



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Thursday, 27 February 2020

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 27 February 2020

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motion]

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Heffron to withdraw that motion of which he gave notice and redraft it in a shorter version. I will not accept the motion in its current form—it is far too long. I will give the member the opportunity to come back with a shorter motion of which he can give notice.

Mr Ron Hoenig: It's been moved before and it's expired.

The SPEAKER: I have ruled on this before and I have given a clear indication to the House: I will not accept members giving notice of a motion that is far too long. I will give the member the opportunity to come back with a shorter version later this morning.

Mr Ron Hoenig: You have previously allowed the exact same notice of motion to be moved and I am simply moving it again.

The SPEAKER: I have ruled. I ask the member to resume his seat and shorten the motion.

Later,

The SPEAKER: I will allow the member for Newcastle to give notice of his motion, but I point out again that when members give notices of motions and read those motions in an emotive or an overly expressive way, it does elicit responses. I again ask members to read motions of which they are giving notice in a fairly nondescript, even-handed way. They are not speeches.

Later,

The SPEAKER: If the member for Heffron is about, I am happy to for him to give notice of his motion, but otherwise the time for giving general business notices of motions has expired. If the member for Heffron is not here, then I will happily take notice of his motion next week.

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2019-2020

Debate resumed from 31 July 2019

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (09:45:24): Today I speak on the Government's 2019-2020 budget. Again, as with the seven other budgets delivered by the Liberal-Nationals Government, my electorate of Cabramatta has been left out in the cold. With the cost of living up, wage growth stagnant and overwhelming pressures on families in my electorate to make ends meet, this Government must do more to deliver for my constituents. My community of Cabramatta is one of the most multicultural and diverse communities in New South Wales. Its rich history is one that embodies Australian values and it is rich because of hardworking people like my constituents. However, this Government cannot take my community for granted, especially with the growing population and demand for public services.

The most pertinent issue of all is Fairfield Hospital. It needs urgent funding to modernise its facilities and bring it up to twenty-first century standards. This budget has not provided the funding for it to be so. Fairfield Hospital serves not only constituents in my electorate, but people in surrounding electorates as well. It is a central health hub that has been serving the Fairfield community for over 30 years and we need to do more to ensure that essential services will always be available to my constituents both now and into the future. In particular, accessibility upgrades, electrical upgrades and air-conditioning upgrades are among the many crucial improvements needed to modernise the hospital.

Thousands of my constituents depend and rely on Fairfield Hospital. Closing the general practice clinic was hard enough, but there would be detrimental effects to my community should Fairfield Hospital close due to a lack of funding. Another prevalent issue that constituents in my electorate have raised with me is the need for the Government to address the increases in the cost of living. Families in my electorate are doing it tough and things are not getting easier for them. Whilst the Government has introduced some incentives to alleviate these pressures, families are still struggling immensely. Those who live in public housing are hit the hardest and we must do more to close the gap and start ensuring that the quality of life for all constituents, whether it be in my electorate or beyond, is the best they can get. That starts by ensuring that the cost of living is manageable for everyone.

The state of local schools also needs to be addressed. This budget did not include any funding to upgrade any existing schools, which begs the question: What does the Government plan to do to address the growing population of school children in my electorate? Demountable classrooms are not the solution to solving the growing population of school children in New South Wales and stretching teacher numbers thinly is most definitely not the most ethical solution to ensuring that our future generations meet twenty-first century educational standards. The Government must look after our children. It must look after our teachers. It needs to put New South Wales back on the map as the education State.

Furthermore, the Government needs to address the growing list of applications on the State public housing list. Day in, day out, constituents who are in urgent need of housing assistance are left helpless. These are vulnerable families in my electorate; they are working-class people who now cannot work due to disabilities or workplace injuries. We need to do more to address this and the Government needs to do something about it urgently for the sake and wellbeing of thousands of Australians who are doing it tough right across New South Wales. However, I will give credit where credit is due. After more than a decade of lobbying for lifts to be installed both by me and the members representing the electorates of Fairfield and Prospect, the Government has finally listened to the pleas of our constituents.

I am pleased that a lift is finally being built at Canley Vale station, but the fact of the matter is that this lift is long overdue. My community deserves its fair share of funding. My community deserves to know why upgrading Fairfield Hospital is not a priority for the Government. The Government can and must do more for my constituents. My community deserves to stand on its own two feet and thrive like the many other communities across this great State. This is a community's plea and demand that their children be looked after, that wages rise and that the cost of living is eased to make life easier for all. I urge the Government to take what I have said into consideration as the future of the people in my electorate lies in its hands.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (09:50:40): As a newly elected member of Parliament in the Fifty-seventh Parliament of New South Wales I am very conscious of and grateful for the privilege bestowed on me to represent the people of Wollondilly. Roads, transport, tourism, education, health, cultural development, open space and sporting infrastructure are the key areas that the Government is delivering on for the region to deal with future growth. The Berejiklian Government has worked hard and made the tough decisions over the last eight years in order to make the biggest infrastructure investment in the State's history. The people of New South Wales in return supported this policy to improve the liveability of citizens and future generations. After being re-elected for a third term in March 2019, the New South Wales Government is getting on with the job of building a better New South Wales for communities across the State.

As Treasurer Perrottet said, the 2019-2020 budget continues the New South Wales Government's legacy of strong financial management, delivering its election commitments, making unprecedented investments in frontline services and infrastructure, and easing the cost of living for families and cutting taxes. At the same time the Government is also laying the foundations for a stronger economic and financial future. The budget delivers sustainable operating services averaging \$1.7 billion per annum over the next four years. New South Wales continues to have the lowest net debt in Australia, projected to be negative \$8.8 million by June 2019. The State is now one of the only five subnational jurisdictions around the world to have the highest possible credit rating, a triple-A, from both major credit rating agencies. This is extremely important considering the recent natural disasters of bushfire, flood and drought recovery that we are in a position to deal with going forward.

Families and communities across New South Wales are seeing tangible benefits following eight years of the Government's fiscal discipline. As the proceeds of the Government's successful asset recycling program bear fruit in the form of new transformational infrastructure like the Northwest Metro, which was opened in May last year, the 2019-20 budget builds this momentum by projecting the largest infrastructure program in the State's history at \$93 billion over the next four years. This once in a generation infrastructure program includes continued construction of the new and upgraded schools and hospitals on an historic scale. The Government is also making record levels of investment in rural and regional areas, including replacing country bridges, repairing local roads and investing in regional water security to create new and better economic opportunities in our regions. The budget

ensures that the people of New South Wales will benefit from exceptional services no matter where they live, no matter what their circumstances. A massive increase in frontline personnel includes 4,600 extra teachers, 5,000 extra nurses and midwives, and 1,500 more police.

In this financial year's budget, over \$143 million was allocated to capital works in the Wollondilly electorate with large projects in health and education infrastructure. This includes a significant amount for the works in those areas. The Government is building world-class education infrastructure. In this budget, the Government's total investment in school infrastructure is \$6.7 billion over the next four years. This includes \$917.4 million to build eight new schools and significantly upgrade a further 32 schools. In addition, the Government is providing \$500 million over the next four years to support non-government schools to build, extend and upgrade their facilities. The upgrade of Picton High School in my electorate is well underway with \$48.16 million spent in this financial year. Picton High School, which is at present the only high school in the northern part of my electorate, will now be in a position to cater for up to 2,000 students. This school has over 75 students who attend via bus each day. Provision has been made in coming budgets for a new K-12 school to be provided in Wilton Junction to accommodate the housing development that will be taking place over the next few years.

The Berejiklian Government has a high priority to provide first-class health facilities and services. The redevelopment of Bowral and District Hospital is ensuring that that priority is delivered. It is a direct result of the Berejiklian Government's ability to provide and grow a strong economy in New South Wales. Residents in the Southern Highlands part of my electorate will benefit from better health care as a result of an additional injection of funds for the continued redevelopment of Bowral and District Hospital. During the recent election campaign I was able to secure an additional \$55 million in funding on top of the already committed \$65 million, and this budget will provide further facilities and services at that hospital. The total redevelopment of the hospital is in the order of \$120 million. This expenditure on the redevelopment of the Bowral and District Hospital represents the largest infrastructure investment in the Southern Highlands in a generation.

The additional \$55 million will go towards the construction of additional wards and upgrading sterilising and medical imaging facilities following the completion of the current \$65 million building works on new emergency department wards and birthing suites. The doctors, nurses and community are passionate about their hospital. They are the reason that the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government is happy to make this funding commitment. Not only will patients and their families benefit from this redevelopment, the dedicated staff of Bowral and District Hospital will continue to deliver the best possible care in a hospital for the future. As Minister Hazzard indicated, the new investment by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government will also contribute to growing the New South Wales economy as it is projected to create a large number of jobs in my local area.

The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government is investing more than \$8 billion in health infrastructure over the next four years, including record investment in regions so that patients receive high quality care closer to home. In addition to the new facilities, the South Western Sydney Local Health District, which Bowral Hospital is part of, will benefit from an additional 822 staff, including 114 doctors, 52 nurses and midwives, 69 allied staff and 110 hospital support workers. Across the State the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government will deliver 5,000 new nurses and midwives over the next four years, the largest workforce boost in the history of Australian health care. About 11 months ago I turned the first sod in the first stage of the \$65 million redevelopment of the Bowral and District Hospital. The construction is now well underway and is looking like it will be completed by the end of the year. It was my first official function as the newly declared member for Wollondilly and I was excited that a project of this significance was being delivered to the people of my electorate.

The current stage will deliver a new clinical services building featuring improved facilities for patients and staff including a new emergency department, new patient units with more single patient rooms with en suites, modern theatres, a new main entrance and new medical equipment. The early works that were in preparation last year are now completed. We hope for an opening of stage two by the end of 2020. Construction work is ongoing including a new ambulance ramp and parking to the emergency services department as well as a relocation of services, a new driveway and car park and remediation. Work has started on services and the main construction is expected to commence and be completed by the end of this year.

For the second stage of the redevelopment of the hospital, extensive consultation process will take place with a range of stakeholders at clinical, administrative and community inpatient levels to ensure that the further redevelopment of the hospital reflects the needs of our community in the Southern Highlands. Recently I was involved in another milestone for Bowral and District Hospital with the redevelopment and commissioning of a 35-metre crane. During this time there was a contest to name the crane. I believe it is called Rahi—an Indian term for bonded protection. A young girl from St Michael's at Mittagong won a colouring-in competition. My daughters

were annoyed because they did not know about it. The arrival of the new crane was one of the first key steps. It had been years since we had seen a large crane in the middle of Bowral. It is being used for the \$65 million redevelopment of Bowral and District Hospital. This project has boosted the community. People may not know that approximately 40 per cent of people in the Southern Highlands are aged over 65 years and it is extremely important for them to know they can be treated and taken care of in a new and improved hospital close to home and near their loved ones.

The Government is approving grant applications for projects and events that encourage openness towards mental health in the community. There is an increasing awareness of the need for support in the area of mental health and those grants will support community-based solutions. The grants are aimed at community groups that are helping to reduce the impact of mental ill health and are raising awareness around mental health and wellbeing more generally. Grants up to \$1,000 provide a great vehicle for groups and organisations to host an event to bring the message of wellbeing to the heart of the community. Events which may be fun, thought-provoking, creative, engaging, sporting and educational will be hosted by community groups. The events are about creating a sense of security and providing a safe place to decrease the isolation people feel when things are not great.

Last year during Mental Health Month I had lots of conversations about mental health and promoting mentally healthier communities. Recently I had the pleasure of participating in a community feedback session with Community Links Tahmoor. Councillor Larry Whipper from Wingecarribee council conducted an excellent session. The council does a lot of good work in the community dealing with recovery processes, especially recently. Mental health has been a massive issue in our area as a result of the drought and also the bushfires. Young children being evacuated from their homes, particularly just before Christmas, was traumatic. One night just after Christmas when Burradoo-Exeter fires hit the electorate of Goulburn, 749 people were evacuated from Moss Vale Services Club to Mittagong RSL Club which put a lot of strain on their mental health. They were worried that their houses would not still be standing when roads were cleared and it was safe for them to return. We have done a lot of work with mental health in the area. Community Links Wellbeing has been a great provider of help in that respect.

Appin residents will reap the benefit of a \$5 million investment in new recreational facilities and 60 hectares of open space as part of the \$150 million investment in new and improved parklands. This investment will provide new district level public amenities, parking, lights and recreational facilities. Forty-three hectares of the unutilised land in Upchurch Street, Appin, will be transformed into a new parkland for the growing Appin community. This is an invaluable investment for local families with 17 hectares being preserved for its thriving koala population. I will be working closely with the council and the community to ensure the best possible facilities are provided.

Funds are being allocated in the budget to allow for Wollondilly Shire Council to receive \$15,000 to manage the flying fox camp at Picton. This funding will help support the council to create a buffer, separating the Stonequarry Creek flying fox camp from affected residents in Picton. A large number of flying foxes are roosting in the area and this funding will help council to better manage them and their impact on the local community. The residents of Picton are strongly supportive of this funding. Wollondilly Shire Council was one of 15 local government areas to receive funding in the round of the Government's Flying-fox Grants Program that supports local communities living with flying foxes.

Flying foxes are a protected native species in New South Wales and are protected by law. The Government is working hard to reduce the conflict between people and flying fox colonies by supporting long-term solutions that improve and restore the flying fox habitat. When flying fox colonies decide to set up camp close to houses, noise and odour can cause concerns for residents. This program has been going since 2016 and is already supported by 25 councils to manage flying fox camps and help local communities. Grants are administered to Local Government NSW and funds have been allocated to ensure that this program is extended beyond 2019-20. Under the Flying-fox Habitat Restoration Program the NSW Environmental Trust has committed \$5 million to the trial flying fox habitat restoration away from human settlements finding a long-term solution to conflict.

In the area of culture, \$2.49 million has been allocated to the wonderful regional art gallery to be based in the Southern Highlands. The Regional Culture Fund will go towards the establishment of the Southern Highlands Regional Art Gallery hosting significant and major exhibitions. It will even hold an Archibald Prize exhibition as part of a regional tour from the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Renowned local artist Ben Quilty has been a strong supporter of this project which will benefit residents of my electorate and provide significant focus for tourism in the Southern Highlands. The Regional Cultural Fund will provide inspiration, education and development opportunities for young regional artists.

Netballers from the Wollondilly Netball Association will benefit from the provision of \$1 million in the 2019-20 budget for a resurfacing project for 12 courts at Tahmoor Sportsground. The current courts are a mixture of grass and asphalt, which do not provide an all-weather playing surface. The grant will enable the courts to be

resurfaced to a much higher standard, which will enable the association to bid for rights to hold major championships at Tahmoor. More than 700 participants who play mini netball to masters regularly use the courts. The upgrade was welcome by all users in the Tahmoor area and Little Athletics Australia will also be provided with \$35,000 for the purchase of new equipment. This is a welcome addition to the club, the Tahmoor Little Athletics and the service it continues to provide the local community for the development of junior athletes.

Picton Sportsground was allocated \$1 million for an upgrade to its facilities and the soccer field. This will enable the club to cater for a large number of new participants and officials, many of whom are female. The soccer club will work closely with the local council to ensure the delivery of this project, which will have significant benefits for the community. Kids in Wollondilly are keeping active while their parents are keeping their cash. From 1 July last year parents have had access to a \$200 Active Kids voucher for each school-enrolled child. Active Kids is one of the most popular programs for kids and parents and has just been doubled to help kids stay active all year long. We all know that kids in Wollondilly want to play sport and to keep active with their friends. Now parents can encourage them more with another voucher to help spread the costs associated with the preparation. The Active Kids program was launched in 2018. Since then more than one million vouchers have been redeemed and more than \$100 million has been saved by New South Wales families. [*Extension of time*]

Families across my electorate keep telling me how much the Active Kids vouchers help them to manage the costs of living. With two vouchers available per enrolled schoolchild, parents now have even more money back in their pockets while their kids are staying happy and healthy. It is a big win for New South Wales when more kids can participate in sport because of the Government's drive to take down the barriers of expensive registration costs. Whether it is soccer, Scouts, Australian Football League, Rugby, Rugby League, netball, golf or volleyball, we are sure to find active kids who will love it. Active Kids really is making a difference to children's participation in sport and active recreation in New South Wales.

From January to June there was an overall increase of 13 per cent in the number of Active Kids vouchers created. Following an influx of registrations for dance, gymnastics, tennis and swimming with Active Kids providers, 70 per cent of the vouchers created were for girls. These are incredible results that demonstrate why the New South Wales Government is investing an additional \$40 million in the Active Kids program in this year's budget. As a result of allocations in this year's budget, parents of enrolled children can access a second \$100 Active Kids voucher each year to put towards registration and membership fees for sport and active recreation.

New South Wales will be a safer State with the allocation of a \$583 million investment into extra police, who are being assigned to local area commands and specialist areas to protect communities and fight crime. I recently met with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, David Elliott, in Tahmoor. Over the next 12 months six new officers will be joining the Camden Police Area Command, which covers part of the Wollondilly electorate, to respond to emergencies in the local community. Mr Elliott said that the Berejiklian Government was delivering a record investment in frontline services for schools and hospitals, as well as police and emergency services.

In addition to more local police, the NSW Police Force will boost the ranks of high-visibility teams, as well as specialist crime fighters devoted to strategic intelligence and cybercrime. The changing nature of crime meant that it was vital to have more police introduced into the ranks. This is a major boost to ensure that police have the resources they need to protect the community. Wollondilly has some of its lowest crime rates in 20 years. Those extra officers include specialist police who deal with aged crime prevention and who monitor offenders on the Child Protection Register. The Wollondilly community will be a safer place with the New South Wales Government investment boosting our Police Area Command. I am proud to welcome those men and women and wish them every success in their policing careers in the Wollondilly community.

As part of the 2019-20 Active Transport (Walking and Cycling) Program, the Government has allocated funding for the concept design, community consultation and detailed design of the missing link of a shared parkway between River Road in Tahmoor and Wonga Road in Picton, near Picton High School. The allocation will also allow the construction of the first stage of the project in this financial year, which is 200 metres of shared parkway at the front of Picton High School on Argyle Street up to the intersection of Wonga Road.

Debate interrupted.

Bills

WATER (COMMONWEALTH POWERS) AMENDMENT (TERMINATION OF REFERENCES) BILL 2019

Second Reading Speech

Debate resumed from 21 November 2019.

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (10:15:10): Our officials need a clear message that they work for New South Wales and that mission creep and giving away more authority to the Commonwealth are finished. There needs to be stronger reporting to the Parliament of the content, intent and lawfulness of any negotiation with the Commonwealth regarding water. It is stated in our Constitution and the expectation of the Australian people is that parliaments have power only for the purposes of being responsible and upholding laws. Importantly, they must benefit the Australian people. I think we have moved a long way from that expectation of responsibility. I repeat that this amendment does not start the termination process on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan; it allows a parliament to debate a nominated reason why termination may occur. This will force answers and greater caution from this Government and the Commonwealth Government.

If a later termination motion were successful this would not "rip up" the plan, to use a term of another member in this place. The progress made to date in water sharing plans would still be in place and so would our agreements on water delivery. On 9 August 2019 the Premier, with no reference to the Parliament or the New South Wales basin communities, signed a revised intergovernmental agreement on implementing water reform in the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. There was no consultation with communities, industry or anybody that would be impacted by the agreement. I call on everyone in this place to support a piece of legislation that returns the power of scrutiny to the New South Wales Parliament and to the people we represent. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

WATER MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT (WATER RIGHTS TRANSPARENCY) BILL 2020

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mrs Helen Dalton, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (10:18:21): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It is my pleasure to introduce this extremely overdue bill to Parliament. Secrecy is the mother of corruption and mismanagement. I believe the toxic level of secrecy surrounding water ownership across New South Wales is one of the major reasons why we find ourselves in the mess that we are in today regarding water. We all know that the drought in Australia has caused misery and hardship for many, but do members know that it has also been extremely profitable for a select few? We do not always know who because it is impossible to find out who owns water in New South Wales or how much they own. There is no online register where I can type the name of a person, a company or, indeed, a government department to find out. When I was elected I did not even have to declare the amount of water I own on my pecuniary interest form. Anyone—foreign or Australian—can buy vast quantities of our most precious natural resource whilst concealing their identity. You might ask: Who? Politicians, foreign companies, perhaps foreign governments or Sydney traders can all own water, manipulate the price and make millions off the back of the misery of struggling farmers.

