their cause.

#### **OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE MALTESE FESTA**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (19:37):** The parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace Maltese Festa has been a highlight of the Greystanes community since 1965, bringing together our local Maltese community. Festas are a vital part of Maltese culture and on 29 September 2019 I was honoured to attend this year's event. Special guest Reverend Bishop Vincent Long celebrated mass in honour of Our Lady, with our local parish priest, Father Paul Marshall. This was followed by the procession of Our Lady Queen of Peace, musical performances by Our Lady Queen of Peace Maltese Band NSW. There were food stalls, rides and other fun activities for families to enjoy. An impressive fireworks display finished the day. This is a wonderful community event not only for our Maltese community but for the thousands of local residents who attend every year. I thank Lisa Bright and the festa committee for all their hard work in organising a terrific day and for sharing their culture with the entire Western Sydney community.

#### **THORNLEIGH NETBALL CLUB**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (19:38):** I acknowledge an amazing 2019 season for the Thornleigh Netball Club. Three teams from the club made the grand final: the 10/4s, the B1s and the C3s. All three teams took out the premiership. The under-10/4 team was the only junior team to make the grand final. It was the first year of competition for many players and the first year coaching for Sarah Pegley and Jess Williamson. In the senior ranks the B1s won their game 47-39, while the C3s won 41-32. For the C3 team the grand final marked the last game for president Clare Ashpole. Clare has been playing with Thornleigh for 47 years. Not many people could say they have taken the court for 47 years with only one winter season off for injury. Clare is truly one of a kind and despite a tough year for her family she has yet again dedicated many hours to Thornleigh and the sport of netball. Despite hanging up her netball dress, Clare will continue as Thornleigh Netball Club president. I thank Clare for all she has done for our community.

#### **CENTRAL COAST LGBTIQ-PLUS EVENTS**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:39):** It is now very clear that the Central Coast is a welcome place for the LGBTIQ-plus community. It was fabulous to join over 6,000 visitors at the pinnacle Fair Day event at Peninsula Recreation Precinct at Umina after a week of inclusive, supportive and very fun celebrations of unity and life in the peninsula during the Naughty Noodle Fun Haus Coastal Twist Festival. The Outing Disability exhibition at the Cafe & Art RePublik Cafe challenged our assumptions about the concerns faced by members of the LGBTIQ-plus community living with intellectual and mental health challenges. The Love Club risqué cabaret once again knocked our socks off, educated, and brought joy to every member of the audience. I give a huge thanks to fantabulous Yana Alana, all the amazing performers, and to the Dollar Dazzlers—one of whom grew up on the Central Coast—for funky disc jockey free-dancing afterwards. The disco at Woy Woy Leagues Club was fantastic. The first ticket was sold to a 75-year-old woman who has no internet access. I congratulate the organisers for bringing on a better, brighter, accepting, inclusive and celebrated future for everyone on the Central Coast.

#### **MONTE SANT' ANGELO MERCY COLLEGE**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:40):** I acknowledge an outstanding student at Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College, Juliette Dwyer, who, along with 19 other students from across New South Wales, was awarded the 2019 Premier's Anzac Memorial Scholarship. Juliette recently joined fellow scholars on a trip through Germany, France and Belgium where they visited the historic battlegrounds of World War I and World War II. They were joined by representatives from the New South Wales Office of Veterans Affairs and a war historian to learn about the catalysts and consequences of world conflicts. Juliette's trip, funded by the Berejiklian Government's initiative, has given her an amazing and unique experience, learning about and commemorating the service of the Anzacs. I thank her teacher, Trish Smith, for encouraging and supporting her students to take advantage of once-in-a-lifetime opportunities such as the Anzac Memorial Scholarship. I also recognise Principal Nicole Christensen, who is leading a fantastic team of teachers at Monte school and providing a well-rounded education for those young female leaders of the future.

**WARNERS BAY AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL CLUB**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (19:41):** I congratulate the Warners Bay Australian Football Club on the tremendous growth of its sporting community in recent years. Due to the dedication of the committee the club has grown from four junior teams in 2012 to 15 this season. It had seven teams in finals this year and five making grand finals. In 2019 the club had a 12 per cent increase in junior registrations, with an incredible 30 per cent growth in female registration. I am especially proud of the significant growth in female membership at the club. It is important that we encourage young women and girls to enjoy physical activity as research shows that they can be less likely to participate in sport than young men. I congratulate the Warners Bay Australian Football Club committee for its hard work and dedication over many years that has led the club to achieve these fantastic results.

**CONNELLS POINT SAILING CLUB**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (19:42):** I welcome the funding provided to Connells Point Sailing Club for equipment repairs and operating classes. The club has had a longstanding presence within the community, with its inaugural meeting being held in 1938. The club sails along the Georges River between Tom Uglys Bridge and Oatley. The club has grown tremendously from its humble beginnings, with members originally operating out of their backyards. Now the club uses a clubhouse in Donnelly Park and has trained sailors who have enjoyed success at both State and National levels. The club is run entirely by volunteers and is widely recognised as being inclusive and community-focused. The club's money is sourced through membership fees, the canteen and social functions and other fundraising activities. For this reason I welcome the grant of \$2,500 that the State Government recently provided to the club. This funding will go a long way in assisting in the costs of equipment repairs and other operating costs. I thank the club for the fantastic work it does in facilitating sailing in our local community.

**REMI FRANCES MILLAR**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (19:43):** I take this opportunity to welcome a very special Shellharbour resident to our community. Miss Remi Frances Millar was born on 7 October 2019 to parents Emma and Daniel Millar from Mount Warrigal. When born Remi Frances weighed in at a pretty astounding 5.88 kilograms, or 12.9 pounds. That is over 2.5 kilos above the national average. In fact, according to a recent *Mothers and Babies Report*, only 1.2 per cent of Australian newborns weigh over 4.5 kilograms. Whilst a bit of a surprise for Emma and Daniel, they are no stranger to bigger babies. Remi Frances' sibling, Willow, weighed in at 5.5 kilograms when she was born two years ago. I extend congratulations to Emma and Daniel on their new healthy baby girl and wish the entire Millar family all the best for the future.

**HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE 2019**

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (19:44):** It is that time of the year when our year 12 students come to the end of 13 years of schooling. On Thursday all students will sit their first HSC exam. As I have mentioned before, Ku-ring-gai is home to some of the best high schools in Australia, with two co-educational schools, two selective public schools and seven independent schools. My message to the year 12 students of Ku-ring-gai is straightforward: Your HSC is not the only way to open doors to the future; your schooling is more than just a number. It is about the friendships made, the challenges that have been taken and your individual progression into adulthood. There are many pathways to where you want to go. Although I completed my HSC some time ago I have a few tips to help you through the next five weeks—eat, sleep, exercise and, most importantly, get up if you fall down. Completing the HSC is an achievement to be proud of. I wish all year 12 students the best over the weeks and years to come.