The purpose of the bill is to end the secrecy on water ownership across the State. Put simply, the bill does three things. First, it changes the pecuniary interest form for New South Wales MPs so they have to declare their water ownership. Secondly, it changes the application process for getting a water licence so people cannot hide their identity when they apply for the licence. Thirdly, it changes the online New South Wales water register to allow people to search for the water holdings of people, companies and government departments. Those changes are long overdue. I cannot believe that after so many years of the problems we have had, nobody else in the State Parliament or Federal Parliament has tried to address this issue adequately. We have a register of property and land where we can all find out who owns what and where, so why on earth do we keep water secret?

Since water was separated from land and became an individual property right, there have been many issues around registering and providing public transparency on water ownership. At present it is very difficult for ordinary members of the public to find out who has an entitlement to New South Wales river water, groundwater and floodplain harvesting water. While the New South Wales government authority—WaterNSW—maintains an online water register, the limited information contained in that register and restrictive search functions blocks transparency. It is not possible to search for the water access licences, known as the WALs, by an individual person's name; a company name and Australian Business Number [ABN]; a government department name; or even an irrigation scheme name. Instead, the register allows us to search for a water access licence number or earthworks approval to find out details of water entitlements. We can only search by the number, not the name. How the hell would we know the access licence number of a person? It is impossible.

At present the water register is deliberately complex and difficult to use. Moreover, getting a water licence is easier than opening a bank account. It is possible for corporate entities to obtain a licence without disclosing the names of major shareholders, company owners, parent companies or other individuals who may directly benefit from water purchased. As I mentioned, there is another big issue undermining transparency: Those of us in this Chamber—members of the New South Wales Parliament—are not required to disclose our water entitlements as part of our disclosures of pecuniary interests. Members are required under legislation to disclose such things as their property ownership, gifts, income sources, debts and contributions to travel but there is no requirement to disclose water entitlements.

The bill I have introduced proposes a number of simple changes to enable a member of the public to search for water entitlements by the names of individual people, ABNs and government department names. The information is to be available either free of charge or for a small cost via an online database. There is also a need to increase the amount of information a person or entity must provide to authorities to obtain or hold a water access licence. It is not good enough for a company in the Cayman Islands to buy large quantities of water—which has happened—while keeping the names of the directors, board members and major shareholders a secret. That is disgraceful.

If a foreign or domestic corporation wants to own Australia's most valuable natural resource, then we, the Australian taxpayers, deserve to know something about them. Under the bill, the following information will need to be provided when an application is made for a water licence: first, the registered address of the corporation; secondly, the corporation's Australian Company Number or Australian Registered Business Number, if applicable; thirdly, the position held by the person making the application on behalf of the corporation; fourthly, details of any other corporation related to the corporation; fifthly, the names of the directors of the corporation; and, finally, the name of any person entitled to 20 per cent or more of the voting shares in the corporation. That will not only apply to new applications. Under the bill, current water licence holders will be given 12 months from the date the legislation is enacted to provide the information.

The bill also changes a key regulation for New South Wales MPs, which is long overdue. The disclosures of pecuniary interests filled out by members of this Parliament will be changed so they include the requirement for members to disclose their water entitlements. Water bureaucrats have also come under scrutiny over the past few years. People have asked me if we can, in fact, trust them to manage a water register like this. The bill addresses that issue as it mandates an audit to be carried out on the operation of the water register by the Natural Resources Commission every 12 months.

The bill is absolutely vital. Water use in New South Wales has been subject to considerable controversy over the past 20 years. We only have to look at the past week or so and note what has been happening in the media. Allegations of corruption, mismanagement, insider trading, conflicts of interest, market manipulation, misuse of environmental allocations, water theft and over-extraction have been made. As a result drought conditions across the State have been made much worse than they needed to be, causing considerable hardship for people across western New South Wales. The long-term future of river systems is under threat. The potentially disastrous consequences for the economy, health and welfare of regional New South Wales can be seen.

There is also increasing concern about the impact of speculators on water prices. Increasing transparency over who owns water is an important first step in addressing those problems. Several government departments have water entitlements but little public information is available on how they use that water or on what the outcomes are from that water use. Rumours abound about individual politicians, political donors, celebrities, companies and foreign governments owning water. Allegations are often made about those groups manipulating the market, restricting water availability and keeping prices high for their own private benefit.

A better online water register containing more information on water licences and allowing people to identify water licence holders would increase public confidence and trust in our water system. It would also allow researchers and oversight bodies to better scrutinise water use and analyse how the allocation and trade of water could better meet the needs of agriculture, the environment and critical human need. At present, there is less transparency over water ownership compared to other forms of ownership, such as land, property and company shares. It is possible for the general public to search for the names of people and companies who own a property or shares, albeit for a fee. Water is a scarce, valuable natural resource currently under threat and water ownership should be subject to more transparency than property and company share ownership, not less.

It is my pleasure today to welcome members of the community group Speak Up to the Chamber, which is made up of farmers and community members across the southern Riverina. Later today I will be introducing the group's petition to the New South Wales Parliament. Speak Up's petition demands this Government lobby the Federal Government for a royal commission and a national water register. Some 11,000 people signed the petition in just five months. That shows how desperate farmers are to end this secrecy around water. New South Wales is Australia's biggest State. We should be leading the way when it comes to water transparency. It is what the public

demands and it is up to us as their representatives to address this issue. This legislation is an important first step towards fixing our water woes. It will send a message to the bush that we have turned the corner and are moving away from the darkness and secrecy towards progress and light. Unless you secretly own water and are making lots of money, I cannot see any possible reason for rejecting this sensible law change. For the sake of our farmers, for the sake of our rural communities, I urge members to support the bill.

Debate adjourned.

CIVIL REMEDIES FOR SERIOUS INVASIONS OF PRIVACY BILL 2019

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Paul Lynch, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (10:31:46): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the NSW Labor Opposition to introduce the Civil Remedies for Serious Invasions of Privacy Bill 2019. The object of the bill is to implement the proposals for legislation in the report on civil remedies for serious invasion of privacy published in March 2016. The report was produced by the then Standing Committee on Law and Justice of the Legislative Council. The committee recommendations were multi party and unanimous. They have been ignored by the Government. I note that the bill is, in substantive terms, broadly the same as the bills introduced in the previous Parliament by the Opposition both in this House and in the other place. There are two broad introductory melancholy themes that I should touch on.

One is that the Government has a distinct disinterest in adopting reform recommendations prepared by committees or commissions. It has little interest in legislative reforms generally. For those interested in this institution and the possibilities of law reform, it is a depressing fact that in this portfolio area only four Government bills were introduced by the Government last year—two Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bills and two Justice Legislation Amendment Bills for miscellaneous amendments. By contrast, since the election, the Opposition has introduced and second read five bills, each dealing with different and substantive policy proposals. The lack of any Government legislative agenda is pretty glaring and obvious. It is also reflected over the general period of the past eight years, leaving aside the flurry at the end of 2018 when various unrelated bills were cobbled together in a range of cognate bills to implement the recommendations of various statutory reviews.

The other melancholy theme is the comparative disinterest shown by the Government in issues of privacy. In the age of what Shoshana Zuboff describes as "surveillance capitalism" and when Europe has recently passed the General Data Protection Regulation, it is extraordinary that the law currently meant to protect privacy in this State was introduced before the invention of the iPhone. If defamation law needs to be reformed because of the advance of the internet age, then privacy law is in even greater need of reform. That is only emphasised by the infamous antics of the office of the then Minister for Finance, Services and Property in 2018-19.

This bill is part of a project of updating and reform, as are Labor's proposals to amend the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act to include State-owned corporations within its purview and to require mandatory notification of serious breaches of privacy by State agencies. The report of the Standing Committee on Law and Justice made a number of recommendations. They included the substantial adoption of earlier proposals for legislation in report No. 123 of the Australian Law Reform Commission in relation to the creation of a statutory cause of action on serious invasion of personal privacy enforceable through court proceedings. Additionally, the committee recommended that the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal have this jurisdiction. It also recommended the conferral of power on the Privacy Commissioner to receive and deal with complaints about serious invasions of personal privacy. This includes takedown powers for the commissioner.

The committee inquiry was established in June 2015 and the report was handed down in March 2016. These are particularly serious issues for our society. Much public concern is expressed about the unauthorised sharing of intimate images—known colloquially as revenge porn. That has now been criminalised by legislation but orders directing the taking down of images can only follow a conviction, which may well take considerable time to occur. Additionally, of course some victims may be reluctant to be involved with the criminal law.

Debate interrupted.

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION AMENDMENT (MINISTERIAL CODE OF CONDUCT—PROPERTY DEVELOPERS) BILL 2019**Second Reading Debate**

Debate resumed from 14 November 2019.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (10:36:19): I lead for the Government in debate on the Independent Commission against Corruption Amendment (Ministerial Code of Conduct—Property Developers) Bill 2019. I cannot see the Leader of the Opposition in the Chamber—she obviously cares that much about the bill she introduced in November—but I will proceed. The Government will not support the bill. We oppose it strongly. The bill was introduced by the Leader of the Opposition on 14 November and seeks to amend the NSW Ministerial Code of Conduct, which is set out in the Appendix to the Independent Commission Against Corruption Regulation 2017, to prohibit Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries from remaining or becoming property developers.

The Government believes this bill is unnecessary as the existing conflict of interest provisions in the code of conduct already address all potential conflict of interests for Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, including potential conflicts regarding property ownership, development of land and planning applications. I cannot see the Opposition leader in the Parliament as I speak to her bill. But she has got it wrong. The bill is a waste of the Parliament's time. It is completely redundant. The matters that the Leader of the Opposition raised last year are already dealt with comprehensively and squarely in existing legislation, the code of conduct, the annexure and schedules.

If the Leader of the Opposition were in the Chamber, she would have the benefit of my going through the provisions that show there is no issue. But she is not here. She does not care enough about the bill that she brought forward in November, and that is fine. But for the benefit of her colleagues, I am happy to go through the provisions in the code, the legislation and the annexure to show why the Government opposes the bill. I can think of much better uses of the Legislative Assembly's time, but I will do this if I have to. Part 3 of the schedule to the code requires Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries to give notice promptly to the Premier of any conflict of interest that arises in relation to any matter. It is very broad. A Minister or Parliamentary Secretary who has a conflict of interest in a matter must abstain from making, or participating in, any decision on that matter. They must also abstain from taking, or participating in, any action on that matter. Only if the Premier is satisfied that no conflict of interest arises or that any potential conflict of interest can be managed appropriately can the Premier make a ruling authorising the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary to continue to act.

Some definitions are important here. Under the Ministerial Code of Conduct, a conflict of interest arises if there is a conflict between the public duty and the private interest of the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary in which the private interest of the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary could have the potential to influence the performance of their public duty objectively. Clause 7 of the code reiterates that a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary must not, without the written approval of the Premier, make, or participate in the making of, any decision or take any other action on a matter in which the Minister is aware that they have a conflict of interest. There it is in summary. It is clear; it is squarely dealt with under the current provisions.

If only the Leader of the Opposition had read the code and understood how it captures the conduct that she seems most concerned about, she would realise that it is comprehensively and directly dealt with in the Act itself. The existing provisions ensure that where there is any conflict of interest between the private interest of a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary and the performance of their public duty, or any potential conflict of interest that cannot be managed appropriately, they cannot act on that matter. That includes any potential conflicts in the issues that the Leader of the Opposition identifies in the bill: property ownership, development of land or planning applications.

I also highlight other important existing safeguards to prove that the bill is totally unnecessary. Strict disclosure provisions exist in the Ministerial Code of Conduct. As members of Parliament, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries are required to disclose their pecuniary interests and other matters under the Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983. Members must disclose all sources of income, the address of each parcel of real property in which the member has an interest and the nature of that interest. Disclosures must include each disposition of real property by the member that the member retains either wholly or in part, the use and benefit of the property or the right to reacquire the property at a later time. The disclosures must include each disposition of property to a person by any other person under arrangements made by the member whereby the member obtained, either wholly or in part, the use and benefit of the property. Finally, the disclosures must also include any corporations in which the member had an interest or held any position and the nature of that interest or position held.

As members know, the Register of Disclosures by Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Register of Disclosures by Members of the Legislative Council are available publicly. Under the Ministerial Code of Conduct, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries are required to make additional disclosures of their interests, including the pecuniary and other interests of their immediate family members. All those disclosure obligations are targeted to ensure the transparency and accountability for all pecuniary and other interests held by Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries. The second safeguard I highlight is the existing prohibitions on misuse of information. Clause 10 of the code prohibits Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries from using improperly any information acquired in the course of their official functions, including in the course of Cabinet deliberations, for the private benefit of themselves or any other person. That provision prevents the misuse of information that a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary may be privy to in the course of their official functions.

The third safeguard I highlight is the existing prohibitions on secondary employment. Part 3 of the schedule to the code requires Ministers to terminate any form of secondary employment or professional practice before or, if that is not practicable, as soon as practicable after they are appointed. It is clear that Ministers must not have any form of employment or professional practice, or participate in the management of any business. There are only limited exceptions to this provision: where the participation relates to a personal or family business of the Minister, the participation is not likely to give rise to a conflict of interest and the Premier gives a ruling approving the participation. The general prohibition on secondary employment with limited exceptions provides another safeguard against potential conflicts of interest.

The last safeguard is the general prohibition on Ministers holding an interest in a business. Under part 1 of the schedule to the code, a Minister must not hold or acquire any security or interest in a business. The only exceptions to that are specific to diversified arms-length funds or blind trusts, or where the Premier is satisfied that the interest is unlikely to raise any conflict of interest or that any potential conflict of interest can be managed appropriately, and where the Premier has issued a ruling that the particular interest may be held or acquired. It is abundantly clear: The Ministerial Code of Conduct already has strong, direct provisions and supporting safeguards to ensure that any potential conflicts of interest are disclosed, which is most important, and managed appropriately.

I do not know why the Leader of the Opposition has introduced this bill, but clearly she is too busy doing something else today. She is either resiling from the bill or is not interested. I do not know which one of those possibilities is true. Only three Opposition members are present in the Chamber. I clarify again: Without the written approval of the Premier, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries are prohibited from making decisions or taking any action on a matter in which they are aware they have a conflict of interest. That includes any potential conflicts of interest raised in the bill concerning property ownership, development of land or planning applications. They are all captured by existing provisions and are a totally unnecessary focus of the bill. For those reasons, the Government opposes the bill strongly.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (10:47:19): I support the Independent Commission Against Corruption Amendment (Ministerial Code of Conduct—Property Developers) Bill 2019. I start by suggesting that if the member for Vacluse is so concerned about where the Leader of the Opposition is, she should go and ask the question herself. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for introducing this important bill to the House. Her efforts to protect the people of New South Wales and dispel self-serving property developers from the Cabinet table should be praised by every honourable member of the House.

I do not think it will surprise anyone when I say that it is time to take critical and overdue steps to restore public confidence in this House and in its Ministers. Right now, sadly, it is just not there. The New South Wales public should be able to have faith in their government and feel certain that their Ministers are acting in the best interest of citizens, not in the best interests of themselves or their investment portfolios. As the House is aware, the bill being discussed today seeks to amend the NSW Ministerial Code of Conduct, an appendix to Independent Commission Against Corruption Regulation 2017 under the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988. Put simply, the bill seeks to improve integrity and transparency in this House and the Government.

Currently, the code of conduct details the obligations of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, the relevant disclosures they must make, and the conduct they must not engage in in matters such as shareholdings directorships and secondary employment. The bill seeks to extend the obligations of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries by inserting a new requirement that a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary must not be a property developer within the meaning of section 53 of the Electoral Funding Act 2018. As we know, this is already a requirement for members of planning panels under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. By amending this Act and banning property developers from being Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries, the obligation would then fall on members of Parliament themselves to ensure that they are not property developers and to take action to cease being a property developer prior to becoming a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary.

It is important to note that the proposed amendment to the Ministerial Code of Conduct will only affect Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries. It will not affect other members of this House, such as shadow Ministers

or other members of the Government, the Opposition or the crossbench. Every person who is making the decisions that affect the future of our State and has the power to direct policy and public funds should not be motivated or impacted by a conflict of interest. In many ways, this bill is about what the community expects of decision-makers in New South Wales. They expect them not to be self-serving. They expect them to do what is right. They expect them to put the wellbeing of the public before personal gain. To put it bluntly, New South Wales expects that property developers will not be given a seat at the Cabinet table.

I remind the House that Labor has embraced bipartisanship and has supported Government bills related to this matter. We have done what is right. Now it is time for those opposite to do what is right also and support the bill. We are asking for the same support from the Government for this bill as the Government has received from us in the past, which is why it was very disappointing to hear the contribution of the member for Vacluse. Maybe she should have a closer look at what we are proposing. I urge member in this House to think above and beyond party politics and deliver what our State's citizens expect of us.

This is not a standalone issue. The bill should not come as a surprise to anyone in this place. After all, since 2009 New South Wales has had laws banning property developers from making political donations. It seems ridiculous that, whilst property developers are banned from making political donations in an attempt to prevent them impacting policy and government decisions, they are still not banned from being decision-makers themselves in 2019. No-one in this House is in the dark about what allegations provoked this bill. It should be unthinkable that a Minister in this House, who was a Parliamentary Secretary previously, can utilise their privilege and access to confidential information in both or either of those positions for their own personal and economic gain. But clearly it is not.

This scenario, if proven true, would shock and appal every honest, hardworking citizen of our great State. It is our job to make sure that in future this question is never asked and that these allegations are never made again. I remind every member that to serve the people of New South Wales and to represent their interests in this House is an enormous responsibility and a privilege. This piece of legislation seeks to ensure that this highest privilege is not misused for personal gain. If you asked any resident of New South Wales, "Do you think it is fair for a property developer to be a Minister, to be sitting at the Cabinet table and to be making decisions that are affecting your State in their own best interests?", you would get the response, "Of course not. No way."

The bill will effectively prevent one sort of conflict of interest coming into contact with or influencing future policy decisions, no matter who is in government. I do not know how anyone could oppose the bill. It is in the interests of the public; it is in the interests of our State's future. The only people it is not in the interests of are property developers who are seeking to influence policy or profit from a privileged position. Regardless of which side of the House members sit on, I am sure we can all agree that the interests of our State's citizens should always come before the interests of property developers. The bill takes a critical and overdue step in the right direction that will help to restore public confidence in this House and in its Ministers.

It is time to impose on our Ministers and our Parliamentary Secretaries the same standards that apply to our State's planning panels. This Government and this Parliament—the people's House—will have truly failed the people of New South Wales if we decide that we are content to have lost their trust. I believe any amendment or bill that seeks to improve the integrity and transparency of government is worth supporting. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (10:54:59): The member for Vacluse, and Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier very appropriately asked the question: Why has Labor brought this bill? The Independent Commission Against Corruption Amendment (Ministerial Code of Conduct—Property Developers) Bill 2019 was introduced by the Leader of the Opposition on 14 November 2019. I wonder what might have been happening at around that time? Mr Temporary Speaker, you will recall that the Labor Party was embroiled in an ICAC inquiry about a banned property developer with strong associations to the Chinese communist government giving the Australian Labor Party banned property donations, which was covered up by the most senior party official—the general secretary of the ALP—who hung onto her job until she was exposed in the public hearing, even though she had known about the illegal donations for well over 18 months.

I am not going to be lectured to by the Labor Party on property development and integrity because we all know the sorry, sorry history of the ALP before those recent calamitous events involving \$100,000 in Aldi bags being delivered to ALP head office. Whilst no Coalition member of this Parliament has ever been found corrupt by the ICAC, we remember the list of members of the Australian Labor Party who have. That list includes Eddie Obeid, Ian Macdonald, Tony Kelly, Joe Tripodi, Angela D'Amore and Karyn Paluzzano. Former members of this Parliament who were members of the Australian Labor Party who have done prison time include Eddie Obeid; Ian Macdonald; Rex "Buckets" Jackson—some members, like the member for Albury, are too young to remember him—he was the prisons Minister who was receiving bribes to let people out of prison early and was found with

\$100,000 in cash in his boot—and, of course, the disgraced Milton Orkopoulos, who is currently being put back in the slammer because he has been breaching his bail conditions.

We refuse to be lectured on integrity by the ALP and the Leader of the Opposition. The ALP has become a party of slogans without any substance; it always has the little slogan, the media hit, without any substance. Let us be clear: With no Coalition MP ever having been found corrupt by ICAC, as opposed to the list of dishonour that I just read to the House, history shows that our actions are much stronger than words. When the Coalition came to power in 2011, the Ministerial Code of Conduct was substantially beefed up to deal with the sort of atrocious conduct that had taken place under the former Labor administration. If that code of conduct had been put in place and properly enforced, the Eddie Obeids and the Ian Macdonalds of the world never would have been able to do what they did. It is unbelievable that currently a former Labor Minister is being tried in the Supreme Court, which is about 100 metres from this Parliament, for alleged criminal conduct in his office as a member of Parliament and favouring another member of his own political party. It is unbelievable the Opposition would bring forward a bill such as this.

Any reasonable person who believed that politics was about substance rather than slogans would have looked to the Ministerial Code of Conduct and asked the question: Does it cover the problem that this legislation is purporting to cure? I had a quick look at the Ministerial Code of Conduct to refresh my memory for the purposes of speaking this morning. Clause 16 of part 3 deals directly with the question of one Minister making a decision that would confer a benefit to another member of their party or the family of another member of their party. This is very much the subject matter of the criminal trial that is going ahead in the Supreme Court at the moment. The bill is entirely unnecessary and a triumph of form over substance. There are adequate and robust protections under part 3 of the Ministerial Code to ensure people never participate in the decision as a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary when there could be any actual or perceived conflict of interest.

The regime is clear. We remember the Heydon royal commission into the way in which unions operate with no proper process, the way in which there were conflicts of interest, the misuse of power, the misuse of financial resources and of unions so on. Integrity provisions and the conflict of interest provisions are quite common in the corporate world where many Coalition members of Parliament have come from. Within the Ministerial Code of Conduct there are robust conflict of interest provisions. There are duties to disclose conflicts or potential conflicts. There are forms for how disclosures should be made. Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries who have a conflict of interest must abstain from any decision-making in relation to that conflict of interest. There cannot be any use or disclosure of confidential information.

In addition to those provisions, there are provisions that deal with secondary employment. Ministers cannot conduct any business or secondary employment. In other words, provisions are in place now that would preclude a Minister from operating any business, including property development. The bill introduced by the Leader of the Opposition allows family members of Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries to operate a property development business. For instance, Eddie Obeid is on trial with his son in the Supreme Court. Clearly the *modus operandi* of corruption is to involve family members, but the Leader of the Opposition has allowed for the possibility that family members can still operate property development businesses in the bill.

How that is dealt with under the bill is that the Minister or the Parliamentary Secretary ensures there is no conflict of interest. How do they determine that? By going back to the existing code and conflict of interest provisions. The Leader of the Opposition is saying the current conflict of interest provisions can deal with that situation for family members. They can also deal with that situation if the Minister or the Parliamentary Secretary also have a conflict of interest. It is an acknowledgement within that exception and carve out for family members that the existing conflict of interest provisions within the code are adequate. Other than the slogan, "We want to ban property developers", they already cannot operate under the existing code. That is why the bill is unnecessary. It is form over substance. It is just an attempt at, "Look over here. Don't look at us over there."

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (11:05:38): I thank Cabinet Secretary Henskens and Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier Upton for their earlier remarks on why we are standing here debating this absolutely ridiculous bill. There is a mountain of legislation that we could be debating to make a good contribution to the work that we all try to do in this House, but instead we are debating a couple of pages of a suggested Act to amend what is already a very strong New South Wales Ministerial Code of Conduct. As we have heard earlier, in large part the code addresses the challenges and concerns that those opposite purport to be attempting to solve by putting up this tripe.

It is important to acknowledge that the Independent Commission Against Corruption Amendment Bill seeks to amend the code of conduct to prohibit Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries from remaining or becoming property developers. The bill is completely unnecessary. If the Leader of the Opposition had taken the time—I do not know if she did—to review the existing code of conduct, she would have realised that the preamble at point 7 says that the code of conduct already applies to Parliamentary Secretaries. Further on the code of conduct

talks about prohibited interests. Part 3 addresses and deals with secondary employment. There is an existing, very capable piece of legislation in a code of conduct that deals with these issues that the bill is purported to be—

Ms Gabrielle Upton: Comprehensive.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN: I accept the interjection from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, using the word "comprehensive". That is exactly what the existing legislation and code of conduct are. They are comprehensive in dealing with the issues that supposedly arise from the bill. Part 1 deals with prohibited interests and further on looks at secondary employment. It is an ironclad, clear, well-articulated clause dealing with challenges and concerns that Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries may have about secondary employment. Therefore, the bill is entirely unnecessary. The ethical framework set out in the Ministerial Code of Conduct already ensures that conflicts of interest arising from property ownership and other private interests are disclosed, and effectively and appropriately managed. I see the benches opposite are all but empty, which demonstrates the real interests in and views on this bill. It was a stunt from the beginning and it is still a stunt. We could have been talking about issues that are important and meaningful to constituents across New South Wales.

Where is the policy from Labor? Where is the thought? Where is the process? Where is the contribution? The member for Macquarie Fields is holding the fort on this supposedly critical and important legislation that has been put forward to solve problems that apparently exist in the current legislation. Part 3 of the schedule to the code requires Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries to give notice to the Premier promptly of any conflict of interest that arises in relation to any matter. A Minister or Parliamentary Secretary who has a conflict of interest must abstain from making or participating in any decision on that matter. They must also abstain from taking or participating in any action on that matter. Only if the Premier is satisfied that no conflict arises or that any potential conflict of interest can be managed appropriately may the Premier make a ruling authorising the Minister or the Parliamentary Secretary to continue to act.

Existing provisions in the code require the disclosure of pecuniary interests, including the address of each parcel of real property in which the member has an interest and the nature of that interest. That is an important point to reinforce. Let us be very clear: There already exists in the code provisions that require the disclosure of pecuniary interests including the address of each parcel of real property in which the member has an interest and the nature of that interest. Point 2 prohibits misuse of information for private benefit. Point 3 prohibits secondary employment with only very limited exceptions. The final point prohibits Ministers from holding an interest in a business with only very limited exceptions. Existing provisions ensure that where there is any conflict of interest between a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary's private interest and the performance of their public duty or any potential conflict of interest that cannot be managed appropriately, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries are not permitted to participate in any decision or take any action on that matter.

My understanding from reading the bill is that this particular point goes to the heart of what it is trying to challenge. I focus in on that: Existing provisions ensure that where there is any conflict of interest between a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary's private interest and the performance of their public duty or any potential conflict of interest that cannot be managed appropriately, the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries are not permitted to participate in any decision or take any action on that matter. This includes any potential conflicts of interest regarding property ownership, development of land or planning applications. For these reasons and those outlined by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, the Cabinet Secretary, and the Premier, the Government opposes this bill.

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (11:12:55): In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Campbelltown, Vacluse, Shellharbour, Ku-ring-gai and Manly for their contributions. This is a simple bill founded on a simple principle: You can be a Minister, you can be a property developer, but you cannot be both. I note the Attorney General is in the Chamber. Property development lives and dies on State Government decisions. The Government sets the overarching legal framework that affects every development and makes pivotal decisions on individual projects. Those promises and processes need to be honest and fair. They need to be independent of influence from vested interests and financial agendas.

Our Parliament has accepted that basic logic for more than a decade. Why else would it have banned political donations from developers back in 2009? We accepted that members should not be able to influence a decision they might make money from. We are simply extending that principle. If you agree that it is an unacceptable risk to our democracy to have property developers attempting to influence government decision-making with donations, then how could you possibly accept them influencing those same decisions from around the Cabinet table? Government speakers against this bill ignored that principle and that history. I was staggered to hear the member for Vacluse call this bill a waste of time, a member of the laziest Government in our State's history, a Government that has trimmed the parliamentary year shorter and shorter, but still has time to spend in this Chamber padding for time, which is what it has done.

The member for Manly had the gall to call a bill about government integrity, which is at the heart of this Parliament working, a "waste of time". The member for Ku-ring-gai called the bill "style over substance" and the member for Vacluse said it was "redundant". It seems that as well as poor comprehension they have no self-awareness nor any awareness of how the community views this issue. The community wants and needs to have confidence in the decision-making of government, decisions that are made around the Cabinet table. For the benefit of the Government I will explain again why we need this bill. It has three basic provisions: First, if a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary meets the Electoral Funding Act's definition of a property developer when they are appointed, they need to take reasonable steps to end that arrangement as soon as possible. The bill does not reinvent the definition of "property developer"; it is already in the Electoral Funding Act.

Second, the Premier may give a ruling to approve a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary remaining or becoming a property developer if they only meet the definition because of their spouse, and that spouse's property developer business is not likely to give rise to a conflict of interest. Third, the Premier may also direct a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary to cease to be a property developer if the position may give rise to a conflict of interest. These very simple principles within the bill ensure the integrity of the Cabinet, the integrity of the Government and the integrity of the Parliament are maintained.

The Opposition is using an existing definition to extend an existing principle. If Government members can find something unacceptable or a waste of time in that, they must be trying mighty hard. This bill ends a counterintuitive and false distinction that has left an unacceptable risk in our political system. By amending the Ministerial Code of Conduct, it will create a new standard of independence and restore confidence in our planning system; it will take another step towards getting money out of New South Wales politics. I commend the bill to the House. I urge the Government to support the bill to support integrity in decision-making.

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

The House divided.

Ayes40
Noes44
Majority.....4

AYES

Aitchison, J	Bali, S	Barr, C
Butler, R	Car, P	Catley, Y
Chanthivong, A	Cotsis, S	Crakanthorp, T
Daley, M	Dalton, H	Dib, J
Donato, P	Doyle, T	Finn, J
Greenwich, A	Harris, D	Harrison, J
Haylen, J	Hoening, R	Kamper, S
Lalich, N	Leong, J	Lynch, P
McDermott, H	McGirr, J	McKay, J
Mehan, D (teller)	Mihailuk, T	Minns, C
O'Neill, M	Park, R	Parker, J
Scully, P	Smith, T	Tesch, L
Voltz, L	Warren, G	Washington, K
Watson, A (teller)		

NOES

Anderson, K	Berejiklian, G	Bromhead, S
Clancy, J	Conolly, K	Constance, A
Cooke, S (teller)	Coure, M	Crouch, A (teller)
Dominello, V	Elliott, D	Evans, L
Gibbons, M	Griffin, J	Gulaptis, C
Hancock, S	Hazzard, B	Henskens, A
Johnsen, M	Kean, M	Lee, G
Lindsay, W	Marshall, A	O'Dea, J
Pavey, M	Perrottet, D	Petinos, E
Preston, R	Provest, G	Roberts, A
Saunders, D	Sidgreaves, P	Sidoti, J
Singh, G	Smith, N	Speakman, M
Stokes, R	Taylor, M	Toole, P

NOES

Tuckerman, W
Williams, LUpton, G
Wilson, F

Ward, G

PAIRS

Atalla, E
Hornery, S
Saffin, J
Zangari, RAyes, S
Barilaro, J
Davies, T
Williams R**Motion negatived.****PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION AMENDMENT (STATE OWNED CORPORATIONS) BILL 2019****Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from 14 November 2019.**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (11:28:49): Before I deal with the substance of the bill, I acknowledge the advocacy of the member for Liverpool for privacy reform. There are a number of issues with this bill, which means the Government is unable to support it. But I believe that the policy intent of the bill has merit. Following appropriate consultation I intend to progress a government bill in the future that will propose privacy reform in this area. The bill, if enacted, would amend the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 to remove the exclusion of State-owned corporations from the Act and to expand the definition of "public sector agency" to include any State-owned corporation that is not subject to the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988.

In March 2016 the member for Liverpool introduced a bill seeking to amend the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act [PPIPA] in a similar manner. The Government opposed that bill on the basis that it had been developed without consulting State-owned corporations and without full accounting for the effect that those provisions would have on their operations. As then Attorney General Ms Gabriel Upton, MP, emphasised in 2016, the Government does not oppose State-owned corporations being covered by privacy legislation in principle. However, it is essential that any extension of privacy legislation is done in a manner sensitive to the unique operating environment of each agency and is only introduced following appropriate consultation with affected stakeholders. Because of this, last December the departments of Communities and Justice and of Customer Service held discussions with the seven State-owned corporations to determine the feasibility of the current bill.

As this bill was only second read on 14 November last year, a full consultation process could not be undertaken before today's debate. The initial consultation, however, revealed a number of costs and operational impacts that the bill would have on State-owned corporations. Because of the lack of consultation thus far, the bill has been introduced without regard to the particular circumstances and operating environments that each State-owned corporation works in. There are seven State-owned corporations operating in New South Wales, in industries ranging from energy and water provision to port services, and they are Essential Energy, the Forestry Corporation of NSW, Hunter Water, the Port Authority of New South Wales, Sydney Water, Landcom and WaterNSW.

The State Owned Corporations Act 1989 is the main legal and governance framework for the corporatisation of nominated New South Wales Government-owned businesses. Each State-owned corporation has separate enabling legislation. Despite the fact that they share the characteristic of being majority Government-owned commercial enterprises, these entities do not easily lend themselves to a one-size-fits-all approach to privacy. Initial consultation undertaken by the Department of Communities and Justice and the Department of Customer Service revealed that while State-owned corporations are not necessarily opposed to being captured by privacy legislation, their views vary on whether they would prefer to be captured under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, or PPIPA, or the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988.

As the member for Liverpool noted in his second reading speech, State-owned corporations were initially excluded from PPIPA when that Act was introduced in 1998 to ensure that State-owned corporations would not be placed at a competitive disadvantage vis-a-vis the private sector. At that time private sector organisations were not required to comply with privacy legislation. Noting that the Commonwealth Privacy Act now applies to all Australian organisations with an annual turnover of more than \$3 million, it is not clear to what extent that

rationale is still a concern. There is the possibility that the Commonwealth privacy regime may be more appropriate for some State-owned corporations to ensure they have an even playing field with their commercial competitors.

Essential Energy is already prescribed under the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 while Sydney Water voluntarily complies with PPIPA. At least one additional State-owned corporation indicated that it would prefer to be prescribed under the Commonwealth regime to maintain a level playing field with its private commercial competitors. The New South Wales Government can request that the Commonwealth prescribe additional State-owned corporations as State instrumentalities subject to the Commonwealth Privacy Act. Further consultation is required to determine which regime is most suitable for each State-owned corporation. Another issue with the bill—and a common theme emerging from the Department of Communities and Justice's and the Department of Customer Service's discussions with State-owned corporations—is that it does not account for the immediate operational and financial impacts that compliance would place on State-owned corporations. Initial consultation with State-owned corporations has revealed that compliance with the bill's provisions cannot happen immediately and that commencement on assent, as the bill currently proposes, is impracticable.

I have been advised that compliance would involve, among other things, the following: identifying gaps in current policy to understand the changes required; updating internal and external documents and processes, both online and paper-based; identifying and making changes to information technology systems and databases that hold personal information; hiring staff and/or updating position descriptions to cover privacy-related work; and creating training materials and educating staff on compliance with new policies. I have been told that the State-owned corporations advised that they would need at least 12 to 18 months to be fully compliant in these areas. The Government is committed to ensuring that there are effective mechanisms in place to ensure the protection of citizens' personal information. The legal definition of personal information is provided in section 4 of the PPIPA. That section defines personal information as follows:

...information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database and whether or not recorded in a material form) about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion.

Numerous recommendations have been made to bring State-owned corporations under the oversight of PPIPA. They include a 2004 review of PPIPA conducted by the then Department of the Attorney General, a 2008 report by the Australian Law Reform Commission titled *For Your Information: Australian Privacy Law and Practice*, and a 2010 NSW Law Reform Commission report titled *Protecting Privacy in New South Wales*. The former privacy commissioner also supported these recommendations and, as the member for Liverpool also quoted, said:

This regulatory gap in SOC's responsibility for the personal information they collect, use and hold results in inconsistent privacy protections for consumers. This needs to be addressed as the community has heightened concerns around the collection, storage, use, and disclosure of their personal information and expects Government to provide protections for their personal information and privacy as shown by recent research.

Any extension of privacy legislation, however, should only take place following in-depth consultation with the agencies it will affect. The Government has therefore undertaken to continue consultation between the Department of Communities and Justice and the Department of Customer Service, the seven State-owned corporations and the New South Wales Privacy Commissioner, in order to identify the most appropriate approach to bringing State-owned corporations under privacy legislation. I look forward to considering this reform further after the completion of the consultation process and to bringing forward a bill proposing broader privacy reform. An important component of this reform will be the establishment of a mandatory notification of data breaches scheme in New South Wales.

Last year the Department of Communities and Justice released a discussion paper to the public, seeking community views about how government agencies should respond to data breaches. That consultation process sought public feedback on whether a mandatory reporting scheme for data breaches should be adopted under the PPIPA. The department found that there is overwhelming public support for a mandatory notification of data breaches scheme to be introduced in New South Wales and that is a view shared by the Government. The consultation did however identify differing views on what that scheme should look like. The Department of Communities and Justice and the Department of Customer Service are working closely to develop an appropriate model for New South Wales. This will be done in close consultation with the Privacy Commissioner. I look forward to working with the Minister for Customer Service on this model and to bringing forward the required legislative amendments to support this reform.

Any discussion of privacy law should note the support that government departments and agencies are provided in complying with it. Ensuring the protection of privacy rights and promoting a broader culture of good information governance is imperative for responsible government. I acknowledge the important work of the Privacy Commissioner and the Information and Privacy Commission NSW [IPC] in advancing this goal. The IPC has already developed a number of resources to support public sector agencies' compliance with their requirements

under PPIPA. The IPC website, for example, provides guidelines for State departments and agencies on the development and review of privacy management plans, which are strategic planning documents that describe the measures each agency proposes to take to ensure compliance with PPIPA. I look forward to further consulting with the IPC on those important reforms.

To conclude, the Government supports measures to ensure that New South Wales has a strong and robust privacy framework. However, any changes to that framework should be informed by proper consultation and analysis. It is important to appreciate fully how the changes proposed by this bill will impact State-owned corporations before any legislative changes are made. It is also important that legislative changes are considered in consultation with both State-owned corporations and the NSW Privacy Commissioner. Given that these impacts have not yet been fully assessed, the Government does not support this bill, but does support further policy reform in this area.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): I welcome year 11 students from Miller Technology High School who are visiting Parliament House today for a legal studies workshop conducted by staff from Parliamentary Education and Legislative Assembly committees. The Legislative Assembly is considering the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (State Owned Corporations) Bill 2019, which was introduced by the member for Liverpool in whose electorate Miller Technology High School is located.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (11:39:53): The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (State Owned Corporations) Bill 2019 has a long history. I am grateful to my colleague Paul Lynch, the shadow Attorney General and member for Liverpool, for his perseverance on this issue. Indeed, the people of New South Wales should be grateful to him for not giving up on this important reform. I am pleased to support this sensible bill, which is, essentially, a simple piece of housekeeping. In bringing it forward, the shadow Attorney General is doing the Government's work for it. There is a sense of Groundhog Day to debate on the bill: Members are considering an eminently sensible bill that was blocked by the Government in 2016. The Opposition hopes the Government will see sense now. I am pleased to hear the Attorney General say that he sees sense in the bill. In the interests of expediency, the Government should work with the Opposition in a bipartisan way, rather than producing its own bill at some future unspecified time.