**WOLLONGONG ROLLER HAWKS**

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (19:45):** I congratulate the Wollongong Roller Hawks, who, for the third season in a row, are the national wheelchair basketball champions, a three-peat and sensational result for the only regionally based wheelchair basketball team in the national competition. No other regional city can lay claim to being the home of such a sporting success. I congratulate them on their efforts. Wheelchair basketball is a team sport and this is a team that works well together. They are a great team on the court and friends off the court, which has helped to build their cohesion. I thank also the volunteer support team that dedicates so much of its own time to make sure that the Roller Hawks get on the court. I know also how grateful the team is for the support given by the team sponsors. Once again, this year's final against the Queensland Spinning Bullets, commentated by the member for Gosford, was hard fought, but the Roller Hawks' win in the final, once again on enemy territory, was a testament to their hard work and determination. Let us go on to make it four in a row in 2020.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (19:46):** Recently I attended the Camden-Wollondilly Domestic Violence Awareness Day event. Purple balloons could be seen from all entrances to the Narellan Sports Hub. The event was attended by 2,300 netballers. The day was a success, with outstanding community interest, support and donations made on the day. Domestic violence was put front and centre on this day and awareness has now increased as a result. I congratulate Camden-Wollondilly Domestic Violence Committee and the Camden Police Area Command on putting on this event. Indeed, \$4000 was raised and donated to the Camden-Wollondilly Domestic Violence Committee. The work done by this committee is outstanding. I strongly support its members in all their work.

### RIVERINA RURAL FIRE SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (19:47):** I acknowledge firefighters from the Rural Fire Service Riverina Zone who, in recent weeks, have dropped their day jobs and left families to help fire-impacted strangers in northern New South Wales. Twelve volunteers made up the Riverina strike team that left Wagga Wagga Airport, arriving in Glen Innes on 7 October for a five-day deployment. Brigade members from across my electorate joined volunteers from neighbouring areas to actively engage in property protection while battling difficult conditions at Kildare, west of Tenterfield. For some members this was their second deployment and I am sure it will not be their last.

In light of this, I thank each and every emergency service member for their compassion, dedication and resilience ahead of what is already proving to be an extremely challenging fire season. I extend special thanks to Darrel Hursey from Goobarragandra; Liam Frowd and Andrew Roberts from Tumut; Haiden Jansen from Uranquinty; Callum Murdoch from Currawarna; Ray McDonald, Graham O'Brien, Russell Boothey and William Moncrieff from Lake Albert; Daniel Dennis from Yarragundry; Jonty-Jack Bruce, Courtney Lippiatt and Bruce Ryan from Forest Hill; Jason Swift from The Rock; John Stanton from Ladysmith; Brian Clarke from Oura; Ken Knight from Eunony; and Suzanne Sparks from Riverina Aviation Support Brigade.

### KIRRA BYRNE

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:48):** I bring to the attention of the House the potentially life-saving actions of a very diligent local hairdresser. Kirra Byrne is a salon assistant at Chic Hair & Co. One of the salon's clients is 83-year-old Shirley Ryan from Forresters Beach in my electorate of Terrigal. After missing a regular monthly appointment at Chic Hair & Co, the salon staff were concerned that something was wrong with Mrs Ryan. This led to Kirra visiting Mrs Ryan's home, only to find that she had fallen to the ground two days earlier. The police and Mrs Ryan's daughter were called and were able to assist. Mrs Ryan spent a week in Gosford Hospital and a further fortnight in Gosford Private Hospital before returning to full health. I thank Kirra and all staff at Chic Hair & Co. Their actions are a demonstration of the support and care local businesses give to their clients and the community. I congratulate Kirra on going above and beyond, and possibly saving Mrs Ryan's life.

### CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (19:49):** I congratulate Our Lady of Loreto Gardens Catholic Healthcare at Hamlyn Terrace on its silver jubilee celebrations. Our Lady of Loreto Gardens, Warnervale Wellness Centre and members of the community gathered for the celebration on 23 July at Warnervale Wellness Centre to celebrate its twenty-fifth birthday. Catholic Healthcare celebrated 25 years of health and aged care services within all the organisations across Australia. More than 300 employees from all over Australia celebrated receiving their service awards for providing care and support to people of all faiths, backgrounds and ethnicities in their home or when it becomes too difficult to manage for themselves. I congratulate everyone involved and the staff at Catholic Healthcare on reaching this milestone. I wish them all the best for the future.

### WAKEHURST CRICKET CLUB

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (19:50):** Wakehurst Redbacks Cricket Club is an important sporting club in my electorate of Davidson. It is a strong club with a proud local history based in Belrose and is one of the largest cricket clubs in the Manly Warringah District, fielding teams at all levels. The club's president is Deanne Hutt and its treasurer is Julian Humphrey. The club has been heavily dedicated to the promotion and growth of female participation in cricket. It has formulated several options for girls-only cricket. The entry level program is intended for girls aged four to six years of age with limited experience, while the Sixers Girls Cricket League is designed for experienced teenagers. I was pleased to learn of their successful application in round 2 of the NSW ICC T20 World Cup 2020 Cricket Legacy Fund, a New South Wales Government initiative to improve cricket infrastructure and increase participation at the grassroots level. I wish the club all the best for the 2020 season and congratulate all concerned on their innovative work and encouragement of healthy activity in our local community.

**AUSTRALIAN SENIOR DIRT TRACK CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019**

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (19:51):** I was excited recently to open the 2019 Australian Senior Dirt Track Championships at the Barleigh Ranch Raceway in Port Stephens. This two-day event saw competitors from northern Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and across New South Wales travel to Port Stephens to compete. Competitors raced across a number of classes, including the crazy sidecars, pro-women's and open events. Even the kids competed, racing at full throttle. The top award of the day—the Duke of Edinburgh Trophy—was awarded to the winner of the solo and sidecar classes.

I congratulate the 2019 winner, Darren Fein, and runner-up, David Grainger. It was a noisy, dirty and awesome atmosphere trackside. The speed and skill of the riders was exhilarating to witness. Hosting a national event does not happen without a lot of effort and I pay tribute to the members of the Hunter Motorcycle Club for organising the successful event, especially president Keith Davies, secretary Karen Scott and treasurer Lesley Davies. Through the club's hard work, Port Stephens and the dirt track racing were the winners on the day.

**KIERAN SMITH**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (19:52):** I recognise Inverell's Kieran Smith for his fantastic success at the Perth Royal Show. Kieran Smith, a University of New England student, won the national championship for Meat Breeds Sheep Judging and also claimed the Keast Shield as part of the Agricultural Societies Council of NSW representative team. The Keast Shield is presented to the State that scores the most points across the rural ambassador and young judges awards. I congratulate Kieran and the other members of the New South Wales team on this well-deserved achievement. I wish them every success for future shows.

**VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE LEAGUE**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (19:52):** I congratulate the Victims of Crime Assistance League [VOCAL] on 30 years of advocacy for and support of people who have been harmed by crime across the State. Based in Newcastle, VOCAL was founded by Dawn Gilbert in 1989, and provides emotional and court support. It also provides practical help in navigating processes for seeking services, including counselling, police reporting and home security. VOCAL has also lobbied for many causes over its time, including amendments to the Crimes (High Risk Offenders) Act, strengthening of child sexual abuse laws and increasing education around safe and respectful sexual relationships. VOCAL's positive impact on many thousands of lives cannot be quantified. Systematic change would not happen without VOCAL, amongst other groups, standing up and speaking for those who are unable to do so for themselves. I congratulate everyone involved in VOCAL on an outstanding 30 years of work. I extend special thanks to CEO Kerrie Thompson and former CEO of two decades Robyn Cotterell-Jones. They have improved the lives of many people.

**ROBERT DAVEY AND GAVIN AXTELL**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:54):** I acknowledge Robert Davey and Gavin Axtell from Temora, who recently volunteered their expertise to fight bushfires in the Bees Nest region of northern New South Wales. Robert and Gavin spent five days back-burning and putting in containment lines to hold the raging blaze, which has been burning out of control for weeks. It is wonderful that Robert and Gavin had support from their employer, Intersales Temora, to drop everything and head north at very short notice. With a severe bushfire season predicted I praise all of our fireys for their bravery and their commitment to keeping our communities safe.

**SDN MARRICKVILLE CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRE**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (19:54):** This week SDN Marrickville Children's Education and Care Centre celebrates its seventy-fifth birthday. That is 75 years of smiles, laughter, learning and no doubt a few grazed knees along the way. SDN Marrickville has been a home away from home for generations of young inner-westies, providing care and support to families since 1944. Educators both past and present have set the gold standard in care, professionalism and compassion.

The kids love the wonderful classrooms and the amazing garden which makes this childcare centre one of the best. Parents and guardians have often spoken to me about how much they appreciate and value their kids' educators and just how proud they are to be part of the SDN community. I thank the staff and educators at SDN Marrickville both past and present and wish all the kids and educators the very best in the seventy-fifth birthday celebrations.

**BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN JACKSON PAINE**

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (19:55):** I encourage all Hawkesbury locals and visitors from afar to witness a great part of our history at Hawkesbury Central Library. Until November there will be a display

of Brigadier General John Jackson Paine artefacts from his service in World War I. These artefacts include his uniform, travelling trunk, personal photographs and hats. John Jackson Paine was mayor of Windsor, trustee of the Hawkesbury Benevolent Society and Hospital and president of the Hawkesbury District Agricultural Association.

When World War I broke out he volunteered for service and in 1915 was dispatched to Melbourne to command 2,700 troops on SS *Ceramic*—the largest troopship that left Australian shores. A further command of 2,200 troops on SS *Euripides* brought him in touch with the Anzac Mounted Division then operating in Egypt, Sinai and Palestine. Brigadier General John Jackson Paine was awarded the 1915 Star, the General Service Medal, the Victory Medal and the Victoria Decoration. I thank the Paine family for donating the artefacts to the Hawkesbury Regional Museum in 2015 and the Hawkesbury Central Library for hosting the display.

#### LISMORE REGIONAL PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (19:57):** I was proud to accept an invitation to become patron of the Lismore Parkinson's Support Group that meets monthly at the Lismore Workers Club. Convenor Di Lymbury said the group supported local people with Parkinson's and their carers and shared strategies for living well while always respecting confidentiality. Di was diagnosed with early onset Parkinson's in her early 50s and resurrected the support group about five years ago when she moved from the Hunter Valley. Members live in Lismore, Kyogle, Nimbin, Bangalow, Coraki and Evans Head.

Di says regular exercise has been identified as essential to living well with Parkinson's, as is a healthy diet that promotes a healthy gut with good gut bacteria. I promised Di I would lobby for a specialist-trained Parkinson's nurse—just as I did for McGrath Foundation nurses when I was the Federal member for Page. The good news is that Northern NSW Local Health District Chief Executive Wayne Jones tells me a Parkinson's nurse will be employed in the Tweed as part of a pilot program.

#### POVERTY IS NO PICNIC IN THE PARK

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (19:58):** I acknowledge Poverty is No Picnic in the Park, a recent event held in Goulburn by the local branch of Mission Australia. The event was held during Anti-Poverty Week and consisted of a picnic-style barbecue in the park. Part of the event included a food drive where non-perishable items were donated and then lined along the park's edge. These donations will be distributed to people in our community who are experiencing poverty or hardship.

In addition to collecting donations, the Poverty is No Picnic in the Park event also aimed to raise awareness and make connections between the services in our community that support people who are experiencing poverty. There is no denying that times are tough but it would be tougher without the hardworking organisations and the people behind them who work together to help people in need. I thank Mission Australia, Anglicare, Service NSW, St Vincent De Paul, Salvation Army, UnitingCare, Wesley Centre, Centrelink and Rural Aid for their tireless efforts and their time to help improve people's lives. Their efforts are to be congratulated.

#### MARINA NEIL

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (19:59):** I salute the professionalism and talent of Australian Community Media photographer Marina Neil, whose pictures often grace the pages of *The Maitland Mercury* newspaper and website and also the *Newcastle Herald*. Marina recently took out the sports photography community section of the 2019 News Media Awards for her image, *Black and Green in Flight*. This image features two players from opposing rugby teams mid-tackle. This truly impressive action shot was taken during a Maitland Blacks and Merewether Carlton game at Marcellin Park in July last year. I am delighted to add that the Mighty Blacks took down the Greens in that encounter. Marina's success in the 2019 News Media Awards adds to her trove of silverware, which includes a coveted Walkley award. Well done to Marina for this well-deserved award. Long may she take photos and record the history of everyone in Maitland.

#### BRIDGING HOPE FOUNDATION

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (20:00):** This Mental Health Month I acknowledge the Bridging Hope Foundation for taking an innovative approach to tackling mental health issues in communities like mine. Using creativity and the arts to improve mental wellbeing, the Bridging Hope Foundation recently opened a creative precinct in St Leonards with over 4,500 square metres of subsidised space to support emerging North Shore artists. Working with musicians, film producers and visual artists, the Bridging Hope Foundation is raising awareness about youth mental health issues and invigorating the creative community in St Leonards.

The Bridging Hope Foundation recently launched *These Walls Could Talk*, a public art installation that exhibits text-based artworks throughout St Leonards. This project shines a light on the daily experiences of young people living with stress, trauma and mental health issues. What is particularly notable about the artwork is how

poet Omar Sakr and visual artist Cameron Cripps-Kennedy collaborated with students of Bradfield Senior College in its development. I commend the Bridging Hope Foundation for its work with Lifeline Australia to establish a Chinese helpline.

#### PAADA YATRA 2019

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (20:01):** Paada Yatra is an ancient Hindu tradition of pilgrimage between holy sites. The Hindu Council of Australia held its twenty-first Paada Yatra on 5 October 2019. Despite the rain, hundreds of walkers of all ages and professions made the 65-kilometre journey from the Sydney Murugan Temple in Mays Hill all the way to the Sri Venkateswara Temple in Helensburgh. Along with keeping traditions alive, this pilgrimage helps Hindu Australians engage in their spirituality and raises funds for drought-affected farmers throughout New South Wales.

I was pleased to greet walkers at the beginning of their journey in Mays Hill, while New South Wales Opposition leader Jodi McKay met them halfway at the Sai Mandir temple in Strathfield. I thank Renga Rajan, the coordinator of the 2019 Paada Yatra, along with members of the organising committee and the Hindu Council of Australia for organising the pilgrimage and for inviting me to join early in the morning to send off the pilgrims at the beginning of their holy journey. May this important tradition continue into the future.