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (State Owned Corporations) Bill 2016 was defeated by the Government. This bill, like the 2016 bill, seeks to correct the anomaly affecting the people of New South Wales that was created by the development of different privacy regimes at Federal and State levels. In many ways the bill is a model piece of legislation. It is short and to the point. It does nothing more and nothing less than what it says because it is not rocket science. The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 outlines 12 information protection principles. Those principles provide that the personal data of my constituents must be collected lawfully, directly and openly, and only relevant data should be collected; the data should be stored transparently—people should be able to access their personal data and be able to amend and correct it where necessary; the data should be checked for accuracy before it is used and its use should be governed by and limited to the purpose for which it was collected; and the disclosure of the data should be restricted and safeguarded.

We can all agree on those principles for the protection of the people of New South Wales. In fact, if I asked my constituents how they expected their personal and private information to be treated, they would describe those same principles to me. They would not expect State-owned corporations to be exempt from those principles or to be allowed to treat data in a lesser way and with lesser external scrutiny. After all, State-owned corporations have been established by the Government for the people of New South Wales. Essential Energy, Forestry Corporation of NSW, Hunter Water, Port Authority of New South Wales, Sydney Water, Landcom, and WaterNSW are all corporations set up under the State Owned Corporations Act 1989.

They all belong to my constituents and to the people of New South Wales. Therefore they should exemplify the highest and most transparent operational standards. Accordingly, why would members in this House be unable to agree that those entities should be required to uphold the information protection principles? The bill amends the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 to remove the exclusion of State-owned corporations by expressly including them. The Opposition believes that the gap between different sets of privacy rules must be closed for the sake of our constituents. As my colleague the shadow Attorney General and member for Liverpool has said in this place:

The justification for this bill commences with first principles. State-owned corporations hold quite substantial amounts of personal information about the people of New South Wales. It follows logically that SOC's should thus be included within the ... regime.

He continued:

Other State agencies are included and the reasons for their inclusion apply equally to the inclusion of SOC's.

The argument of the shadow Attorney General and member for Liverpool is clear and compelling. Currently the State's privacy law covers "public sector agencies", which excludes State-owned corporations such as energy

companies, water utilities and port authorities. The rationale for their exemption at the time the Act was drafted was that they needed every chance to compete with the private sector on a level regulatory playing field. However, although Commonwealth legislation has caught up, State regulation of State-owned corporations has lagged behind. No level playing field exists. The use of personal data by the private sector is regulated, however, the current legislative provisions exclude State-owned corporations to the detriment of their customers. That is why members are debating the bill today. A dangerous loophole in the provision of external redress for privacy complaints is in place.

I have heard it said that the reform is not required because State-owned corporations can already voluntarily opt into the Commonwealth regime. People ask: Why do we need new legislation to compel companies to do what they are voluntarily able to do? The answer is simple. Currently 10 government-owned businesses remain outside the scope of both the New South Wales laws and the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988. They include: WaterNSW, the Port Authority of New South Wales, Sydney Water and Endeavour Energy. My understanding is that only Essential Energy—one out of seven New South Wales State-owned corporations—has opted into the Commonwealth regime.

It is clear that voluntary admission to the regime is not working, and so legislation is required. That is why members of this House are considering the bill today. I remind members that the former privacy commissioner advocated for the proposition that underpins the bill. The former privacy commissioner's report dated February 2015, tabled in this place, recommended the change. The Opposition's 2016 bill reflected her recommendation. The people of New South Wales are rightly and increasingly concerned about the safe handling and use of their personal data. This House should not act in opposition to the information protection principles that are enshrined in law. Members must ensure that those principles are upheld and that transparent processes are followed when they are breached or when redress is sought.

Would the current privacy regime pass the pub test in my electorate of Charlestown? No, it certainly would not. State-owned corporations should be leading the way, not lagging behind. Even though exempt State-owned corporations appear to be treating their customer data responsibly, voluntary compliance is a shaky foundation for customers to rely on. I hear that State-owned corporations say they are morally bound by privacy regimes regardless of the legislation. Obviously that is a good start and surely means that including them formally within the legislative framework should not substantially increase operational costs or create any difficulties. It is not good enough for my constituents to rest on the assurances of those corporations that they are doing the right thing. My constituents need external assurances that their personal and private data is handled appropriately.

The Government must get its act together on privacy and personal data. It has taken no steps to put safeguards in place. The shadow Attorney General and member for Liverpool has done the work for the Government. The Opposition supports the bill and the essential protections it provides. The reform will give citizens a formal path of complaint and external review of State-owned corporations. On behalf of my constituents I support the bill and commend it to the House.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (11:49:11): Here we are again debating a half-baked bill that seeks to amend the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998. I acknowledge that this is an important matter. Data Privacy Day, 28 January, reflects the view of all in this House and indeed those we represent, that our data and personal privacy—when it comes to the Internet and digital applications—is of paramount importance. Only last year a \$5 billion fine was levelled at Facebook by the United States Federal Trade Commission which went to the heart of challenges around people's personal privacy and data collection. When discussing privacy and personal information, we should really be considering the role of the giant social media platforms and the expectation that we as consumers and customers of their platforms have of them.

It is worth putting this bill into context and looking at some of the considerations and the view of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, given that data privacy is largely a Commonwealth matter. There are 13 Australian Privacy Principles that are worth considering in the context of this bill. Principle number one is that there is open and transparent management of personal information. The purpose of that principle is to ensure that the Australian Privacy Principles entities manage personal information in an open and transparent way. This includes having a clearly expressed and up-to-date privacy policy.

The second principle concerns anonymity, requiring entities to give individuals the option of not identifying themselves or of using a pseudonym with limited exceptions applying. The third principle is the collection of solicited personal information. This outlines when an entity can collect personal information that is solicited and it applies high standards to the collection of that sensitive information. The fourth principle is around dealing with unsolicited personal information. It outlines how entities must deal with unsolicited personal information. The fifth principle is notification of the collection of personal information, which dictates the circumstances in which an entity can collect personal information and must tell the individual about certain

matters. This would be known to many of us as the prompt that appears when visiting websites, asking us whether we accept the cookies that the website has sitting behind it.

Principle six covers the use or disclosure of personal information. It outlines the circumstances in which an entity can use the personal information that it holds. The seventh is around direct marketing, an important one that goes to the use of personal information for direct marketing purposes and setting out conditions around that. The eighth is around cross-border disclosure of personal information, reflecting the porous nature of how information is traded and shared in a digital sense beyond the normal traditional boundaries of nations. Principle number nine covers the adoption, use or disclosure of government-related identifiers. It seeks to put constraints around government where it is the owner of that information.

Principle number 10 is around the quality of personal information collected, noting that an organisation must take reasonable steps to ensure that the personal information it collects is accurate, up to date and complete. It says an entity must take reasonable steps to ensure the personal information it uses or discloses is accurate and relevant, having regard to the purpose for which it will be used or disclosed. Principle number 11 covers the security of personal information and ensures that entities must take reasonable steps to protect personal information from misuse, interference and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. It says that an organisation has obligations to destroy or de-identify personal information in certain circumstances.

The twelfth of the 13 principles outlines an entity's obligations when an individual requests access to personal information held about them by an entity. This includes a requirement to provide access unless a specific exception applies. The final principle is around the correction of personal information and the obligations entities have with respect to that. They are the 13 Australian Privacy Principles that apply to organisations that collect and hold our data from not only New South Wales but around the Commonwealth.

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, or PPIPA, applies to the New South Wales public sector agencies including government agencies, local councils and universities. The Information and Privacy Commission of New South Wales (IPC) has developed a number of resources to assist public sector agencies to comply with their privacy obligations under PPIPA. The IPC website provides guidelines to assist public sector agencies to write and review a privacy management plan, a strategic planning document that describes the measures each agency proposes to take to ensure compliance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act.

The IPC has established an innovative privacy self-assessment tool to help public sector agencies meet their information access and privacy requirements. This online tool enables agencies to measure the maturity of their information governance systems and implement plans to further develop and improve those systems. The IPC has also developed a privacy governance framework. This dynamic online privacy tool is designed for whole of organisation engagement with the management of personal and health information. Believed to be the first of its kind in Australia, the framework has been established to assist agencies to better understand privacy risks and opportunities and to address their roles and responsibilities in relation to privacy management.

The IPC also provides a range of useful resources to help members of the public to understand their privacy rights, how they can make complaints and how to request access to their personal information. Ensuring the protection of privacy rights and promoting a broader culture of good information governance is imperative for responsible government and the work of the Privacy Commissioner and IPC in advancing this goal should be acknowledged in the context of this discussion around the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (State Owned Corporations) Bill 2019.

I reiterate the views of the Attorney General and share his view and those of previous speakers on the importance of personal data protection and privacy, especially in the modern age in which we live. I again remind members of the substantial fine levelled at private organisations and entities, such as Facebook, who hold an immense amount of personal data about each of us. I commend the work of the Information and Privacy Commission NSW which has clearly developed a number of resources to assist public sector agencies to comply with their privacy obligations under the Act as it currently exists.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (11:57:55): I support the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (State Owned Corporations) Bill 2019 and acknowledge the work Labor's shadow Attorney General has done on this very important bill. I acknowledge that the Attorney General has stated—and I am paraphrasing—that the policy intent of the bill is right. Unfortunately the "Manly Mauler" over there went against his Attorney General. I do not know what happened over the Christmas period but the Manly Mauler was talking it up, talking it big. I say to him, support the Attorney General. Vote for this bill because the intent is right. I know our shadow Attorney General has done comprehensive work, has considered this important bill and has done the stakeholder work required. I know he has done the research. There is no reason for the Government not to support this very important bill.

The Government should support the bill because Government members will be alarmed that the New South Wales Auditor-General's 2019 report *Internal controls and governance* found that 3,324 data incidents had been recorded in New South Wales government agencies as of 31 March 2019. The report also found that 30 per cent of agencies do not provide training to employees on data protection and breach management, that 30 per cent of agencies do not maintain a register of data breach incidents, and that the agencies that do maintain a register of data breaches incidents often failed to report important information, with no agencies recording the estimated cost of any data breach that occurred.

A separate report by the Auditor-General found that almost half of New South Wales government agencies have failed to comply with the basic eight cybersecurity strategies recommended by the Australian Cyber Security Centre. Recently the Government refused to name which agencies had failed to meet those basic standards despite a request by New South Wales Labor under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009. The New South Wales government agencies are responsible for protecting sensitive information, including health and many other records. Recently a study by IBM Security and the Ponemon Institute estimates the average cost of one data breach in the Australian public sector is \$1.7 million.

I support the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Amendment (State Owned Corporations) Bill 2019. I commend my colleague the shadow Attorney General for introducing the bill, which is a commonsense reform. There are times when this House should put aside politics and look at commonsense. The Government should have spoken to the shadow Attorney General, negotiated a settled outcome and supported the bill, rather than opposing it now. The bill has been on the *Business Paper* for a while. The Government had enough time to do the research. The bill removes an outdated loophole in our State's privacy laws. That loophole exempts State-owned corporations [SOCs] from being subject to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection [PPIP] Act 1998.

When that loophole was put in place, no specific privacy laws applied to private corporations. It was felt that it would be unfair to impose the legal requirements on New South Wales State-owned corporations that would not apply to their private sector counterparts. That rationale has evaporated. The Commonwealth Parliament has since amended the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 to apply statutory privacy protections to corporations that are incorporated under the Commonwealth Corporations Act 2001. However, the Commonwealth Privacy Act does not apply to State-owned corporations in New South Wales unless those bodies opt in on a voluntary basis—half your luck there!

Currently, New South Wales has seven State-owned corporations: Essential Energy, Sydney Water, Hunter Water, WaterNSW, Landcom, the Port Authority of New South Wales, and the Forestry Corporation of NSW. I acknowledge Leader of the Opposition Jodi McKay and the shadow Minister for Natural Resources for running a very important campaign about the Forestry Corporation. We have been informed that it will not be privatised and will remain a State-owned corporation. Each of those bodies, particularly the energy and water utilities, holds private information about people. It makes no sense that those bodies are not required by law to be subject to either Commonwealth or New South Wales privacy legislation. The anomaly has been recognised by the NSW Law Reform Commission, the Australian Law Reform Commission and the Privacy Commissioner. All those bodies have recommended that the law be updated to apply privacy protections to New South Wales State-owned corporations. As then Privacy Commissioner Dr Elizabeth Coombs noted on page 19 of a report dated February 2015:

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

Dr Coombs' report continued:

This regulatory gap in SOC's responsibility for the personal information they collect, use and hold results in inconsistent privacy protections for consumers. This needs to be addressed as the community has heightened concerns around the collection, storage, use, and disclosure of their personal information and expects Government to provide protections for their personal information and privacy as shown by recent research.

Dr Coombs also noted:

The statutory review of the PPIP Act undertaken by the Attorney General's Department in 2004 recommended that all NSW SOC's should be subject to privacy regulation.

I also refer to report number 127 by the NSW Law Reform Commission entitled *Protecting privacy in New South Wales*. On page 24 of that report the Commission noted:

...the rationale for excluding SOC's from the scope of PPIPA was the concern that they could be placed at a "competitive disadvantage" with the private sector, which, in 1998, was not regulated by privacy legislation. However, in 2000 the coverage of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) was extended to the private sector and so this rationale is no longer valid.

It should be noted that many New South Wales State-owned corporations state that they comply with either New South Wales or Commonwealth privacy legislation on a voluntary basis. That indicates there would be little or no burden for them to change their systems or business practices if the bill is passed. However, compliance with privacy legislation should not be voluntary or discretionary. Privacy protections should be consistent, certain and legally enforceable.

The passage of the bill would provide certainty, clarity and consistency for State-owned corporations and the people whose data they hold. There is simply no reason to oppose the bill. It is common sense and it has been recommended by the legal experts who have proposed it. Protecting people's private information should be one of the highest priorities of this Government in the twenty-first century. I commend the shadow Attorney General and the member for Liverpool for his tireless and diligent efforts to improve privacy protections in New South Wales.

Debate interrupted.

Business of the House

POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): On behalf of Mr Dugald Saunders: I postpone general business notice of motion (general notice) No. 886 [Australia Day Events—Dubbo Electorate].

Motions

CAMDEN ELECTORATE AUSTRALIA DAY EVENTS

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (12:08:12): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Camden Council, Liverpool City Council and Wollondilly Shire Council on their Australia Day events.
- (2) Notes Australia Day events in the Camden electorate included the Macarthur Lions Street Parade, citizenship ceremonies and Australian of the Year Awards.
- (3) Congratulates St Pauls Catholic Primary School on its successful fundraising efforts for the region's firefighters.
- (4) Acknowledges Australia Day is important for communities to come together and heal after the recent devastating bushfires. The Camden electorate takes in all of the Camden Council and part of the Wollondilly Shire Council and Liverpool City Council. The councils are to be commended for the Australia Day events and activities they put on for their local communities. I congratulate each of them. I will go into detail about the Australia Day events organised by Camden Council while the member for Wollondilly and the member for Holsworthy will do the same for Wollondilly Shire Council and Liverpool City Council respectively. On Australia Day this year thousands of people from the Camden community came together to enjoy the Camden Council's Australia Day festivities for 2020. Australia Day in Camden celebrates everything that is great about Camden and our nation, and how lucky we are.

This year the Camden community also stopped to acknowledge the Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW and other emergency services, volunteers, and all those citizens who selflessly assisted their neighbours and their local community during the horrific fire season. To show its appreciation, Camden Council wrapped one of its waste trucks with images of local firefighters to thank them for their service. This waste truck was included in the Australia Day street parade. Further, as thanks for their efforts, Camden Council also had NSW RFS leading the street parade down Argyle Street; had donations collected at the NSW RFS stand; hosted Camden RSL Club's sausage sizzle at the conclusion of the street parade, where all the money collected was donated to the NSW RFS; and there was a standing ovation at the citizenship ceremony. On behalf of the Camden, Wollondilly and Liverpool communities, I thank them.

In Camden the events on the day started with a thanksgiving service at the Camden Civic Centre, hosted by the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary from Theresa Park. I thank them for their contribution to the day. The thanksgiving service was followed by the Macarthur Lions street parade, where some of the local RFS brigades, the Camden mayor, the Camden Australia Day ambassador, other special guests, and community groups paraded down Argyle Street in front of thousands of Camden residents, who lined the street cheering and waving Australian flags.

After the street parade Camden Council conducted the Australia Day Civic Ceremony held at the Camden Civic Centre. This ceremony recognises our local citizens who have contributed to making Camden so great, and welcomes new citizens to our country and our community. The winners for the award categories were: Citizen of the Year, Brett Atkins; Young Citizen of the Year, Rebecca Halcomb; Arts and Cultural Award, Gaylene Feld; and Sports Achievement Award, Lily Hreszczuk. The award for Community Group of the Year was shared by local service club Macarthur Lions Club and community group Turning Point.

After the awards ceremony, 50 members from 16 different nations of our growing community officially became Australian citizens. It is always a privilege to see residents pledge their commitment to our great country and it is even more special on a day like Australia Day. I thank Camden's Australia Day ambassador, Josephine Peter. Josephine has been volunteering for more than seven decades. Her volunteering work began in 1940 when she was just seven years old and knitted her first pair of socks for Australia's troops in World War II. By the end of the war Josephine had knitted 450 pairs of socks. Following the Australia Day Civic Ceremony, Camden put on its annual street party, which was a huge success. Thousands of people enjoyed the fun activities and entertainment throughout the day, which included a thong-throwing competition, face painting, eating competitions, a cork-hat-making workshop, a koala cupcake decorating station, an Australian animal face mask decorating station, jumping castles and entertainment and live music.

I take this opportunity to again acknowledge former Camden Woman of the Year and Convenor of the Camden-Wollondilly Domestic Violence Network, Tanya Whitehouse. Tanya received an Order of Australia medal in this year's Australia Day Honours for service to the community through welfare initiatives. I also extend a big thank you to Camden Council and its staff, whose efforts made Camden's 2020 Australia Day as great as it was. Finally, I thank the residents of the Camden community who turned out in droves to again acknowledge members of our community and to welcome new citizens into our community.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (12:13:48): I make a very brief contribution to this worthy motion. While recognising the good member and his local area, of course I would prefer to speak about the constituency of the area that I have the great privilege to represent, the Cessnock electorate. The Cessnock electorate spans three different local government areas. We take in a little bit of the corner of Singleton and the western edge of Lake Macquarie, but primarily the Cessnock local government area is a part of the Cessnock electorate. The 2020 Australia Day awards is a significant event in the Cessnock calendar not only because it recognises the wonderful citizens that we have in our community but also because it is the T20 final of the local mayor—a game that this year was washed out and, controversially, was decided by an obscure rule within the Cessnock District Cricket Association, challenged by all and sundry. Nevertheless, the rain on the day was welcome.