#### PENSHURST RSL PANTHERS

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (20:02):** On 1 September I was pleased to attend the Penshurst RSL Panthers Australian Football League grand final. The Panthers are the oldest established junior club in southern Sydney and have played an important role in developing the talent of local footballers. The club has teams for boys and girls aged between five and 17 and is managed on a voluntary basis. It was great to attend the grand final and present the under-14s girls' team with certificates recognising their impressive performance and sportsmanship over the last 12 months.

It was also great to see the refurbishment of the amenities block at Olds Park to be more accommodating for the women who use the facility. It is important that we continue to encourage the participation of women in sport and it is fantastic to see the Penshurst Panthers promote more inclusivity in their club. I congratulate Natasha Clayton, Natalie Hanlen and all those involved at Penshurst Panthers for another successful year. I look forward to supporting them in 2020.

#### WOY WOY ANGLICAN PARISH

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:03):** I acknowledge the recent art exhibition and installation of faceted glass panels in the Woy Woy Anglican Parish. These picturesque glass panels were designed and created by incredibly talented local artist Alexandra Banks. The exhibition is a culmination of collective hard work over the past two years that began with the initial installation of four chapel windows. Alex has creatively interpreted trauma in brilliantly coloured, one-inch thick mosaic-style glass. This celebration of light and colour replaces the previous and somewhat dull patterned glass located well above ceiling height.

The completion of all 45 windows has seen many local community members and organisations come together and contribute to the final stunning product. I thank Father Davies and artist Alex Banks for this wonderful addition to our community. It adds to the history of the church space as well as the cultural landscape of the coast. It also highlights the vast array of talented members of our community coming together to provide artistic additions for everyone to admire and enjoy. How lucky is our beautiful community!

#### MAX TAYLOR

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:04):** Max Taylor is an 11-year-old from Wamberal. I bring him to the attention of the House today because recently he showed bravery, life skills and local knowledge beyond his age when he saved a swimmer from a rip. On 12 March this year, Max was leaving Wamberal when he heard someone shouting for help. With no lifesavers on duty at the time, Max took it upon himself to paddle out into the rip current and attempt a rescue around 150 metres offshore. Max skilfully negotiated the breaking waves while the swimmer was quickly fatiguing. After reaching the swimmer—who was a tourist who had never been to an Australian beach before—it took effort and energy for Max to keep him floating and balanced. After receiving extra support from a nearby off-duty lifesaver, the swimmer was able to be brought back to shore. Max has very deservedly been awarded Rescue of the Month for March 2019 by Surf Life Saving New South Wales. Congratulations to Max, and well done Wamberal Surf Saving Club for training such skilled surfers and lifesavers.

**AUSTRALASIAN MEAT INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES UNION, NEWCASTLE AND NORTHERN BRANCH**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (20:05):** I congratulate the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union [AMIEU], Newcastle and Northern branch, for two significant milestones—100 years of fighting for meat workers and 50 years of equal pay for women. The Newcastle and Northern branch, which was formed on 20 August 1919, has been based in Newcastle West since 1973. It services meatworkers from the Hawkesbury River to the Queensland border, as well as cold storage and dairy workers. The union has achieved significant wins for its members, including saving jobs, recovering lost pay and advocating strongly for workplace safety.

The AMIEU has also celebrated 50 years of pay equality—it was the first union in Australia to achieve it. For the time, this was a particularly amazing victory and set a precedent for others to follow suit. Following the legacy of those before them, I acknowledge the current union executive of Mark Cooke, Darrell Shelton, Leonie Gibson, Grant Courtney, Justin Smith, Jason Roe and Amanda Harvey, as well as every person in AMIEU Newcastle and Northern who gets up every day to fight for meat industry workers. Congratulations on 100 years.

**JEFF BENTLEY**

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (20:06):** I pay tribute to Hawkesbury veteran Jeff Bentley for his extraordinary gallantry at the battles of Coral and Balmoral in Vietnam in May and June 1968. It was an honour to gather with Mr Bentley's family, friends and dignitaries at Richmond RSL sub-branch recently, where he was presented with a citation and pin. After 51 years we have officially recognised his bravery. This acknowledgement was long overdue. Jeff Bentley is one of the quiet Australians who just got on with life when he returned from service. We owe our freedom to veterans such as Mr Bentley and we must remain forever grateful for their service. I thank Mr Jeff Bentley for his service to our country and his extraordinary gallantry. I wish him and his family all the best ahead.

**AFIF KHALIL NAKFOUR**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—**Afif Khalil Nakfour is an accomplished musician whose numerous talents are a living testimony of his work and skills. Mr Nakfour was born in Dier Mimas in the district of Margiyoun in South Lebanon, on 9 April 1940. Mr Nakfour is known for his research in international music and his career in the music industry. Mr Nakfour plays a wide variety of instruments, including the lute, violin, clarinet, and saxophone. Mr Nakfour has performed with international orchestras that have played in *The Sound of Music* and *Dr Zhivago*. Mr Nakfour has also published three books. Music students throughout Lebanon study his first book, the *History of International Music*, in 1971.

In 1975, Mr Nakfour migrated to Australia with his wife to escape the war in Lebanon. Mr Nakfour worked in a factory and then moved into photography and is well known in the Lebanese-Australian community in Sydney. Indeed he is everywhere: weddings, funerals, community fundraisers and receptions for overseas visitors. Mr Nakfour is much more than a photographer, he is a man with a wonderful personal story and I want to acknowledge him for his hard work for the Australian-Lebanese community and his contribution to education.

**LIBBY ELLIOT**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—**Eight-year-old Libby Elliot from Glenmore Park was just four years old when she was first diagnosed with neurofibromatosis (NF). Five tumours were discovered on her brain and several down her spine. She underwent her first brain surgery to partially remove a tumour growing behind her right eye. Now at eight years old, she has undergone a nasal cavity tumour removal and a spinal tumour removal.

There is currently no cure for NF, and as most of the tumours are benign, chemotherapy has little effect. Tumours are only removed when they cause issues, but each surgery comes with risks that the nerves themselves will be damaged. Libby's mum Jennifer is now working hard to raise awareness of NF and its debilitating and deadly nature. World NF awareness day is on May 22 and seeks to raise awareness and funding for further research into a cure for NF.

**WESTERN TOWNS TOUR**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—**I thank Progress Associations in Woodenbong, Urbenville and Bonalbo for their country hospitality when I visited them on a western towns tour last week. I was joined by Richmond Police District Commander Superintendent Toby Lindsay, Senior Constable Josh Mottee—recently posted to Woodenbong—and Senior Constable Troy Cridland, based at Tabulam and Chief Inspector Darren Cloake. We discussed a range of issues, including community policing, access to health services, rural

infrastructure needs and the impacts of drought and bushfires. Tenterfield Shire Mayor Cr Peter Petty and Cr Gary Verri joined us in Urbenville, where I had arranged an inspection of the former police station.

Urbenville Connect, led by Cynthia Coppock, has expressed an interest in using the historic building, now surplus to NSW Police Force needs, as a community hub. Cr Petty has pledged that his council will partner with me in trying to make this community dream a reality. I also inspected the Urbenville Showground, just within Kyogle Shire's boundaries, with Urbenville Reserve Trust chairman Dennis Hill, secretary Diana Payne and grants writer Kerry Brown. I support the Trust's efforts to upgrade antiquated amenities and to establishing a primitive campsite to attract grey nomads.