The Citizen of the Year for 2020 is Melissa Gontier. During the course of last year she and a number of other people recognised a need to provide food for the homeless and for struggling families in the Cessnock electorate. They started with something as simple as a soup kitchen in the TAFE grounds one or two nights a week. That grew to three or four nights and ultimately they ended up in a shopfront with myriad donations of food, clothing and blankets coming from our local community, providing things that homeless people and people less well-off might need. Ultimately, Melissa and her team became the regular point for food and nourishment for a significant number of people in my electorate who are struggling with homelessness, are couch surfing or who may even be the working poor, as we see increasingly in our communities. The organisation now offers a service for people to have a hearty, cooked meal five out of seven nights a week and they can even take food away with them for their breakfast and lunch the following day. People can even get a change of clothes.

The group has recently moved into the old professional coaches premises at Cessnock tennis courts, which now means they can also offer their customers, their friends, their clients—call them what you will—somewhere to shower and to wash clothes if they need to and somewhere to get themselves into whatever state of hygiene and cleanliness they desire. It is incredible work being done by a grassroots organisation. They have no government funding or support; they started with literally nothing and they have grown from there with the generosity of the community.

Our Senior Citizen of the Year is Teddy Jackson. Teddy Jackson has been managing and facilitating aged care facilities across the Cessnock local government area for three or four decades—it feels like it has been for my entire life. He continues to do that even though he now could well be one of the clients. But he is incredibly healthy, incredibly intelligent and runs an incredibly good not-for-profit organisation, which continues to provide wonderful aged-care facilities for the people of Cessnock. Teddy Jackson could have won the Senior Citizen of the Year award any time over the past 20 or 30 years. His award is well deserved.

The Young Citizen of the Year is Chelsea Webb. Chelsea will be in this place as our Cessnock representative at the YMCA Youth Parliament in the coming months. She is an incredibly dynamic and energetic young woman. She attends Mount View High School and she does a lot of work in the community around anti-bullying, leadership and general community service. She is a wonderful young lady and I am very, very proud that she will be coming into this Chamber in the coming months as a young person to sit on the green leather. I certainly hope that at some time in the future she considers a political career because she would be a wonderful representative of the Cessnock community in the years and decades ahead.

Finally—although there were many other award winners on the day—the Community Event of the Year award went to the Lost Diggers of Weston and Field of Honour. A local community group decided that they would try to identify in the local cemetery at Kurri Kurri every grave of a former service man or woman and that they

would put a poppy beside that grave over the course of the Anzac Day weekend. It was incredible to see the thousands of people who went to see that most magnificent display. Each grave had placed on it not only a poppy but also an Australian flag. All of that work was done by volunteers. It was a genuine and unique celebration of our returned service people who, fortunately, did not die in the fields of war and came back but ultimately died many decades later. They lay to rest now in the Kurri Kurri Cemetery and they were recognised on this special occasion by these wonderful community people. I commend the motion from the good member. We can talk about Australia Day awards on any given day in this Chamber. It has been a great privilege to talk about the wonderful award winners of Cessnock.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:19:53): I join with my colleagues in acknowledging the successful Australia Day events held this year. Australia Day in my electorate is always a busy and exciting time. We have a number of events and celebrations in honour of the day that give the community a chance to come together and join in the fun. One of my favourite events is starting the day with the Sandy Point community. They put on a huge breakfast that is always delicious. It is always a nice chance to catch up with everybody at Sandy Point as well. A number of official celebrations are also put on by Liverpool City Council and Sutherland Shire Council. Sutherland council decided this year not to have fireworks at their Menai event, which I thought was a wise decision in light of the bushfires. They went ahead with the Cronulla fireworks as they were over the ocean. It was a spectacular opportunity to see fireworks in the area.

The Australia Day awards and citizenship ceremony held at Casula Powerhouse is always a moving event. That is because we get to welcome and congratulate new citizens into the local community and we award and acknowledge local individuals and groups who have made a remarkable contribution to our community. It is always a nice time. Liverpool City Council also hosted an Australia Day event full of activities at Woodward Park in the evening. I did miss them but I hear the band Hari Kari was a highlight of the night. The event also collected donations for the NSW Rural Fire Service in support of their continued efforts in this horrific bushfire season. Later in the afternoon, my electorate also hosted the Premier's Western Sydney community reception. We were very lucky that Premier Berejiklian came and celebrated Australia Day at Casula Powerhouse. It was wonderful to have her there again with some of my western Sydney colleagues. The event showcased the hard work that the Premier and our Government have been doing for western Sydney. It was also a chance to bring together volunteers, community members and leaders from across western Sydney, such as my local RFS brigade captains, to thank them for all the great work they do throughout the year.

As the member for Camden put in his notice of motion, I too congratulate St Paul's Catholic Parish Primary School and all our schools for their amazing fundraising efforts for our hardworking firefighters. Money is not the only thing that our students have been providing. I recognise one of my local schools, Dalmeny Public School and their efforts supporting the Casula RFS volunteers. Their year 1 class—and I love thinking of the little year 1 kids doing this—sat down and wrote letters to thank the firefighters for their efforts. There were some lovely messages of gratitude which obviously would have boosted the morale of the Casula RFS. It is a lovely habit for the year 1 students to learn now and to take with them into their future and a lovely thing for the RFS volunteers to receive as well.

It is important to acknowledge Australia Day as an important day for our communities across the State, as we come together and celebrate our nation. It is events and celebrations held in my electorate and all across New South Wales that encourage inclusion and participation. It gets us up and active, and it gets us feeling proud to be Australian. That is especially essential for our State in its effort to heal after the recent bushfires. It was a special day and I thank everybody involved for their time and effort in organising. They obviously give up a lot of their time to organise events across the Christmas period when the rest of us are all relaxing. I thank them for putting those events on.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (12:23:56): I support the notice of motion moved by the member for Camden and my next door neighbour Peter Sidgreaves. Australia Day is proudly celebrated across my electorate with many events and celebrations, both formal and informal. On 26 January 2020 in the shire of Wollondilly I was proud to attend a ceremony in the Picton Botanic Gardens where over 5,000 people were in attendance. Like all my constituents, I am a very proud Australian and always look forward to the celebration of our national day on 26 January. Of particular significance was a special tribute to the RFS that was held at the commencement of the ceremony. A large wreath was presented to the Picton RFS captain on behalf of the community to recognise the two RFS volunteers, Andrew and Geoff from Horsley Park RFS, who died fighting the Green Wattle Creek fire in Buxton. This was a moving experience for me and it demonstrated the sense of community that has been evident all through the bushfire crisis.

Local charities and community organisations provided a range of stalls, while the Rotary Clubs of Picton and Wollondilly North made bacon and egg rolls and held a sausage sizzle. As the crowd arrived they could hear a performance from local choral group, Picton Harmony and an Aboriginal calling. A rousing tribute to the RFS

was given by the Highlands Pipes and Drums. Council CEO Ben Taylor officially welcomed all to the event, which commenced with the raising of the Australian, Aboriginal and Wollondilly flags and the singing of the national anthem by Taylor Smetanin of Wollondilly Anglican College. The Wollondilly poem was read by John Churchill and we heard another performance by Picton Harmony singing a joyous rendition of *Where the White Waratahs Grow*. A wonderful Welcome to Country was given by Aunty Glenda Chalker, a Dharawal Aboriginal Elder, followed by an excellent welcome from the Mayor of Wollondilly. His leadership since late 2018 has been magnificent and the council has operated in fine form working with State and Federal governments, which has not always been the relationship in the past.

The Australia Day prayer was read by Nash Moody, the school captain of St Anthony's Catholic Parish Primary School at Picton. The Wollondilly Australia Day ambassador Lindy Hou, OAM, gave an address on the significance of the day and asked all to feel proud that they live in such a wonderful country, where the feeling of community is such a great aspect of our lifestyle. This was followed by a citizenship ceremony where 21 residents of the shire were welcomed by Wollondilly Mayor Councillor Matthew Deeth as Australian citizens. The Australia Day awards then followed and 26 residents were nominated for the local Australia Day awards. Barbara Jolley was named Wollondilly's Citizen of the Year in recognition of her outstanding service to the Silverdale Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade and the community of Silverdale and Warragamba. This was particularly significant given the events of the previous couple of months.

Young Citizen of the Year, Mali Dillon, is a member of the Youth Parliament and has been pushing a lot of policy direction in drought. It is great to see some of our young people focusing on regional areas. Achiever of the Year was awarded to Jay Seene. Sportsperson of the Year was awarded to Shane Taylor. Local Hero/Community Group of the Year was awarded to Ron Bolton and Environmental Citizen of the Year was awarded to the Buxton Community Garden. After the official program, the entertainment continued with local groups Monkey's Uncle, Picton Harmony and the free family day included a giant water slide, Thomas the Tank Engine rides, reptile displays, interactive sports, giant garden games and much more. All in all it was a great day given all that the Wollondilly shire has experienced in the past few months. I was proud to be part of those celebrations.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:28:05): I thank the member for Camden for bringing this excellent motion before the House. This Australia Day has been an opportunity for our Central Coast community to say thank you to our amazing emergency services. In the lead-up to Australia Day this year, I had the opportunity to join my Federal colleague Lucy Wicks, the member for Robertson, at a street stall near Terrigal Beach. Lucy created a fantastic initiative, a message book where local residents were able to write a message of thanks and appreciation to our truly wonderful Rural Fire Service volunteers. While most of our suburbs on the Central Coast were not directly impacted by fire, we can tell from the messages received that everyone in our community feels personally invested in the fire effort. I take this opportunity to say thank you again to our local heroes. It is extraordinary that so many people are willing to put their lives on the line by running towards danger while everyone else is running in the opposite direction.

It is thanks to their efforts that people, property and wildlife were able to be protected. As I have said in this Chamber before, the Australian Reptile Park made outstanding efforts to keep its amazing and unique wildlife safe. Australia Day also provides us with the opportunity to honour those who have served others. Each year a number of Central Coast residents are honoured by receiving an Order of Australia and I take this opportunity to recognise each of them. Chris Cox was recognised for service to the performing arts and community through the Youth In Performing Arts initiative. This is a fantastic opportunity for young people on the Central Coast to develop their music, dance and performance skills. The Central Coast has a plethora of young artistic talent that we see regularly at many community events.

David Booth was recognised for service to the community through his father's family business, Booths Motor Group. This fantastic family company has been operating on the Central Coast for decades and puts huge amounts of financial support back into community organisations, local sports clubs and others. Kerrie Dougherty was honoured for service to astronautics through her work as a space historian. I also acknowledge Dennis Gee for his service to surf lifesaving, having been involved with Surf Life Saving Central Coast for the past 70 years. That is an incredible contribution to the outstanding surf lifesaving organisation, especially on the Central Coast. We know what a wonderful job our lifesavers do keeping both visitors and locals safe on our beaches—we have had no drowning deaths on a patrolled beach for the past four seasons. Andrew Hoban was also recognised for service to surf life saving, having been a member of surf clubs for the past 60 years.

John Wareham was honoured for service to aged welfare and the community for his involvement in Gosford Men's Barbershop Chorus, the World Harmony Council and the Australian Association of Men Barbershop Singers. Christopher Beatson received a Public Service Medal for outstanding service to the NSW Police Force. Finally, Brett Davies, who is a constituent of mine, received the Australian Fire Service Medal

for his long and ongoing career with Fire and Rescue NSW. As I have said before, Australia Day should be a proud and patriotic occasion for all Australians. This is certainly the case for the Central Coast community. I again thank the member for Camden for bringing this excellent motion before the House and for giving us the chance to recognise the many outstanding Australians whom we acknowledge on Australia Day. It is a wonderful occasion on the Central Coast, with many celebrations of Australian patriotism.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:32:07): I speak to the motion moved by the member for Camden and I thank him for raising it today. All members in this House appreciate the importance of Australia Day. It is a day we can all take immense pride in. Together, we create a diverse, vibrant country comprising so many varying cultures and backgrounds, making Australia the most successful multicultural society in the world. Since citizenship ceremonies started in Australia more than 70 years ago, millions of people have pledged their loyalty to this country. This year thousands more joined their ranks. Australian citizenship represents commitment to Australia and its people, the values we share and our common future. This Australia Day I had the privilege of attending two local citizenship ceremonies in my area—one at North Sydney Council and the other at Admiralty House with the Governor General.

I thank Councillor Roy Bendall of Mosman Council for representing me at the Mosman citizenship ceremony, which I must attend in alternate years as it clashes with the North Sydney event. However, I acknowledge the recipients of the Mosman Council's citizen awards. Mosman Council's 2020 Citizen of the Year award was presented jointly to Ivan and Beth Hodge, who are well known and loved Mosman locals in my electorate of North Shore. Since 2004 Ivan and Beth have been hosting a free event at the Balmoral rotunda in celebration of their anniversary. All Mosman residents are invited to join in the celebrations, complete with a fire truck display and performances by the NSW Fire and Rescue Band and marching bands. I congratulate them on their award and thank them for their contribution to our community.

Elliot Connor was awarded the Mosman Council Young Citizen of the Year award. Elliott is the founder and CEO of Human Nature Projects, an international NGO. He is also active across two dozen conservation charities. Elliott regularly runs activities for the 1st Mosman Scout Group and also volunteers with WIRES, rescuing injured wildlife. I congratulate Elliott and thank him for showing the power that people have to change our planet and preserve our environment.

At the North Sydney Council citizenship ceremony we welcomed 60 new Australian citizens from 21 different countries. With over 21 nationalities represented, one way of expressing this diversity was for everyone to shout "Good morning" in their native language. It was a lovely way to hear the range of accents there on the day. As well as presenting the new citizens with their certificates, it was also a time to present the Australia Day community awards for the North Sydney Council area. Our Citizen of the Year award was presented to the senior pastor of Church by the Bridge, Reverend Paul Dale, who has been serving this church and the North Sydney community for 17 years. When Paul took up responsibility of Church by the Bridge in Kirribilli there were no more than 30 congregation members. Today, the church has more than 700 adult members and 200 children. In recent years he has also taken over responsibility as Reverend of St Augustine's Anglican Church in Neutral Bay, which is my local church where both my husband and I and my grandparents were married.

The North Sydney Young Citizen of the Year award was presented to 17-year-old Zoe Moore, who was nominated by Phoenix House youth services for the positive impact that she has had on her peers through promoting and strengthening peer connection with students in the Phoenix House study support service. I have spoken before in this place about the contribution that Phoenix House makes to young people in the community. I thank Zoe for giving back to them, and I also congratulate Jethro on joining us. The North Sydney Community Group of the Year award was presented to the Coal Loader Community Tour Guides Group, which has five volunteers who run tours of the sustainability centre every week. The North Sydney Environmental Citizens of the Year award was presented to the Coal Loader Aquaponic Volunteer Group.

I thank the staff of North Sydney Council for organising such a wonderful event. I also thank the band, whose members include Belinda Adams, Dave Armstrong and Steve Cummins, and all the new citizens who attended on the day. I wish them the best of luck. Later in the day I joined His Excellency the Governor General at Admiralty House in Kirribilli. I thank him and Mrs Linda Hurley for their moving citizenship ceremony. I congratulate all the citizenship winners; I know they will continue to be an integral part of our local community. Once more, I welcome all our new citizens.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (12:36:22): By leave: I thank the member for Camden for bringing forward this motion. I pay tribute to the outstanding achievers who were recognised for their contributions to their local communities as part of the Australia Day festivities in my electorate just a month ago. It is most important that we continue to hold these community-based events on occasions that bring us together as we continue to face what has felt like a never-ending drought. Despite a bit of recent rain, the issue of drought support for communities and businesses continues to be at the front of my mind. Events such as Australia Day are really important in

regional areas, where councils are often asked to bring together different communities that are often separated by quite large distances in order to forge a shared identity.

That certainly happened in my region. For example, Narromine shire has a population of about 6½ thousand people and the council held two Australia Day events: one in Narromine and another in the smaller town of Trangie. Australia Day awards were presented in both towns, recognising the contributions that residents have made to their local community. I was lucky enough to attend and speak at the Narromine celebrations at Dundas Park. What a day that was. It was fantastic to meet the community award winners. One thing I highlight is the watermelon-eating contest, which is always the highlight. I foolishly took on the reigning world champion, Anthony "Evvo" Everett, who completely demolished me. In this competition it is not a wedge of watermelon; it is a circle of watermelon that you have to eat with your face and try not to split it, which is quite a feat. I failed miserably. Evvo is the reigning world champion and he easily took the champion title again this year. Well done, Evvo.

The common thread running through Australia Day is coming together as a community. No-one highlighted that more than Dubbo's Australia Day ambassador, Peter Gibbs. Peter is a Gamilaroi man and Dubbo resident who established the Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery Program [IPROWD]. IPROWD supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to join the NSW Police Force or other justice, emergency and government agencies. In his speech Peter acknowledged that many conversations happen about Australia Day and about maybe changing the date. He urged people to look at Australia from the perspective of a new immigrant choosing to call Australia home. He said, "No country or community is perfect, but we are all very lucky to live in Australia and what we have achieved in this country is definitely worth celebrating." The meaning of Peter's words was evident on the faces of those who became Australian citizens this year. I have attended many citizenship ceremonies over the years and the one thing they all have in common is the sheer joy on people's faces when they take the oath, receive their certificate and are welcomed as an Australian.

Well done to Dubbo's Citizen of the Year Megan Hamblin, who has a lot of involvement with St John Ambulance. Mid-Western's Citizen of the Year Award was presented to Jan Pirie, a retired registered nurse. Narromine's Citizen of the Year was awarded to Jan Colmer, who moved there 28 years ago and has been heavily involved in the community. Wellington Senior Citizen of the year was Aunty Joyce Williams, a Wiradjuri Elder who has been part of the community in many different ways and still offers welcome to country. I ran into Aunty Joyce just recently; she is an absolute gem. The Trangie Citizen of the year went to the principal of Trangie Central School, Anne Holden, for her continued service to education and the wider community.

There were young citizens of the year award recipients, including Molly Croft, and sporting achievements awards to a range of people, including young Lilly Clarke, whom I have mentioned in this place before. Other awards went to community groups that do a lot around our region and should be recognised. There is no doubt that Australia Day events continue to help bring people together, remind us of our community spirit and provide an opportunity for us all to reconnect with friends and neighbours. I congratulate everyone who was nominated or awarded at this year's Australia Day events and look forward to next year's celebrations.

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (12:41:08): In reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Cessnock, Holsworthy, Wollondilly, Terrigal, North Sydney and Dubbo for their contributions to debate on this motion. Australia Day is an important day for people of the electorate of Camden and, indeed, for most Australians. I commend the motion to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I welcome to the public gallery 20 law students from Macquarie University and Hamburg University. The House is presently dealing with general motions, which members move to debate issues in their electorates.

Motions

TAFE NSW

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (12:41:56): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises TAFE is an incredibly important and highly valued public education institution.

- (2) Acknowledges the Government has slowly decimated TAFE.
- (3) Recognises TAFE plays a critical role in economic prosperity during the current skills shortage.
- (4) Calls on the Government to follow the Opposition's lead and commit to rebuilding TAFE.

In 2011 the Government said it would not touch TAFE. Nine years down the track we have a decimated TAFE system. The system has 175,000 fewer students, 5,500 fewer teachers and courses are disappearing every second day. Young apprentices have to travel for 3½ to four hours to undertake their studies. The Premier stands up in this place and says, "We are the party of the workers", but they are not the party of the students. Those opposite do not do much for the students. They are the party for people who are interested in privatisation. The other day I thought I was on the set of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* and there are a few—

Mr Adam Crouch: Phone a friend.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I was just told to "phone a friend", but the person who needed to phone a friend that day was the Premier. I asked whether she would rule out privatising TAFE and she said, "I am not sure what you mean". I asked, "Will you rule out privatisation?" I finally got something the third time I asked. If I were Eddie McGuire I would have asked, "Do you want to ring a friend?" because the only people who are going to benefit are the private providers that the Government supports. It wants to knock out the public education system. TAFE has an incredible record and an incredible history. It has much love and support from everybody in the State but the statistics are damning. Only last year, \$6.5 million was spent on consultancies. Would you believe that \$1.4 million was spent on a consultancy report that simply asked: What is the purpose of TAFE? You are kidding me—I could have given that answer for nothing. Its purpose is to educate people. Its purpose is to address the skills shortage. Its purpose is to build the economy. Mr Temporary Speaker, the member for Heathcote, is a former TAFE teacher and he loves TAFE. I expect him to vote with the Opposition a little later.