#### **ILLAWARRA SHOALHAVEN SUICIDE PREVENTION COLLABORATIVE**

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira)**—The Collaborative was formed in 2015 and has worked together with multiple sectors of our community implementing a comprehensive approach to suicide preventions that has reached thousands within the Illawarra Shoalhaven community. 2375 people have completed the suicide prevention training and 75% of those people have helped someone within 6 months of completing the course. They have developed a resource "where to go for support" and have handed out over 20,000 to local organisation and community groups. They have delivered the YAM (Youth Aware of Mental Health) to over 5800 school students

The Collaborative has worked together with other organisations to develop a new service to support people during the transition from hospital-based care to the community. It is called Next Steps Aftercare Service. Next Step is not about mental health treatment, it is about supporting recovery by helping people identify and work towards their goals as well as connect with the support of the community. I acknowledge the hard work by all the team at the Collaborative and congratulate them on their outstanding success in building the support needed within our community for suicide prevention

#### **RYAN BUTLER**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—It is my pleasure to recognise a young member of the Leeton community, Ryan Butler, for his personal achievements in athletics and track events. Ryan is a young man dedicated to his love of sport. He was selected to compete in the athletics and track events recently held in Canada. This exhibits great perseverance, discipline and talent. Ryan's dream is to gain a scholarship to university in the United States and pursue his dream of becoming a professional NFL player. I congratulate Ryan on his achievements and setting an example for other young athletes.

#### **COLO COLO SPORTS CLUB**

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)**—I recognise Colo Colo Sports Club, which is a Club based in the Chilean community. Its members particularly reside in South West Sydney, including in the electorate of Liverpool. On 15 September this year the Club organised a celebration of Chilean independence, which was achieved from Spain in the nineteenth century. The event was held at Fairfield Showground. It is always inspiring to celebrate a decision by people in the Southern hemisphere to seek independence from an imperial metropolitan power in the Northern hemisphere and to declare themselves a Republic. This is an achievement worthy of emulation.

The Chilean community is part of the extraordinary multicultural diversity of Western and South Western Sydney. The Chilean community make a valuable contribution to our area. It is the contributions of communities such as this that make our area such an interesting and attractive place in which to live. I acknowledge Club President Daniel Allebi and Secretary Teresa Vasquez and other Club officials. I also congratulate all those who contributed to make the event successful. Viva Chile.

#### **PAMELA HERRICK AND EDWARD CUNNINGHAM MARRIAGE**

**Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)**—I wish to pass on my most sincere congratulations to Pamela Herrick and Edward Cunningham who were married on the 20th October 2018 at Cronulla. These two constituents of the Heathcote Electorate proved that love is important at any stage in life as they were married at the youthful age of 76 and 88. I wish them the best for a happy future together and hope they celebrate their anniversary with great joy.

#### **SUTHERLAND SHIRE LIONESS CLUB**

**Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)**—I rise to acknowledge the wonderful Sutherland Shire Lioness Club, which celebrates its 41st Charter Anniversary this month. The selfless and dedicated Lionesses devote their time and effort to assist those less fortunate than themselves through the club's programme of community service. Over

the years, this fellowship of like-minded women has maintained a high reputation amongst the local community, fundraising for local charities such as Kookaburra Kids, Project Youth and our local high schools.

I acknowledge the incoming board members for 2019-2020, President Liz Beves, Secretary Marilyn Morrison, Treasurer Sue Maclean, 1st Vice President Lee Dunn, 2nd Vice President Jenny Ward, 3rd Vice President Jenni Warren, Publicity Officer Lynn Sutherland, 2 year Directors Marg Rule and Jill Newman, 1 year Directors Lorna Sonnerdale and Fay Brooker, Lioness Tamer Pat Coates, Lioness Tail Twister June Orsman, Bulletin Editor Helen Eastwood and Bulletin Sub-Editor Pam Frost. I also recognise the contributions of outgoing board members, particularly 2018-2019 President Di Weatherall, Valda Patterson, Shirley Flood, Denise Patterson and Joy Palmer. I congratulate each and every member of the Sutherland Shire Lioness Club on 41 fantastic years, and thank them all for their continued service to our community.

#### **EURONGILLY CWA BRANCH**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—Mr Speaker, I wish to congratulate the Eurongilly CWA which recently hosted the Hume Group Cultural and International Day at the newly renovated Eurongilly Hall. Forty two members from seven branches attended the event and they were entertained with short stories, poems and performances including an op shop fashion parade. In the afternoon, Gail Commens, Eurongilly Branch President and President of the South Pacific area of the Associated Country Women of the World, spoke to the gathering about the wonderful charitable work being carried out by the world's largest organisation supporting rural and urban women. It's always great to hear of women coming together, socialising and sharing stories which help to raise the spirits of communities particularly during tough drought times which are currently being experienced across the state.

#### **COOPER GANNON - YMCA YOUTH PARLIAMENT**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)**—I congratulate Cooper Gannon from Kirrawee High School on his prominent participation in this year's YMCA Youth Parliament Program. Cooper's passion for making a positive change and taking part in debates regarding youth affairs was put into great use as he participated in the Mental Health Committee. Cooper was the lead sponsor of the Mental Health Access, Early Intervention and Awareness Scheme Bill. The bill aimed to address mental health and mental illness in communities across NSW and to outline possible reforms that can lead to early prevention and better access of available services. Cooper was given a great and rare insight into the political process. I hope this experience helps him achieve his future goals and aspirations. Cooper was also recently elected as school captain at Kirrawee High School.

#### **SACKVILLE STREET PUBLIC SCHOOL MARKET DAY**

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields)**—Sock wrestling, slime and a sausage sizzle were all part of the fun at Sackville Street Public School's Market Day in September. The annual event raises money for the school's Year 6 farewell and a gift to the school from Year 6 students. Students helped organise this year's event, enabling them to learn new skills in marketing, finance and community engagement. The students were involved in developing stall ideas, consulting with the school community and arranging community partners, such as the Rural Fire Service, GWS Giants, Ambulance NSW and NSW Fire and Rescue. There was fairy floss, popcorn and a bake sale; as well as temporary tattoos, hairspray and the teacher 'Pie Face' raffle.

I have been a regular visitor to Sackville Street's Market Day over the years and I can attest to the event's continued success – a result of the students' enthusiasm and the staff's commitment. I'd like to acknowledge organisers' efforts in hosting another successful Market Day and trust the event continues to bring students, teachers and families together in the spirit of learning, fun and community.

#### **SUPERINTENDENT JULIAN GRIFFITHS**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—Speaker, I rise to congratulate St George Police Officer, Superintendent Julian Griffiths. Recently, Julian farewelled the command, taking up a transfer position in south west Sydney. Superintendent Griffiths has led the St George LAC admirably, and before that was at Sutherland Police Station. I have had the absolute privilege of meeting with Superintendent Griffiths on a number of occasions including the announcement of \$29 million for the redevelopment of Hurstville Police Station.

I met frequently with Superintendent Griffiths to discuss local safety issues and statistics, and was always thoroughly impressed with his passion and dedication to the local area. I welcome and wish all the best for Tony Cook, from the State Crime Command, who will fill Superintendent Griffiths' shoes and I look forward to working alongside Tony for the local area. I thank all police officers for their passion to serve and protect. It is a challenging job and one I am so thankful they undertake.