Our friends in the gallery who are here from Germany know how to do trade properly. They know how to do manufacturing. They know how to do everything. We have heard the Premier and Minister talk about TAFE and try to make it out as though we do not like it. Are you kidding me? Opposition members are the ones who keep talking about rebuilding TAFE, about saving TAFE. We stand shoulder to shoulder with members of the mighty union. We can talk about all sorts of things, but this Government cannot escape the fact that it has decimated TAFE.

David Gonski is an outstanding and wonderful human being who understands education—we saw what he did with the Gonski report. I support him completely as a person and in what he does. He will discover and write in his report that the Government has neglected TAFE, has cut out the public provider and has moved to cost shift everything it can. The Government says it does not want to privatise because it is not selling, but there is a lot more to privatisation. The Government wrote the book on privatisation. It will make TAFE a franchise. It will get private entities to deliver the courses

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for Shellharbour will come to order.

Mr JIHAD DIB: Let us start with some of those private deliverers. Some of the registered training officers are all right. The plumbers from the industry do a good job. But the system was set up because the Government cut plumbing courses.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for Terrigal will come to order.

Mr JIHAD DIB: The Government cut carpentry and metal courses. We have a skills shortage and, under this Government, apprenticeship numbers have gone down by 33 per cent.

Mr Chris Minns: How much?

Mr JIHAD DIB: By 33 per cent. When this privatisation-obsessed Liberal-Nationals Government came to power, apprenticeships in New South Wales were at 126,000. As of March this year, we are down to 87,000. That is a 33 per cent drop. Yesterday there was a motion in the House about mathematics. Here is some mathematics: a 33 per cent drop. And we have a skills shortage like we have never seen before. Some 1,500 apprenticeships went begging in New South Wales last year. We talk about the jobs of the future but let us fix the jobs now. Let us get the skills training fixed now. Let us invest properly in education. Mr Gonski and Mr Shergold will work it out and find that the Government has failed the people of New South Wales.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I call the member for Canterbury to order for the first time.

Mr JIHAD DIB: It has failed the public education system. It has failed the TAFE system. All the Government is interested in is how it can outsource TAFE because others see it as a money-making opportunity. We on this side of the House see education as a pathway to the future; we see it as the only way forward. TAFE

is not a lesser option, so do not invest in it as though it is a lesser option. It is equal. It is just as good and it is just as important. I cannot believe—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I call the member for Terrigal to order for the first time.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I hear Government members talk about things like Connected Learning Centres. That is a pop-up TAFE. A real TAFE college has real buildings, it has real workshops and it has real teachers who are qualified and employed on a permanent full-time basis. Mr Temporary Speaker, you are going to hear lots of stories about TAFE. In fact, yesterday a gentleman called Ray Hadley's show and told his story as a TAFE teacher. He has been moved from campus to campus to campus. He teaches in an area with a skills shortage so he keeps getting moved from one place to the other. Government members love to tell us all the things they are going to do, all the things they want to do: "We are going to make it a world-class system, the gold standard." Government members cannot just talk the talk; they have to walk the walk. The Government has to take responsibility for TAFE and invest.

Follow the Labor Party's lead and invest in TAFE, believe in TAFE, support TAFE, support apprentices and support the trades. Look to the jobs of the future and work with industry, but do not sell out TAFE to industry. We have to work with industry. We want industry to be part of the journey but we cannot simply walk away from TAFE. People expect two things from government: to look after them properly and to deliver the best possible free public education system that works for everyone and provides opportunities for all. The Government has some major issues. If Government members think the people of New South Wales are going to be quiet about this, they are kidding themselves. The people of New South Wales want proper investment in TAFE and skills, and the shortages addressed. Let us use some creativity. Let us address the skills shortage. Let us consider how we can make things better. Rebuild TAFE. Do not destroy it.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (12:49:23): The TAFE NSW resourcing motion moved by the member for Lakemba states:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises TAFE is an incredibly important and highly valued public education institution.
- (2) Acknowledges the Government has slowly decimated TAFE.
- (3) Recognises TAFE plays a critical role in economic prosperity during the current skills shortage.
- (4) Calls on the Government to follow the Opposition's lead and commit to rebuilding TAFE.

The Government will amend the motion as follows. I move:

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

this House:

- (1) Recognises TAFE is an incredibly important and highly valued public education institution.
- (2) Recognises TAFE plays a critical role in economic prosperity during the current skills shortage.
- (3) Commends Premier Gladys Berejiklian for her commitment to excellence in vocational education and training.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I call the member for Kogarah to order for the first time.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: The Government agrees with the member for Lakemba that TAFE NSW is an incredibly important public education institution, valued not just by the Government but by communities right across the State. But the member is simply wrong and playing politics when he says that TAFE has been disadvantaged by the Government. In fact, the opposite is true. As the member for Goulburn, I am lucky to have three TAFEs located in my electorate. In January the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education joined me in my electorate to visit Moss Vale TAFE, which services the northern portion of my electorate, mainly in the Southern Highlands region.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I call the member for Kogarah to order for the second time.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: In recent years it has been transformed into a hub for independent, creative businesses, resulting in a thriving economy. Communities such as the Southern Highlands, which was so heavily impacted by our recent bushfires, rely on our TAFE institutions to deliver ongoing vocational education to aid with our recovery process. This is not a short-term recovery but longer term, including our essential trade and hospitality industries. I know the importance of the Government's commitment to investing in TAFE NSW as the leading provider of training in Australia and ensuring that residents throughout the State have access to quality training at TAFE NSW now and in the future. I commend the Government for its strong investment in the TAFE sector, with TAFE receiving \$1.85 billion in the 2019-20 financial year—up 3.1 per cent on the previous year. This represents almost 80 per cent of the total skills budget in New South Wales. So I find it disappointing

that Labor took to the last election a policy that stated it would give 70 per cent of the vocational education and training budget in New South Wales to TAFE.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I call the member for Shellharbour to order for the first time.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: It seems that, despite the rhetoric, it wants to give TAFE less funding. Labor wants to cut funding to TAFE. Trades in our regions are our bread and butter, and any such cut to their funding is a direct attack on our regional communities that are already doing it so tough. Shame on Labor for cutting the budget. Shame on Labor for even suggesting that it be cut. As a regional member of Parliament, I recognise that the extensive footprint of TAFE NSW across the State, which is far-reaching both geographically and in the broad range of courses it delivers, makes it an invaluable public asset.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I call the member for Shellharbour to order for the second time.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: Having education and training opportunities in the regions is of crucial importance as it allows young people to study and build careers in their home towns rather than forcing them to relocate to larger towns or cities. That is why the Government is investing in TAFE NSW to build a further eight new Connected Learning Centres [CLCs]. These new, modern TAFE NSW campuses located across New South Wales are opening up training opportunities for regional communities. I am advised that across the 14 operational CLCs in Quirindi, Glen Innes, Tenterfield, Coonabarabran, Bega, Narrandera, Deniliquin, Corowa, Bourke, Grenfell, Singleton, Yamba, Murwillumbah and Scone delivered by TAFE NSW there has been an increase of both enrolments and courses available in our regional communities. We have committed a further \$61.7 million over the next four years to deliver tranche three of the Connected Learning Centre Program. This will see eight new facilities rolled out across the State, including at Nambucca Heads, Tomaree, Byron Bay, Hay, Jindabyne, West Wyalong, Batemans Bay and Cobar—bringing the total number of CLCs delivered by this Government to 22. I advise that the centres are a great asset to their local communities, offering world-class, digitally enabled, flexible and hands-on learning opportunities.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for Port Stephens will come to order.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: Supported by engaging learning technologies and mobile training units, it is no surprise that those new educational facilities have received a warm welcome from local schools and employers. I welcome the review of the system to be led by Mr David Gonski, AC, and Professor Peter Shergold, AC. The Premier is right: If we can get students thinking of TAFE in the same way they think of university, we will have the opportunity to resolve skills shortages and benefit the wider State economy.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: We need more tradies in existing trades, but we also need to prepare workers in new areas like 3D printing, robotics and other technology industries to provide the jobs of the future.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I call the member for Cessnock to order for the first time.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: They are just some of the ways in which the Government is supporting TAFE NSW to become the new gold standard in education and training.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I call the member for Cessnock to order for the second time. I call the member for Cessnock to order for the third time.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: The Government is making sure we have a world-class TAFE and training system that delivers more qualified tradies for the workplaces of the future.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (12:56:50): I will nominate the member for Goulburn for *Australia's Got Talent* as a stand-up comedian. She must have completed the Moss Vale certificate III course in career advancement. I was inspired by the evangelical performance of the member for Lakemba. After listening to his contribution, I think the Tories have discovered the road to Damascus. When I hear Coalition members talking about being supportive of TAFE, I look at what they did nine years ago. Nine years ago, most of those who were elected in 2011 signed pre-election pledges not to cut TAFE as it was so important to New South Wales. They said in writing that \$1 spent on TAFE returns \$6.20 to the New South Wales economy. But what have they done since their election? They have cut TAFE—175,000 students are gone and 5,000 teachers are gone. The provision of technical and further education has been privatised and handed over to the private sector. In June 2014 Leader of the Opposition, John Robertson, and shadow Minister for Education and Training, the member for Keira, issued a statement about their assessment of Smart and Skilled. They said:

Under the Baird Liberal Government TAFE fees will dramatically increase from 1 January 2015—pricing many students out of essential vocational education training ... These massive fee hikes will also lead to long-term skill shortages in many industries across the State.

Do you think Robbo and the Lone Ranger had a crystal ball? Do you think they went to TAFE at Moss Vale for career advancement six years ago to learn about the impact of the Coalition Government's cuts? It was absolutely obvious—as it was obvious to those opposite who got elected in 2011. They sat in this Chamber watching as it happened. What did they do? When Robbo introduced his private member's bill in 2014, they voted it down. Like trained monkeys, they do whatever they are told.

But it is not just in this House. The other place passed a bill that provided for legislation to stop the introduction of the Baird Government's Smart and Skilled training market, to restore TAFE funding, and to freeze TAFE fees and the flow of money to private providers at the 2010-11 levels. The late Dr John Kaye, a man who I have enormous respect for, said that the Baird Government refused to acknowledge the destructive impact its policies and training had on New South Wales' world-class provider of education and training. That bill never got through this House either. The Government has had every opportunity. The only thing I say to the Government is that at least it has not pork-barrelled, because it has destroyed TAFE everywhere. In Bega people have been protesting about massive skill shortages. There are places in Bermagui where they cannot get workers in the marina because they do not have TAFE courses for local people.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (13:01:04): I was on the TAFE website this morning. I was looking to see how the over \$6 million in consultancy fees had been spent and whether it added any value, student places, teachers or support staff to TAFE. Sadly it did not and I could not see how it was spent. I noted that there were four managing directors over the 12 months of 2018-19—that says it all. I thought, "Wouldn't that \$6 million be better spent on not introducing Higher Education Contribution Scheme [HECS] fees for the vocational education and training [VET] sector like the Government is proposing to do?" It is shameful. As I was on the website, I looked at the TAFE campuses in my area and I came to Lismore. The blurb about Lismore states:

TAFE NSW Lismore is located in the city centre in the heart of the Richmond Valley.

I am sure the mayor of Richmond Valley—who is in Casino, not Lismore—and the member for Clarence, whose electorate covers Richmond Valley, would be as surprised as I was to discover that Lismore TAFE is in the heart of Richmond Valley. It is actually in the heart of Lismore. They call themselves smart and skilled, but they cannot even get that right on the website. How smart is that? I bet that will be taken down very quickly after I have spoken here. I could not let that pass, but there are bigger concerns than that one, such as the way the Government treats TAFE as a private VET, as it does the higher education providers. All else flows from that. TAFE should be to the VET sector, to education and to the workforce what Medicare is to the health sector—the actual core. That then governs all else that happens. The public and private health sectors are complimentary and collaborative, as TAFE is with the private providers, and it should be. Having open slather on contestability is just ridiculous; it decimates the whole TAFE sector.

Private providers do not undertake the research, development and planning that is required to be abreast of the jobs of today and the future. They do not do the workforce mapping and planning that is required to maintain a skilled and salient workforce, and to absorb the ever-changing jobs and work market. I come into this place and I have to listen to the Deputy Premier who is always bleating on about how The Nationals do wonderfully in regional New South Wales and that only they look after the regions. The Nationals have decimated TAFE. The member for Coffs Harbour knows this. The agricultural students have gone because the member for Coffs Harbour has costed them out of the market. That is all on The Nationals 11-year watch. Shame on them—they talk about regional jobs!

I will talk briefly about a letter I received from someone who lives and works in Lismore as a plumber. That person said that they have recently finished their apprenticeship and have been trying for over 12 months to further their study to become a licensed contractor, but are unable to do so because their local TAFE is not running the course. That person is not the only one; I have letters from a few plumbers. One said that they have been told there are not enough students to run the course. My inquiries tell me there are. They are complaining to me. Do members know what they were told to do? They were told to go to Coffs Harbour. They were told to drive 2½ hours three days a week for a 14-week block, and to take time out of their jobs. How can they do that? It is impossible.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (13:05:13): I move:

That the amendment be amended by leaving out paragraph (3).

Firstly, I take this opportunity to thank the member for Lakemba for moving this incredibly important motion. This is such an important motion that I am shocked that the Minister is not here. Where is the Minister? This is so important.

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

The Minister is hiding. Let me make it very clear: I love TAFE. It is an institution that Labor built and that Labor will always defend. It was once the world's leading training facility, but this Government has absolutely decimated it, purely for ideological reasons. Government members are hell-bent on destroying everything that great Labor governments have built. We have seen this. In New South Wales there is only one TAFE that does wooden ship building—my uncle is actually one of the TAFE teachers—because this Government has decimated TAFE. We have seen this in enrolment numbers that continue to decline. We have seen this in the staff members who continue to lose their jobs. This once-great institution has been decimated. It is no wonder no-one wants to enrol. TAFE was designed to provide access to training and education for everyone. Not only has it been gutted, but simultaneously it has become unaffordable and subsequently unattainable for so many people. I will talk about two things specific to my electorate. We have not been immune to the Government's barbaric acts. For more than a decade Randwick Boys High School and Randwick Girls High School have been running a wonderful mentoring program through TAFE. Last year the principals got a letter that read:

Thank you to you and your staff for working with us on the TAFE Peer Program this year. We expect all your students to graduate from this program in November.

Unfortunately due to changes in staffing within our section and TAFE systems, we are unable to offer this program to your school next year. Our staff have thoroughly enjoyed working with your staff and students over many years, it has been a very successful program in developing the ... mentoring skills of your students.

Kind regards

The letter was signed by the head teacher of literacy. Government members do not care who they impact while they are decimating TAFE. Those great programs no longer exist because of the cuts that the Government is making to TAFE.

Mr Clayton Barr: That is a good point.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: It is a great point. In addition, this Government is building an ambulance superstation on the site of Randwick TAFE. One might think that it is great that the State Government is putting money into health. Actually there is absolutely no evidence that demonstrates that ambulance superstations increase response times. The evidence is the reverse. I fear—as do the staff and the community—that this is just a ploy to incrementally downgrade the wonderful Randwick TAFE and to sell off this prime real estate. I note that it states online that the Randwick superstation will be situated on the corner of Darley Road and King Street, adjacent to TAFE NSW's campus. I would like to clarify that it is actually on the TAFE site and has taken land from the TAFE site. This has been clarified in questions on notice. I make this very clear: There is no evidence that ambulance superstations improve response times. This Government has a very clear track record of using mechanisms like this to further downgrade TAFE campuses. It is doing this to free up more assets.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (13:09:43): I will ignore the proposed amendment to the motion, which is political waffle that suggests that something positive is happening in the TAFE sector. Quite frankly, the good member for Goulburn, who has been a member for only a short time, does not understand the financial structure of the TAFE sector. I will run through it in basic terms. When the member arrived in government, government funding for TAFE was approximately \$1.75 billion. Students paid only the last little bit. Under the current structure the \$1.8 billion is stumped up by \$1.2 billion in fees charged directly to the students. This Government—the taxpayer—provides less than \$600 million in funding for TAFE. That is the legacy of this Government. Some 175,000 students have said, "No thanks, I don't want to pay that fee," so the Government now offers them the opportunity to rack up that fee on their credit card. When they leave TAFE and start working in some of the lowest-paying jobs in the State, the Government will let them start their lives with an incredibly large debt. That is the legacy of this Government.

Over the coming years, as we try to rebuild the State after the terrible bushfires and, in some places, drought, sadly and tragically there will not be enough tradies. There will not be enough bricklayers, carpenters, plasterers, electricians and plumbers. The tradies will not be there to do the work. That legacy—the stink and the carcass that this Government has created in TAFE—will be played out over the coming years for those poor unfortunate people who have lost everything. When they are scratching around trying to find a tradie to rebuild their house, they will not be worrying about robotics. Do those opposite think they give a Jatz cracker about robotics?

They will be looking for an electrician, a bricklayer and a plasterer to rebuild their houses, but they will not be able to find one. Do those opposite know why? Because that is the Government's legacy—those basic trades. Please stop coming into this Chamber and waffling on about future trades. We need trades today. We need the same trades that our TAFEs have been developing for the past 100 years. The Government's legacy is that those apprentices no longer exist. The Government does not employ apprentices anymore because it has

outsourced and privatised everything. Government departments used to be the biggest provider and trainer of apprentices—not on this Government's watch. It has structured the finances of TAFE so that private entities are no longer taking on apprentices.

Debate interrupted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to Glenn Crump from Moree, who is a guest of the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, and member for Northern Tablelands. I welcome Avondale School students Elijah Spiros, Zoe Cochrane, Jack Hawkins, Acacia Ryan and their principal, Deb Cooper, guests of the Member for Lake Macquarie. I acknowledge year 10 business studies students and their teacher from Fort Street High School, guests of the member for Newtown. Finally, I welcome the Speak Up group of Southern Riverina who are here as guests of the member for Murray. Welcome to the Chamber.

Announcements

DEPARTMENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The SPEAKER: I inform the House of the outcome of the recent review into the senior management of the Legislative Assembly Department facilitated by an external consultant. The new team structure provides senior management in the Legislative Assembly with greater clarity on roles and responsibilities in meeting its operational needs and the challenges of a modern legislature. Three key areas will report to Clerk Helen Minnican: Corporate and Privilege, headed by Deputy Clerk Les Gönye; House and Procedure, headed by Assistant Clerk Carly Maxwell; and Scrutiny and Engagement, headed by newly promoted Assistant Clerk Jonathan Elliott.

The structure permits rotation for senior managers while preserving formal delegations, including to the Deputy Clerk. Our leadership team is well placed to contribute actively to the Parliament's strategic priorities of modernisation, institutional strengthening and greater community engagement. Director Simon Johnston has been appointed to the position of Serjeant-at-Arms with ongoing assistance from Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms Jenny Whight. A memorandum informing members and staff of the changes will be circulated shortly.

SARAH CRUICKSHANK

The SPEAKER: Today is Sarah Cruickshank's final question time as she leaves her role as the Premier's Chief of Staff to return to the New South Wales public service. Sarah has served with distinction in her role since the member for Willoughby became the Premier, including through the transition from the Baird Government to the Berejiklian Government and the 2019 election. Many members in the Parliament, including those not on the Government side, would have worked with Sarah in her role. On behalf of the House, I acknowledge Sarah's contribution as Chief of Staff and wish Sarah the best of luck in her new role.

Rulings

CALLS TO ORDER

The SPEAKER (14:17:45): This week I have had cause to reflect on a ruling I made on 16 October 2019 when I indicated that members who interrupt the flow of proceedings by making interjections or taking frivolous points of order to deliberately interrupt debate might be put on multiple calls to order. Given the degree of interruption of that nature this week, I inform the House that if I feel members are being deliberately frivolous or interrupting the flow of debate, I will use multiple calls to order today and in the future.

Members

CALLS TO ORDER

The SPEAKER: The following members are already on calls to order: the member for Canterbury is on one call to order, the member for Kogarah is on two, the member for Shellharbour is on two, the member for Port Stephens is on one, the member for Gosford is on one, the member for Cessnock is on three and the member for Terrigal is on one.

REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: On behalf of Ms Gladys Berejiklian: I inform the House that:

- (1) The Treasurer will answer questions today in the absence of the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney.

- (2) The Minister for Regional Transport and Roads will answer questions today in the absence of the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade.

Question Time

PUBLIC HOSPITALS PRIVATISATION

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:20:15): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the damning findings of the Northern Beaches Hospital parliamentary inquiry that her Government members supported, does the Premier finally accept that there should be no privatisation of public hospitals in New South Wales?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:20:39): The Government made a statement about this before the election. When Minister Hazzard became the health Minister, he said that the Northern Beaches Hospital would be the last public-private partnership [PPP] that would happen through that process. He said that on the record prior to the last election. We took that to the people.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Another question time when the Leader of the Opposition cannot get her question right. When those opposite were in Government, they were comfortable doing PPPs.

The SPEAKER: The member for Keira will remain silent.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They were quite happy to privatise health services in Orange. They were quite happy to privatise health services in the Hawkesbury, at Royal North Shore, in Newcastle, so—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Government stated its position clearly before the election. Minister Hazzard did that before the election.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Every day the Opposition comes in here and asks a question because members opposite have not done their homework.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Look at the public record. The member for Shellharbour would be able to tell them.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: This is the problem with members opposite.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They do not have the right people in their strategy meeting in the morning. If they had asked the member for Shellharbour, she could have told them a PPP that was designated for her hospital will longer be a PPP, and there are lots of other examples. But I want to pay tribute to all those who work in our health system. It is one of the largest systems in the world. We are contributing \$10 million towards building new hospitals and upgrading hospitals. We have upgraded, built or have underway 100 new hospital facilities, 60 of which are in rural and regional communities.

I am very pleased about that because we know that for those without access to health services in rural and remote communities, they really rely on those services—as do all of us across the State. This is another example of those opposite not doing their homework, but another opportunity for me to talk about how the Government is building for the future, whether it is transport, education—wherever it is—but especially in health. We look forward to building more hospitals for the future, supporting our nurses, supporting our health professionals and making sure that our citizens get the services they need.

EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (14:23:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the Government's education infrastructure pipeline?

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I thank the member for his question. His community is one of the fastest growing in the State. A number of schools in his electorate—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: His community—along with many others in the north-west, in the south-west and in western Sydney—is growing rapidly. We have had to meet that challenge by ensuring not only that we look at the standards in our schools but also that we are investing record amounts in upgrading our school buildings. Last week and the week before it gave me great satisfaction to visit a number of new schools that we have either upgraded or opened in this term of government. In this school term alone, 24 schools are brand-new or upgraded. I visited Smalls Road Public School at Ryde with Minister Dominello. I visited Arthur Phillip High School and the primary school with the member for Parramatta.

I am also pleased to say that last year we upgraded or built from scratch 42 schools, including Bardia Public School in the Macquarie Fields electorate, Bolwarra Public School in Maitland, Hunter School of the Performing Arts in Newcastle, and Homebush West Public School and Marie Bashir Public School in the Strathfield electorate. Schools were upgraded at Ingleburn, Macquarie Fields, Claremont Meadows and Londonderry—the list goes on. It is interesting that all the schools I have mentioned, with one or two exceptions, were in Labor electorates because we build schools where they are needed. The Government is picking up where Labor failed and is building schools in their communities.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Say thank you.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Exactly. I know all members opposite are grateful. They do not say it publicly but their school communities are grateful for the schools that we are building. I am very pleased that this term there are an additional 24 new or upgraded schools, including in our regions and cities, and in less populated areas and heavily populated areas. I was pleased to visit Epping Public School with the member for Epping to see upgrades there. Schools in regional areas, such as Newcastle East Public School, have also been upgraded. The member for Newcastle is grateful for it although he does not really talk about what he is grateful for. I am sure that Gwynneville Public School in Wollongong is grateful for its upgrade, as is Yagoona Public School in Bankstown, which the member for Bankstown is happy about.

The SPEAKER: The member for Newcastle will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The member for Prospect will be happy with what has happened at Pendle Hill Public School. I know that the Government does not often get credit for building schools in the inner west but I am pleased that Ultimo Public School in the electorate of Balmain has been upgraded. The stage one construction of Inner Sydney High School in the Newtown electorate has also been done, which I know is greatly appreciated.

The SPEAKER: The member for Oatley will remain silent. He is setting a bad example.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: By the end of the four-year cycle there will be 190 new and upgraded schools in the State. The Government will also ensure that for the first time in our State's history the maintenance backlog is reduced to zero. We are very pleased about this.

The SPEAKER: The member for South Coast will remain silent. I remind the member for Cessnock that he is on three calls to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I would have thought the shadow Minister for Education would pay attention to all the schools that we are building, but that is okay.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Sorry, Jihad got demoted. I thought he was the shadow Minister for Education, but he is not anymore. I put on record that he should be the shadow Minister for Education because he was very good at it. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members are not helping.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I do not mean to digress. As I was saying, the maintenance backlog is being reduced substantially. It will be reduced to zero. Some schools will always need ongoing maintenance but the Government will ensure that the times when principals, school communities and P&Cs had to wait for years to get basic amenities fixed are gone. That is no longer the case. It is the \$1.3 billion—

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is interesting that when we talk about health, education and infrastructure, members opposite switch off because they did nothing in government.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Whilst the member for Kiama is interjecting, he reminds me of an important point: Labor closed about 90 schools when it was in government.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: In fact, Labor closed the high school that I went to. It is true.

The SPEAKER: The behaviour of members from both sides of the Chamber is unacceptable. Members will remain silent for the remaining 25 seconds of the answer.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Labor Government closed Ryde High School and North Ryde High School. Now Smalls Road Public School is on that site. Members opposite closed down schools; we are building them. They do not care about education; we are improving standards. That is what we will continue to do.

TAFE NSW

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (14:31:23): My question is directed to the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, and Acting Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans. Given the Government's appalling record on privatisation—

The SPEAKER: Government members will be called to order if they continue to interrupt. I call the member for Tweed to order for the first time.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I will repeat the question. My question is directed to the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, and Acting Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

Dr Geoff Lee: That's me.

Mr JIHAD DIB: It is you. Given the Government's appalling record on privatisation—

The SPEAKER: The member will be allowed to ask his question in silence. I will not let him continue while he is being interrupted.

Mr JIHAD DIB: My question is directed to the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, and Acting Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

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

Mr JIHAD DIB: Given the Government's appalling record on privatisation, will the Minister guarantee that no more TAFE courses will be cut or campuses closed as a result of the TAFE review?

Mr Andrew Constance: Point of order: My point of order relates to subclauses 2 (a), 2 (b) and 2 (g) of Standing Order 128. That question is clearly out of order on the basis—

The SPEAKER: Please refer to the standing order again.

Mr Andrew Constance: Mr Speaker, yesterday you asked me to name the subclauses so now I am following your very clear instructions on standing orders. My point of order relates to subclauses 2 (a), 2 (b) and 2 (g) of Standing Order 128. There is a series of untrue imputations in that question. The good member should rewrite his question. That would be appropriate.

The SPEAKER: I am happy to permit the question.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (14:34:09): I thank the member for Lakemba for his insightful question. We on this side of the House are proud to support TAFE and its future. This week we announced a review into the future of TAFE and how it can be even better than it is today. This side of the House has committed to TAFE being the comprehensive public provider of vocational education and training, and we are very proud of that. I know that the member for Lakemba was a great shadow Minister for education; we expect a little bit better from him. You do not need to politicise TAFE because we love TAFE. This Government is getting on with delivering a stronger TAFE, focused on our students, focused on our industry and focused on our staff. We make no apology for supporting our campuses, our students and our staff. In fact, this year's budget is \$1.85 billion. That is a 3.1 per cent increase—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: We can read about the budget. My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was: Will the Minister guarantee that no more TAFE courses will be cut or campuses closed? Yes or no? Will the Minister guarantee that?

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue. I call the member for Keira to order for the third time.

Dr GEOFF LEE: Maybe the question should be: Jodi, why did you demote Jihad? He was such great opposition. But I digress. We are very proud of our commitment to TAFE and of our review to look at how we can make it even better.

Ms Gladys Berejiklian: And what about our Connected Learning Centres [CLCs], all brand-new centres?

Dr GEOFF LEE: That reminds me, today my opposition colleague Jihad called the CLCs shopfronts.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: The Minister should direct his comments through the Chair. I think it is important that he does not speak to a member across the Chamber. He is obviously a Minister who is struggling with the question and with his portfolio.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. I am satisfied that the Minister is addressing me.

Dr GEOFF LEE: I wanted to pick up the inaccurate and sad thing that the member for Lakemba said, that there were not real teachers at CLCs. That is an absolutely appalling statement. If he ever gets the opportunity to visit CLCs he should apologise to those teachers. It is an appalling indictment of him that he does not support teachers. This side of the House supports teachers. That is why we are investing \$137.2 million of capital expenditure.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order: I am more than happy to chat with the Minister later and maybe show him *Hansard* so he can see exactly what I said, and I will see him at a CLC down the track. But the question was specifically will he guarantee that no more TAFE courses will be cut or campuses closed as a result of the review? It was not about the other stuff that he is talking about.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Dr GEOFF LEE: I will continue. I should not be nasty. I will let the member for Lakemba explain why he does not like teachers when he visits the campuses. In fact, in the last term of government we delivered 14 connected learning centres—that is 14 more campuses across the State. In this term of government we are delivering eight new CLCs. Those opposite do not want to acknowledge this investment.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: They wanted to stop Nambucca getting a new learning centre.

Dr GEOFF LEE: That is true. I was with the member for Oxley looking at a site for a new Connected Learning Centre in her electorate.

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

Dr GEOFF LEE: This side of the House is committed to TAFE. We understand its valuable role.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: It relates to Standing Order 129. Given the Minister is unable to answer this question—

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being relevant.

Ms Jodi McKay: —we can take it that he will be cutting courses and he will be closing campuses.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat.

Ms Jodi McKay: If that is different, then stand up here and say that.

The SPEAKER: I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time. I remind the member for Canterbury that she is on three calls to order.

REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSON (Upper Hunter) (14:39:26): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on projects being delivered to improve transport and roads in the regions, particularly in the Hunter?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (14:39:57): I thank the member for Upper Hunter for his question. He knows that we are powering ahead with our plans to improve roads

and transport right across regional New South Wales. I take this opportunity to update the House on how some of these initiatives are tracking. We have started seven new bus trials—services that connect some of our most isolated communities to their nearest regional centre, and in some cases giving the communities access to public transport for the very first time. This can be a game changer for people living in those communities and there is plenty more to come.

We are currently out to market looking for local operators to run another six services. We are looking at routes like Tamber Springs to Tamworth; Conargo to Echuca; Tumut to Wagga Wagga, which will stop in small communities like Tarcutta and Ladysmith. We are also investing in infrastructure, from the new Tabulam bridge in the far north, which is on track to open to traffic in the middle of this year, to the new Gunnedah bridge, which will provide an unrestricted higher mass limit for freight movements in that area. I know that the member for Kiama and the member for South Coast are excited about the work that will soon commence on the new Nowra bridge. That bridge will deliver faster and more reliable journeys for people living in the Nowra and Bomaderry areas. It also builds on the huge investment that this Government is making in the Princes Highway right along the south coast and in the Pacific Highway and the Great Western Highway.

We are all about making it easier for people to visit the regions. We welcome those tourists opposite who I understand are going to visit the Hunter tomorrow and over the weekend to host their regional shadow Cabinet meeting in Singleton. I am happy to confirm to those opposite, who seem to have struggled with the definition of "regional New South Wales" all week, that Singleton is definitely in regional New South Wales. I will give them a few tips on things they should look at while they are there. How about they look at the Scone bypass? That is another great project that has been delivered by this Government—a five-kilometre bypass that will deliver safer, faster journeys for people travelling along the New England Highway. It will reduce travel times, it will take hundreds of heavy vehicles out of town and it will transform the town centre.

That project has supported more than 1,000 direct and indirect jobs during construction and has injected millions of dollars into the local economy. The project has been completed months ahead of schedule. In fact, it will shortly open to traffic and there is more to come as we continue our investment in the New England Highway. We are also working on the Muswellbrook bypass. A concept design is now in development for a nine-kilometre bypass of Muswellbrook, which will improve travel times along the highway, particularly for freight. Of course, there is Singleton. The concept design for the Singleton bypass is currently out for community feedback. It will remove up to 15,000 vehicles a day from the CBD and motorists will be able to avoid up to five sets of traffic lights.

We are continuing to invest in improving connections for communities like Singleton. In January we added two extra daily return services between Singleton and Newcastle, stopping in communities like Maitland, Greta and Branxton, which is good news for the huge crowds I expect will be going to the Singleton Country Labor conference over the weekend. The Country Labor conference over the weekend is an important conference. You would think Labor would want to discuss the real issues affecting the lives of people in regional New South Wales. You would expect them to be talking about things such as drought. You would expect them to be talking about things such as water security. You would expect them to be talking about things concerning bushfires. [*Extension of time*]

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Maybe we can talk about racism in the National Party and the disgraceful email that came from your party members about the people of Dubbo.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being relevant. I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the second time for that comment.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I kid you not, the very first motion on the agenda for debate is that Labor dump the Country Labor brand and why? Because it makes them look like fools on election day. That is the quote that is in the conference paper.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I will not take a point of order from the member for Campbelltown. The member forfeited the right to take a point of order after his last comment.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: It is unfair to say it is the brand, because you make yourselves look like fools each and every day in this House.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Whatever rant this is, it is now totally unrelated to the question that the Minister was asked; and, secondly, the Minister's appalling breach of standing orders in not resuming his seat when a point of order was taken.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: We are excited about the three bypasses that are happening in Scone in the member for Upper Hunter's electorate. What we are finding out is that Country Labor has been nothing more than a sham, to hide their dodgy donations in the past.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was about regional roads, nothing to do with the Country Labor conference, which is going to be in this member's electorate. It will be interesting to see if he is actually there for once.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being relevant. The Minister may continue.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: In all seriousness, it is good to see that members of this House are getting out of Sydney, getting out of the bubble and talking to people in regional New South Wales, because that is the only way to understand what regional communities think and say. When there are people like the member for Campbelltown who are trying to argue that western Sydney should be part of a regional seniors' travel card, then we have got big problems. On this side of the House we will continue to stand up for and develop regional New South Wales. *[Time expired.]*

The SPEAKER: Time has expired. Does the member for Kogarah have a question?

Mr Chris Minns: The Liberal Party have their country conference at the North Sydney pool. That is their idea of a regional centre.

The SPEAKER: I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Kogarah from the Chamber for the rest of the day under Standing Order 249.

[The member for Kogarah left the Chamber at 14:50 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

SINGLETON TAFE

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (14:47:43): My question is directed to the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education—

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Wakehurst that he is on a call to order. I do not want to put him on a second call to order. I call the member for Baulkham Hills to order for the first time.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: With New South Wales facing a dire skills shortage in trades, why does the Minister's Government—

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

Mr CLAYTON BARR: —not offer one single metalworking, mining or agriculture course at Singleton TAFE?

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (14:48:42): I thank the member for his question. I also thank the member for Tamworth. We were out at Gunnedah opening the new \$43 million investment in the trade skills centre and the pilot program to look at how we can match up young unemployed people with employers. We have been doing a pre-vocational employment program over the last nine months. We are very proud of our investment in TAFE this year. As I said in answer to the last question, it was \$1.85 billion, up 3.1 per cent, if I am right.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was specifically as to whether courses that relate to skills shortages in that area in mining, agriculture and metallurgy are being run at Singleton TAFE.

Dr GEOFF LEE: It is great news to inform the House—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting and allow the Minister to answer the question.

Dr GEOFF LEE: It is great news to inform the House that mining is offered at Kurri Kurri, some 15 kilometres away. Kurri Kurri has a great viticulture section too. It has golf courses. We are increasing the number of locations and campuses for TAFE. It was great to see the 14 Connected Learning Centres [CLCs] delivered in the last term of government. In this term of government we are delivering another eight CLCs. The member for Lakemba was inquiring earlier about teacher numbers. We have more teachers this year than last year. If he bothers to read the annual report, he will figure that out.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance. My question is specifically about metalworking, mine working and agriculture at Singleton TAFE.

Dr GEOFF LEE: It does disappoint me that those on the opposite side—

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

Dr GEOFF LEE: —want to politicise TAFE.

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

Dr GEOFF LEE: It is an important comprehensive provider of training services.

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

Dr GEOFF LEE: On Tuesday we announced the review of TAFE headed by two eminent professionals, David Gonski and Peter Shergold. This review is looking at how we can run the courses of the future.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. This is a critical question for the people of Singleton and the growing of jobs for young people. It is important the Minister answers the question.

The SPEAKER: I understand the point of order: The Opposition is identifying the precise nature of the question and I draw the Minister's attention to that.

Dr GEOFF LEE: We are very interested in what courses we run at each location. The point of the review is to look at the alignment between what we need to run, where we need to run it, what teachers we need, and what courses we should run for future industry requirements. That reminds me of Meadowbank TAFE. I thank the good member for Ryde for his support at Meadowbank. Not only will it be a centre where there are fantastic construction services—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Minister is flouting your ruling.

The SPEAKER: I remind the Minister that he should refer to the precise TAFE college.

Dr GEOFF LEE: I apologise, I love to talk about every TAFE, including Singleton TAFE. It is a wonderful TAFE. I send a big shout-out to all the teachers and staff that do such a wonderful job. We know on this side we support the teachers and staff, not just at Singleton but right around the State. We are proud to say that we are investing in TAFE. We are looking at how we can deliver better for our students, staff and industry. Singleton—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Metalworking, mining and agriculture courses at Singleton TAFE. Why is the Minister not delivering those critical courses? Please answer this question.

Dr GEOFF LEE: We care about all our campuses, including Singleton. We support our teachers, students and campuses.

The SPEAKER: One more word from the member for Cessnock and he will be removed from the Chamber.

STATE ECONOMY

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (14:54:03): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Government's sound financial management is leading to record investments in key government services, including education?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (14:54:23): I thank the member for her question and the great work that she is doing in the Hawkesbury electorate. How good is the Windsor Bridge? It is above water, would you believe, unlike the old Labor bridge, which is below water. She has learnt from the best and is doing a great job. The member for Hawkesbury's question goes to the heart of the difference between our side of the House and the other side of the House. The simple fact is that we cannot provide quality government services without strong financial management and that is what the Coalition delivers. It is not just about capital and infrastructure, but also recurrent and frontline investment. Because of our sound finances we have been able to deliver significant increases in health, education, police and emergency services.

The reality is that frontline services have received more under the Coalition Government than they did under Labor. For police, as the police Minister knows, we have increased our investment by 27 per cent since Labor was in office; education is up 36 per cent; and health, as the Minister would say, is up not 10 per cent, not 20 per cent, not 30 per cent, but 45 per cent under the Coalition compared to Labor. What does that mean with

respect to frontline services? Over the next four years we will deliver 8,300 more nurses, midwives and health professionals, 4,600 more teachers and 1,500 more police.