### **CASS HUA XING ACTIVITY GROUP MOON FESTIVAL CELEBRATION**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)**—It was a pleasure to be part of the Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS) Hua Xing Activity Group's Moon Festival Celebrations at Bankstown Senior Citizens' Centre on 11 September 2019. Also known as the Mid-Autumn Festival, the Moon Festival is one of the most significant occasions in the Chinese calendar and is celebrated by holding gatherings with family and friends, and of course the sharing of traditional Moon cakes. I am delighted that this important time-honoured tradition continues to be observed by the thriving local Chinese community in Bankstown.

I would like to acknowledge CASS Care Foundation Chairperson and Honorary Director Mr Henry Pan OAM, and Senior Executive Officer of Home Ageing Services Mr Ivan Wong and thank them for their invitation to attend and speak at the event and their kind hospitality on the day. I would like to take this opportunity to commend Mr Colin Chen, who leads the CASS Hua Xing Activity Group on a voluntary basis and without any government funding, for providing an invaluable service as part of CASS Care for many Chinese, Korean and Indonesian speaking seniors in our local community.

### **SENIOR CONSTABLE MITCHELL PARKER**

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter)**—I would like to congratulate Senior Constable Mitchell Parker for being awarded the Commissioner's Commendation for Courage which was presented to him at the Hunter Police District Awards Ceremony recently held at Raymond Terrace. Senior Constable Parker received this award "for outstanding courage and devotion to duty during the rescue of a male from a dam near Dungog on July 2015". I again congratulate Senior Constable Mitchell Parker for his bravery he displayed, he is to be commended for his courage and is a worthy recipient of this commendation.

### **ATHERTON CLOSE COMMUNITY FIRE UNIT**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—I recently joined Fire and Rescue NSW Inspector Brett Crotty to present medals for long service to the Atherton Close Community Fire Unit. The Atherton Close Community Fire Unit was established 15 years ago and was the first to be established in the Newcastle area. Community Fire Units are a team of local residents living in urban areas close to bushland, who are supported by Fire and Rescue NSW to enhance their safety and resilience to bushfires. There are more than 590 Community Fire Units operating through NSW, with almost 7,000 volunteers giving up their time to help the community.

For the past 15 years, the Atherton Close CFU has undertaken property preparation and protection, actively managed spot fires and ember attacks in times of bushfire, and assisted with recovery operations within their area of activity. Six members of the Atherton Close Community Fire Unit were given long service medals for 15 years of service. Congratulations to Bill Anderson, Peter Anastasiou, John King, Richard Masson, Andrew Collins and John Williams.

### **BEVERLEY PARK SCHOOL**

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)**—One of the greatest perks of being a Member of Parliament is the opportunity to visit various schools throughout the electorate. It's within the boundaries of those schools where ideas come to life and future leaders of our community are developed and nurtured. But without a doubt, one of the more inspiring schools in the Campbelltown electorate has to be Beverley Park School. The school is a kindergarten to Year 12 facility that caters for students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities. I was recently invited to the school for the official opening of new sensory playground equipment. I was extremely proud to have secured funding that went towards the construction of the playground. The faces on the students and staff at the opening was simply incredible. It was much more than just a playground – it was a space where those students could thrive and showcase their abilities. It is projects like the sensory playground at Beverley Park School that really make a difference in our community. I congratulate everyone involved in making the sensory playground make the transition from dream to reality.

### **JACK CALLAGHAN**

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)**—I wish to acknowledge the efforts of Morisset teenager Jack Callaghan who recently became the youngest ever winner of Newcastle Harness Racing's driver's premiership. Jack was aged just 17 when he completed his first full season of driving in the 2018-19 racing calendar. Just 18 months ago he left Year 11 at Avondale School to work full-time at his father's Morisset stables and concentrate on his driving career. Over the past year, the now 18-year-old scored 46 race wins in Newcastle and a further four at Maitland. The total also secured him the Hunter Valley driver's premiership. He secured a rare treble of wins at one Newcastle race meet and also won the feature race on Breeder's Challenge Day at Menangle in his biggest win of the year. Not only has he taken on and beaten some of the best and most experienced drivers in the region,

he is now sought after by many of the leading trainers. Jack has made the most of his opportunities over the past year and is obviously destined for bigger things on the world's paceways. I congratulate him and wish him well.

### THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES COMMEMORATION

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)**—I rise today to acknowledge The Families and Friends of the First AIF, for their fitting commemoration of the Third Battle of Ypres. I had the honour of representing the Leader of the Opposition at this years' service, held in the new ANZAC Auditorium at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park. The Commemoration honoured the 43 Divisions of British and Dominion troops involved in all the Third Battle of Ypres. The battles lasted for 102 days with more than 300,000 casualties. Australian Divisions participated in the battles of Menin Road, Polygon Wood, Broodseinde, Poelcapelle and Passchendaele.

This year the Commemorative Address being given by Mr Paul Irving, President, Royal United Services Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies NSW (RUSINSW), who told a harrowing story of a young man who remarkably made it through the conflict and back to Australia, but bore the internal scars of battle throughout his life. Sacrifices like these must never be forgotten. I would like to thank the Jim Munro, the President of the Families and Friends of the 1st AIF for putting the service together and the ANZAC Memorial for hosting this fitting commemoration.

### BELINDA MAXWORTHY

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)**—Earlier this year I met a young archer named Belinda Maxworthy and today I would like to congratulate her some impressive competition results. Belinda recently competed in the Asia Cup and has come away with a silver medal. Belinda, along with her teammates Tayla King and Alice Ingley beat the second ranked team Japan in a sudden death shoot out to make it through to the grand final. The 21 year old is currently ranked 153rd in the world and has her eyes firmly set on competing in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. She does this while also completing a Bachelor of Science. Belinda is an amazing athlete and I know Dad Anthony is exceptionally proud of her hard work and determination to achieve in her sport. Even moving to Queensland to be able to train under the National Coach. I have no doubt Belinda is destined for great things and we will continue to see her star rise.

### NSW RFS VOLUNTEERS COMMENDED

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)**—I would like to acknowledge firefighters from the Rural Fire Service Riverina Zone, who have in recent weeks dropped their day jobs and left families to help fire-impacted strangers in Northern NSW. Twelve volunteers made up the Riverina strike team that left Wagga Airport, arriving in Glen Innes on October 7, for a five-day deployment. Brigade members from across my electorate helped to protect property, enduring difficult conditions at Kildare, west of Tenterfield. For some members, this was their second deployment and I am sure it will not be their last. I would like to thank each and every emergency service member for their compassion, dedication and resilience, ahead of what is already proving to be an extremely challenging fire season. Special thanks to:

- Darrel Hursey: Goobarragandra
- Liam Frowd and Andrew Roberts: Tumut
- Haiden Jansen: Uranquinty
- Callum Murdoch: Currawarna
- Ray McDonald, Graham O'Brien, Russell Boothey, William Moncrieff: Lake Albert
- Daniel Dennis: Yarragundry
- Jonty-Jack Bruce, Courtney Lippiatt, Bruce Ryan: Forest Hill
- Jason Swift: The Rock
- John Stanton: Ladysmith
- Brian Clarke: Oura
- Ken Knight: Eunony
- Suzanne Sparks: Riverina Aviation Support Brigade

### LITTLE NICHOLSON STREET PLAY CENTRE

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)**—Today I recognise a wonderful community organisation, the Little Nicholson Street Play Centre which is in the heart of my electorate of Balmain. This centre provides a community

facility for kids to grow, play and learn, and for families in the community to connect with each other. Little Nicholson Street Play Centre has been available to children for over 30 years and is run by an extraordinary volunteer committee who manage finance, memberships and the fundraising needed to keep this community facility open to parents and carers. I would like to acknowledge the current committee including President Angela Kreis as well as Hayley Watts, Louise Sim, Victoria Welsh, Renee Raper, Kerrie Fergusson, Gemma Pulpett, Lisa Austin and Tania Barker. I also want to acknowledge former President Natalie Britton and former Treasurer Rachael Davern who worked with my office to secure a \$10,000 grant last year to fund a toddler safe play area for the Centre. I have been out to see that play area and it is a really fantastic addition. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered their time over the years to help this fabulous community organisation grow and thrive.

#### **AIMEE CARLIN**

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney)—**I congratulate and recognise the bravery of, Aimee Carlin who at just 19 years of age assisted in saving the life of a young man caught in a rip in the ocean near Tuncurry in 2018. As a local learn to swim instructor at Nepean Aquatic Centre, Aimee did not hesitate to act and put her swimming and safety training into action when she noticed the man calling for help as a rip was taking him out to sea. Aimee's quick thinking and early intervention ensured this man was not added to the drowning statistics. I take this opportunity to thank and commend Aimee for this selfless act and congratulate her on recently being awarded a Bravery Award that was presented at Government House.

#### **MANDY MAILEY**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—**On behalf of the Sydney Electorate I acknowledge the untimely death of Mandy Mailey. Mandy's story began in Belfast, via England, Switzerland, France and Singapore. Growing up during The Troubles, she learned to be feisty, fearless and live life to the fullest. Pyrmont became home for her, Michael and Connor and she brought her love of people and malarkey to us. Her family quickly became active and contributing members of inner city communities, and her red hair and infectious laugh were well known across Pyrmont. Mandy was a driving force and enthusiastic community builder, giving generously of her time and skills to many events, organisations and networks. She was always bringing me details of the thing she was organising. Christmas in Pyrmont, Keep Calm Quiz Nights, Mustard Seed Ultimo Uniting Church and Op Shop, Harris Community Centre, Pyrmont Community Centre, Pyrmont Cares and playgroup will miss her. Many in Pyrmont and Ultimo are mourning Mandy and I join them in sending condolences to Michael and Connor. We all miss her spirit, kindness and laughter. Vale Mandy.

#### **EPPING CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer)—**Recently I was invited to speak at a special event organised by the Epping Chamber of Commerce titled 'Epping: Today & Tomorrow'. It was good to meet with local businesses, community groups and Parramatta Councillors to discuss the future of Epping. Epping is already one of the best places in the world to live, work, raise a family, and run a business, but I believe it has potential to be even better. It is a place for ordinary Australian families to enjoy a great quality of life and to get ahead. But equally, it is perfectly placed for a future filled with opportunities for more businesses to thrive and new local opportunities to be created. There is still more to be done in supporting local business but grassroots organisations such as the Epping Chamber of Commerce play an important part in that, and a resource for government as a representative organisation. Thank you to Chamber President Tony Hackett, Chamber Secretary Betty Ockerlander, and to the whole Chamber of Commerce for the fantastic work you do in our community.

#### **LEGION OF EX-SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN**

**Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—**The Australian Ex-Servicemen and Women Broken Hill Sub-Branch formed in 1946, just after the conclusion of World War II and they have been thriving ever since. The Club has participated in many local events, and offers support and donations to various organisations in Broken Hill and surrounds, and has been growing in numbers since its inception. Their President Bill Graham attended the Annual General Meeting in Sydney to help the local Sub-Branch mark their milestone 75th Anniversary. I wish to take this opportunity to recognise all the members of the Australian Ex-Servicemen and Women Broken Hill. Congratulations and Thank You.

#### **COFFEE WITH A COP**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—**'Coffee with a Cop' is an initiative started by Prospect's own Fairfield Police Area Command, specifically the recently retired Detective Superintendent Peter Lennon. It is intended to be a casual way for citizens and police to become acquainted. No agendas, no speeches, just a casual chat about the community – and free coffee. The events are held monthly in Fairfield PAC and have since spread

across the state. I had the pleasure of attending the October 2nd Coffee with a Cop event, where quite a crowd gathered for a great cup of coffee at Franky and Co, Bonnyrigg Plaza, to talk with our local police officers.

In particular it's incredibly valuable for new migrants and refugees to the area to meet with our local law enforcement and build a trusting relationship. If you see a 'Coffee with a Cop' event happening in your area, I encourage everyone to attend and get to know the police who serve your local community. I want to thank Superintendent Jason Weinstein and the Fairfield PAC for their continuing engagement with our community, and for ensuring that our families remain safe.

#### **BYRON YOUTH THEATRE PERFORM AT 20TH INTERNATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)**—The Byron Youth Theatre is a special organisation in my electorate. They were formed as a social-action theatre company and perform work that specifically addresses issues that affect the young performers and their peers in the audience. This month members of the company performed their piece *Mind Made Me* at the 20th International Mental Health Conference convened by the Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Association on the Gold Coast. This production was created by seven cast members most of whom had a lived experience of dealing with mental health issues. They researched, interviewed peers, shared personal stories and consulted with health professionals.

The result was an incredibly emotive piece of youth theatre that has sometimes shocked audiences but with positive effect. Attendees at the conference and leading mental health experts from across the world said they were inspired and touched by the performance. I congratulate the members of the Byron Youth Theatre on creating this important production and on their huge success sharing their work at the 20th International Mental Health Conference.

#### **HEATH RAFTERY**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)**—Congratulations to local engineer Heath Raftery for winning the Joe Award for the most outstanding digital talent at the NEWi Awards earlier this month. The NEWi Awards recognise digital innovators and creatives in regional Australia who have come up with solutions or a digital response to solving a problem. Heath was nominated for his work as a founder of the Newcastle IoT Pioneers collaborative, a networking group for people who are interested in the Internet of Things revolution. An engineer, Heath is also the co-founder and Head of Technology at innovation start-up NewieVentures, which uses technology to create market-ready products, and founded MiniSparx, a technology and teamwork program aimed 8 to 12-year-olds. Heath has made a fantastic contribution to Newcastle's digital landscape and this award is well deserved. Well done, Heath.

#### **LET'S GO GREEK FESTIVAL 2019**

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education)**—Parramatta was yet again home to one of the best annual festivals in Western Sydney. The Let's Go Greek Festival never fails to impress and this year was no different. Since its establishment in 2014, this festival has stirred the senses of the tens of thousands of delighted festival goers of all ages that pass through its gates each year. The Let's Go Greek Festival boasts all kinds of things to see and do – delivering a night filled with live entertainment, and a wealth of delicious, authentic Greek cuisines to enjoy. The Festival is a fun, family-friendly event and is committed to the well-being of the community.

It values diversity in tradition, welcomes community participation, volunteering and education, whilst promoting a diverse range of businesses and cultural organisations. I congratulate the Hellenic Orthodox Parish and the Community of St. John the Forerunner (St. Ioannis) Parramatta on another fantastic festival. I'd like to extend my thanks to the President of St. Ioannis, Mr. Kos Dimitrou and Father Dimitri Kokkinos for inviting me along, and for organising such a successful event, year after year. I look forward to attending and enjoying many more to come.

#### **PORT MACQUARIE CYCLING CLUB**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—I recognise cycling sensation duo Alani Cockshutt and Miren Davies from Port Macquarie for embarking on an eight-day road and track competition on 2 October in New Zealand to compete against the best junior cyclists on tour. This was the duo's inaugural trip to New Zealand representing the Port Macquarie Cycling Club and both were exciting and understandably a little nervous in taking up the challenge against the Kiwis. The girls finished strongly throughout the event and commented on the amazing experience of cycling with the NSW team, with hopes of being selected to compete at an Oceania level in next couple of years.

Cycling NSW is committed to offering opportunities to enthusiastic riders who have demonstrated clear development potential in junior road and track racing to compete at a senior level. Both Alani and Miren are committed to achieving the next phase in their cycling career in hope that one day soon they will be selected. On their return they will compete at the Yunca Junior Tour of Southland and the National Secondary School Track championships. I congratulate Alani and Miren for following their dreams and wish them all the success at their upcoming events.

#### DEEPAVALI

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)**—The Hindu Council of Australia is into its 21st year of celebration of Deepavali this year, and last Sunday, 13th October 2019, it was my great honour to attend the incredible Deepavali Festival at Rouse Hill Town Centre. Rouse Hill Town Centre (where my office is located) is a lovely shopping centre with streets, a Town Square, outdoor dining and a mix of indoor and outdoor spaces. On the day, the centre was engulfed with the colourful sights, delicious aromas, and beautiful sounds of the Indian Culture. Thousands of people filled the streets experiencing Deepavali and enjoying the celebration, and I was certainly one of them!

I would like to congratulate Hindu Council of Australia on this incredible event. It's the first of two events taking place in The Hills area. The next is this weekend at Bella Vista Farm, and I would encourage everyone to come along and experience something really special. I also commend Rouse Hill Town Centre for hosting the Festival. This Centre embraces local community events and activities of all cultures, which is an ethos all social hubs and shopping centres should replicate. Congratulations again to the Hindu Council of Australia, and Happy Deepavali.

#### LUKE BAILEY

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)**—Mr Speaker, I rise to congratulate Wingham's Luke Bailey. Luke is a 22-year-old wheelchair racer who will contest the 100 metre sprint and also join the 4 x 100 metre relay team at the Para Athletic World Championships in Dubai next month. Luke, has caudal regression syndrome and spina bifida, first began competing in Para-athletics after an introduction to wheelchair racing great Kurt Fearnley. From the moment that Luke sat in Kurt's racing chair, Luke was sold. In 2016, he teamed up with Kurt's long-time coach, Andrew Dawes, and is now training in Newcastle every day, twice a day and three times on a Wednesday.

Luke has seen great success over recent years including at the Swiss National Championships but has an eye towards selection to the 2020 Australian Paralympic Team. When Tokyo was awarded the 2020 Paralympic Games, Luke was there competing in the half marathon. He has always wanted to return to the Japanese capital, and when better than for his Paralympic debut. I look forward to keeping the Parliament updated on Lukes future success.

#### ASSOCIAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE TREVISANI NEL MONDO GALA DINNER

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)**—On Saturday 12th October 2019 I had the great honour of joining the Associazione Internazionale Trevisani Nel Mondo-Sezione di Sydney Inc who held their 12th Annual National Convention Gala Dinner in the Colosseum at Club Marconi. Italian migrants from the Province of Treviso have made significant contributions to Australia over the years, especially in Fairfield City. Throughout the evening, the Association took the time to acknowledge the contributions made by generations of migrants but whilst maintaining and promoting their culture and heritage in their newfound home.

It was a pleasure to see many Trevisani Chapters from across Australia in attendance, in addition to the numerous visitors from the province of Treviso, Italy present on the evening to commend and acknowledge the contributions of their countrymen and to share in the celebrations. I would like to acknowledge the Treviso NSW President Mr Luigi Volpato, Secretary Mrs Eileen Santolin and Committee Members for their hard work and dedication organising the Gala Dinner and the three day convention and congratulate them on an incredibly successful event.

#### ALAN HENDERSON

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—I acknowledge Mosman local, Alan Henderson, who recently celebrated his hundredth birthday. Once described by former Premier, Robert Askin, as a 'man of exemplary character and of undoubted integrity,' Alan has led a life of community service. Alan became an Army section leader, and following the Pearl Harbour bombings, transferred to a coastal battle station to construct anti-aircraft defences.

Alan has always been active in the community wherever he's called home. While working as an accountant, and serving as President of the local Chamber of Commerce, Alan ran as the Liberal candidate for the

seat of Lismore in the 1965 state election. Despite not winning the seat, Alan secured a commitment for a teacher's college; which the Askin Liberal Government went on to deliver, and today has metamorphosed into Southern Cross University. At 100 years of age, Alan is still active in our community as a much loved member of the Mosman RSL Sub-branch. I was pleased to join Alan, his wife Shirley, and his family for his birthday party recently to wish him a happy birthday. I commend Alan for his life-long dedication to community service and I wish him health and happiness in his hundredth year.

#### **LINDFIELD BOOKSHOP - END OF AN ERA**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)**—In many neighbourhoods, local retail businesses sometimes take on almost legendary status. In the Lindfield area, the local bookshop was such a business at the very centre of the community. For almost half a century, the Lindfield Bookshop and Children's Bookshop shop became an icon of good humour, good service and good memories for all book lovers. Some of the children who received books from Lindfield Bookshop grew up to buy books for themselves and their children. The bookshop was established by Max Oliver 46 years ago and for the last 20 years was owned and run by the much loved Scott Whitmont.

The Lindfield Bookshop and Children's Bookshop was an oasis of a sort. You could escape with travel books or indulge a topic of interest, or soak up the pleasures of the latest literary prize winner. For fact or fiction, the wonderful staff went to endless effort to source just the book you absolutely needed. There have been numerous messages on the bookstore's Facebook page lamenting the closure of the shop and I wish Scott - as well as all who worked there- great literary adventures in the future.

#### **AFRICAN COMMUNITY CULTURAL DINNER**

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)**—I congratulate the African and Australian communities on their recent Dinner held at the Liverpool Catholic Club. The nights' theme was "Promoting African and Australian entrepreneurship and small business". The evening was attended by all levels of Government and by businesses and cultural groups across our community. The IGBO Community Australian President Silas Moneke, together with the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre, the Ugandan, Rwanda and planning committee are creating a strong platform to build cultural pride and lasting relationships amongst the communities. Those invited were encouraged to share their ideas and stories especially their achievements with potential to work towards their business dreams for the future.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 20:07 until  
Wednesday 16 October 2019 at 09:30**