In 2019 there were an additional 365 full-time police, up 2.3 per cent; 947 more nurses, up 2 per cent; and 235 new teachers. That is frontline workers looking after the people of our great State. Despite those record investments, the Opposition is never happy. It is always complaining, whingeing and whining. We have seen that this week with its attack on TAFE. I was browsing through a website last night, wsws.org, which is the World Socialist Web Site, which I was put onto by the member for Liverpool. The headline of the article was, "... Governments launch major assault on TAFE teachers". The article stated:

The [state Labor] government has been pressing for deep inroads into TAFE ... and conditions.

And it is doing this in "collaboration" with its Federal counterparts in Canberra. That is pretty harsh because we have just announced our reform. Then I looked at the date—4 December 2009. Who was the Minister? Verity Firth. Who was the Prime Minister? Kevin Rudd, phase number one. I say to Federal Labor and NSW Labor: Hands off our TAFE. Leave our TAFE courses alone. Leave TAFE in this State alone while we are reforming it and ensuring that students across New South Wales have the best access, the best courses, the best teachers and—

Ms Prue Car: You are gutting it! You are gutting TAFE.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Particularly you. You were going to gut TAFE. The member for Londonderry knows it. She was running a campaign to gut TAFE. We have the best supporters that TAFE has ever had in New South Wales. It is a disgrace. Even the socialists were onto them. It is a hard truth, isn't it? The reality is, why can we make record investments in frontline services and members opposite never could? Part of that has been possible because of our asset recycling plan, which we know that members opposite have opposed. Not only does that enable us to unlock capital to invest in new infrastructure, it frees up capital that would have otherwise been spent on infrastructure and allows us to invest in frontline services. The reality is that while they complain, if we look at every measure under a Coalition Government in every agency, we have invested more than them. [*Extension of time*]

The best indicator of future performance is past performance and that is what it did under its government. This allows us to invest more in frontline workers and give the people of New South Wales the infrastructure they deserve. Labor's approach is like Dusty Springfield economics, as the health Minister would know: wishing, hoping, thinking and praying. Wishing they could manage money well, hoping they could recycle some assets but the unions will not let them, thinking they will get away with more debt and deficit and praying that the Liberals will come back and fix up their mess again. In the Chamber today they talk about privatisation. There is one thing we would sell if we could and that is the New South Wales Labor Party. But according to ICAC, it has already been bought.

It can come to this Chamber every day and complain about privatisation and asset recycling, but these are the facts. We are the best friend TAFE has ever had and we have invested more than ever. The asset base and the net worth of this State has increased from \$150 billion under Labor to \$250 billion under the Coalition. While Opposition members keep undermining each other, we will keep tunnelling this State. While they keep blocking, we will keep building the infrastructure to make a real difference to the people of New South Wales and while they keep whining, we, the Coalition, will keep winning.

The SPEAKER: I will make two comments. First, members will have noticed that I consciously did not pull up members who were interjecting during that answer. I hope members will realise that I am drawing a distinction between those questions that are being answered seriously and those that involve a vigorous exchange from both sides of the House. Second, further to an earlier question, I wanted to avail myself of previous rulings on Standing Order 128 in relation to the point of order taken by the Leader of the House and the question from the member for Lakemba. Even though it was in the preamble to the question, in future I will not accept comments such as "appalling record". I have reflected on it and clarify that such terminology is not acceptable.

SCHOOL STUDENT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (15:02:30): My question is directed to the Premier. With 46 per cent of year 6 students failing the minimum performance standard in science, New South Wales is placing second last in the country. How can the Premier claim that education results are one of her priorities when the Government has produced this disaster?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:02:49): I thank the member for her question and commend her because we are all passionate about education. At the education summit I attended last week, a number of experts presented and commented on the issues around core competencies of English, science and maths. They are being crowded out.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: They said this was a trend that had been going on for the past two or three decades. It is not a new trend. I note from the tone of the question asked that the Opposition will therefore support all the education reform that the New South Wales Government is embarking on. There are three pillars to that reform.

The SPEAKER: Members will remain silent and listen to the three pillars.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The first critical pillar is to declutter the curriculum. The curriculum has not been reviewed for 30 years and, as a result, the core competencies of English, maths and science have been crowded out.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: As a result, the core competencies of English, maths and science have been crowded out.

The SPEAKER: The member for Londonderry will be removed from the Chamber for the remainder of the day.

[The member for Londonderry left the Chamber at 15:07 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The Government feels very strongly about that and it is something we will be addressing. We know where successful schools are producing results, notwithstanding that schools in a similar demographic are perhaps not doing as well. This Government has now introduced across all State schools a program called Bump It Up, which focuses on core competencies, to ensure that we identify school by school, student by student how we can elevate those core competencies. The third plank to our reform, which I have been discussing this week, is making sure we improve the transition from high school to work, high school to TAFE and high school to university.

A key issue in all of this is STEM—science, technology, engineering and mathematics. I am incredibly proud of the fact that we have not only introduced more STEM subjects in our schools but we have also made maths compulsory. Every student, no matter their level of understanding, will have to study maths to year 12. It was a battle getting that up because for too long our system has not focused on the core competencies it needs to focus on. That is something we are addressing in this curriculum review. Can everybody tell I am passionate about this? We are the Government that supports our students. We are the Government that supports our teachers. We want core competencies back in our schools. We want all students to study maths, science and English.

The SPEAKER: I have been tolerant with the member for Maroubra, but I now call him to order for the first time. Two Opposition members have been removed from the Chamber and there may be more. I remind Government members that a number of them are on calls to order: The member for Kiama is on three calls to order, the member for Oatley is on two calls order and the member for Wakehurst is on two calls to order. On the Opposition side, members representing the electorates of Canterbury, Port Stephens, Kiera and Cessnock are on three calls to order. I warn members on both sides that I will have no hesitation in removing more members from the Chamber if they continue to interject.

AGRICULTURE

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (15:06:42): My question is addressed to the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales. Will the Minister update the House on the Government's plan for agriculture?

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (15:07:18): I thank the member for Albury for his wonderful question. I was going to start with an apology, Mr Speaker. Usually I would be attentive and listening to your rulings in the Chamber, but today I have had my head buried in an amazing document that I printed off the internet. I know, it is hard to believe that I can operate one. I will show the document to the member for Cessnock after this.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: I would have thought that the agriculture Minister might have been talking about drought.

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

Ms Yasmin Catley: Or making sure we have enough water.

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

Ms Yasmin Catley: It is Standing Order 129. I would have thought that the agriculture Minister might have talked about drought.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. The Minister will continue.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: I am glad the member for Swansea made that interjection because I was scanning this document looking for a mention of drought or bushfires, or something like that given that the Country Labor conference is happening this weekend.

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

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: There are 29 pages of motions that range in topics from changing the Country Labor name to the number of delegates, but nothing that I can see that substantively relates to agricultural policy or advancing an industry that employs hundreds of thousands of people and is worth \$16 billion a year to the State's economy—nothing at all. It is a document that is large but bereft of any actual substance.

Ms Anna Watson: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. You said a moment ago that serious questions would be heard in silence. This is not a serious answer. Does that mean members on this side can start yelling and screaming again? This has answer has nothing to do with the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Ms Jodie Harrison: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Is it a different point of order? I have just ruled on Standing Order 129. I will take the point of order if it is something different, otherwise I will hear the Minister further.

Ms Jodie Harrison: It is Standing Order 129. The question was—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue. I will not rule on it again. I made it clear that when a member takes a point of order on a particular standing order—and I have just ruled on it—I will not take a point of order on the same standing order immediately.

Ms Jodie Harrison: The question was about the plan for agriculture.

The SPEAKER: No it was not. The Minister will continue. The member will resume her seat. I call the member for Charlestown to order for the first time. If she continues to interject she will be placed on more calls to order.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: It looks like I have hit a nerve. To come to the member's question about the plan for agriculture, of which this document displays none, members on this side of the House have a very strong and bold plan for agriculture—to lift the value of output of agricultural production in this State to \$19.3 billion by the year 2023, which is consistent with the Federal Government's ambitious objective to lift agricultural production in this country to \$100 billion by the year 2030. How are we going to do that? We will do that by supporting our farmers and agricultural industries through drought.

We will help them recover from bushfires and drought and we will also back them with some of the world's best science and research from the Department of Primary Industries. We have over 600 of the world's leading agricultural scientists and researchers conducting trials on over 13,000 hectares of land at our research stations and farms across the State. Those trials are backed by an annual \$100 million research program that is helping farmers become more resilient as they adopt the latest world trends and incorporate new technology into their operations to make sure that they continue to be at the very top of their game.

Why? Agriculture is critical to this State's economy. The industry employs hundreds of thousands of people and is the livelihood and lifeblood of many country communities. But we have a responsibility in this State to feed and clothe citizens not only across Australia but also increasingly around the world as the food task continues to grow. The rest of the world relies on New South Wales farmers to make sure that they can continue to eat high-quality cheap protein, that they can access good quality food and, importantly, that they can also clothe themselves with some of the highest quality fibre products found anywhere in the world. Members on this side of the House are absolutely committed to continuing to support and grow the agricultural sector in this State beyond the most devastating drought and despite the worst bushfire season we have ever experienced. [*Extension of time*]

The message is clear: Members on this side of the House are absolutely committed to that. I welcome the commitment from those opposite to do the same. While Labor members are enjoying their time in Singleton debating motions about what the name of the party should be—

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: —we will continue the work of supporting agriculture in this State.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Greg Warren: It is Standing Order 73. We also have a clear message on this side.

The SPEAKER: Speak to Standing Order 73, please.

Mr GREG WARREN: We will not tolerate racism or derogatory statements against our First Nation peoples and we will stand against it.

The SPEAKER: Who is it directed against?

Mr Greg Warren: Standing Order 73.

The SPEAKER: Who is it directed against?

Mr Greg Warren: I called the point of order to the Minister.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has finished his answer.

FLOOD PLAIN HARVESTING

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (15:13:22): My question is directed to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing. Before the Minister's approval of flood plain harvesting last Friday afternoon, which northern and southern stakeholder groups did the Minister consult with and why did the Minister blame government bureaucrats for the decision? Does the buck not stop with the Minister when it comes to major water decisions?

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (15:13:55): I thank the member for Murray for her question and acknowledge you have something like 4,800 megalitres of water on your farm property—

Mrs Helen Dalton: Point of order: It is Standing Order 129, relevance.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Mrs Helen Dalton: Answer the question.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will continue.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I think the millionaire from the Murray should understand how relevant that response is.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: The Minister should refer to the member by her correct title.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

Ms Jodi McKay: Plus, if she wants to launch an attack she can do that by way of substantive motion, not when we are talking about drought at a critical time for this State.

The SPEAKER: The first point of order is upheld, the second point of order is dismissed.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: For the record, I do not have any water licences. I have nothing like 4,800 billion litres of water.

Mrs Helen Dalton: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Murray will make it clear what her point of order is.

Mrs Helen Dalton: It is Standing Order 129. Answer the question: who did you speak to about floodplain harvesting? Who were the people you discussed it with? Was it the people in the south? Who was it? Why did you blame your bureaucrats?

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

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: The people of Murray, the people of Barwon, the people of western New South Wales are sick of politics and that type of behaviour around water. What was happening in your part of the world during that rainfall recently? The accusations and claims you are making against bureaucrats, against me and against communities is absolutely disgraceful.

Mr Philip Donato: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Minister has had two minutes to answer the question and she has made no reference to the question.

The SPEAKER: I am satisfied the Minister is being generally relevant.

Mr David Harris: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Is it a different point of order?

Mr David Harris: It is a different point of order. The Minister is being argumentative with the member for Murray. It is Standing Order 73 because she is making accusations that the member cannot defend because it is not being done via a substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: You may have had an argument, but Standing Order 73 does not apply.

Mr David Harris: Further to the point of order—

The SPEAKER: I have ruled on the point of order. The Minister will continue.

Mr David Harris: She is making a substantive attack on someone personally.

The SPEAKER: That is not the case at this stage.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: What I am trying to do is put some context around a very vicious question, a vicious allegation that she has levelled at communities, at me and at public servants. While her behaviour is appalling in the sense of what she is doing in social media, what she is saying—

The SPEAKER: I will hear the point of order now.

Mr David Harris: It is Standing Order 73.

The SPEAKER: At this stage I ask the Minister to desist from making further comments of that nature about the member for Murray. The Minister is now straying into Standing Order 73.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: Did you hear the question?

The SPEAKER: I did hear the question. The member for Murray will resume her seat. I ask the Minister to be mindful of Standing Order 73.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: It is important that we show leadership and strength and not attack one community against another. We have had rain. We have got 170,000 megalitres of water expected to meet Lake Wetherill on 13 March. Do you know what? That is good news and the communities of the north have participated in that with a floodplain embargo—the first ever in the history of New South Wales. They have been denied the opportunity to pump that water because we needed a first flush down to the Menindee Lakes and to the Wentworth region. All we have heard out of this woman is mistruths, lies and accusations. You wait till you get caught out. [*Time expired.*]

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Oxley to order for the second time. The Minister will resume her seat. Was the member for Dubbo seeking to take a point of order?

Mr Dugald Saunders: No.

The SPEAKER: The member for Murray was on her feet. Are you seeking an extension of time?

Mrs Helen Dalton: Yes, please.

The SPEAKER: Does the Minister wish an extension of time?

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: No.

The SPEAKER: An extension of time is granted, but the Minister does not want it.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (15:20:03): My question is addressed to the Minister for Energy and Environment. Will the Minister update the House on the Government's bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth on energy?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (15:20:24): What a great question from a great member who cares about protecting our environment while at the same time caring about protecting our economy and growing it into the future. The member for Dubbo cares about growing our economy—

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Canterbury for the last time.

Mr MATT KEAN: —creating jobs in the regions and seeing investment flow into the regions and that is exactly what he has delivered. We have seen billions of dollars and hundreds of new jobs go into his community of Dubbo through the development of the nation's first Renewable Energy Zone. This will deliver 3,000 megawatts of clean renewable energy into the system which will drive down wholesale prices. This is exactly what practical

action on climate change looks like—more jobs, investment into the regions, driving down power prices, not driving them up.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: This is exactly what our deal with the Commonwealth delivers: a deal that will see over \$3 billion of investment coming into New South Wales which will create the State's first ever Renewable Energy Zone and will pay for the transmission infrastructure to bring those electrons to market. This is an absolute game changer for our State and the beneficiaries are the people of the regions that will see billions of dollars going into their communities.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: New jobs will be created and it will help drive down power prices. Renewable energy cannot be done without dispatchable energy and that is exactly what our deal delivers. Our deal delivers dispatchable energy into the system to firm up renewable energy. So we will have lower power prices through renewable energy and we will firm it up delivering reliable energy. That is exactly what the HumeLink will deliver, which will be underwritten by this deal. When the HumeLink is constructed it will immediately deliver 500 megawatts of additional capacity into the system and an additional 2,000 megawatts of capacity when Snowy 2.0 is delivered into the system. But this deal is about more than just securing our energy future, it is also about lowering emissions across the economy.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Swansea to order for the third time. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the third time. If you utter another word you will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr MATT KEAN: Unlike Labor, we are not going to tax us or regulate us into oblivion. We are going to incentivise the market and underwrite investments in things like electric vehicles. We are going to underwrite the investment in new industries like green hydrogen. This deal will underwrite and turbocharge our agricultural industry. That is exactly right. It will set up agriculture for success in the future and create new revenue streams for our farmers who will take advantage of new opportunities in offset markets that are being created. Again, this is what practical action on climate change looks like—not taxing the hell out of people, not destroying our economy but growing our economy and securing our future.

The world is changing. We need to be ready to take advantage of the opportunities that those changes bring. That can be done not by destroying existing jobs and industries but by adding new jobs and new industries, and that is what a Coalition Government is all about. We need to continue to support our existing industries and our export markets as they exist at the moment, but we also need to grab the opportunities that the new economy is presenting to us. The reality is that the most valuable car manufacturer in the history of the United States is not Ford or General Motors—it is Tesla. What this deal will deliver for New South Wales is the Teslas of the aluminium industry. What this deal will deliver for New South Wales is the Teslas of the cement industry, the hydrogen industry and the mining sector. What this deal will also deliver for New South Wales is the Teslas of the agriculture industry. *[Extension of time]*

All this is possible because of the \$3 billion deal that this Government has landed with the Commonwealth to underwrite the success of existing industries and take advantage of the opportunities that are being created in the new economy. The deal will build renewable energy zones and build the transmission and infrastructure to bring those renewable energy zones and new energy sources into the market. That will drive down power prices for New South Wales and set up our State to lead the nation, and indeed be up there with the cheapest sources of energy in the entire world. That will transform our economy because that is what Liberal-Nationals governments do. That is exactly what we do.

This deal is the single largest investment in State-based emissions reduction in our nation's history. We do this not just because we care about the environment; we do it because we care about our economy. That is exactly what this is all about. While Labor talks about climate change, posture on emissions targets and virtue signal out there, we get the job done because we care about growing our economy. We care about jobs. We care about new industries and opportunities. We care about the future of this State and we will not let those opposite take us backwards, tax us into oblivion and regulate the hell out of existing industries.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Swansea takes a point of order. The Minister will resume his seat. What is the member's point of order?

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: Did the Minister have to wait for Barra to be away to be asked that question?

The SPEAKER: Order! Albeit we are in the last 10 seconds of question time, I direct the Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Swansea from the Chamber under Standing Order 249.

[The member for Swansea left the Chamber at 15:30 accompanied by the Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Mr MATT KEAN: Let me assure the member for Swansea that on this side of the House we are absolutely united in turbocharging our economy.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

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**.

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**.

Low-cost Housing and Homelessness

Petition requesting increased funding for low-cost housing and homelessness services, 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**.

Social Housing

Petition requesting that the Sirius building be retained and its social housing function be continued, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Private Members' Statements

GROUPED PROPERTY SERVICES PTY LTD

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (15:28:42): I advise the House of the outrageous and unacceptable behaviour of the owners of Grouped Property Services Pty Ltd [GPS] and its impact upon my constituent Jose Pena and other employees. On 8 June 2017 the Fair Work Ombudsman [FWO] issued a media release about obtaining near-record penalties of \$447,300 against the operators of a Sydney-based cleaning company. In the Federal Court, Justice Anna Katzmann found that the company had treated vulnerable employees as "slaves" under a "calculated" scheme. The press release states:

Grouped Property Services Pty Ltd has been penalised \$370,000 and also ordered to back-pay \$223,244 to 49 employees it exploited between 2011 and 2013.

Rosario Pucci—the former owner-operator of the company described by the Court as being "intimately involved" in the exploitation—has been penalised a further \$74,300.

His brother Enrico Pucci, the company's current owner and sole director, has been penalised \$3,000 for his involvement in contravening the adverse action provision of the Fair Work Act that makes it unlawful to dismiss an employee for exercising a workplace right, such as inquiring about payment of wages.

In 2011 the FWO had previously secured \$4,400 in court-issued fines against Rosario Pucci for his involvement in underpaying three employees. Wash and Go Pty Ltd was placed into liquidation, which prevented the FWO from securing penalties against it. The case against GPS revealed dubious so-called labour hire arrangements, sham contracting arrangements and questionable corporate structures. The majority of exploited workers were used as cleaners. GPS claimed that 51 workers were employed by a so-called labour hire company, National Contractors Pty Ltd, which was registered at the GPS address. The court held that that was simply a shell company established to avoid paying employees their minimum award wages and entitlements. The real employer was GPS and on several occasions when employees asked for their below-entitlement wages to be paid, they were sacked.

There were also three other companies claiming to be labour hire companies that had been registered at the GPS address and that had gone into liquidation. The court described the treatment of various employees by Rosario

Pucci as "inexcusable", "disgraceful" and "reprehensible and shameful". Justice Katzmann ordered that her judgement be forwarded to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission [ASIC] and the Australian Taxation Office for consideration. The Fair Work Ombudsman had previously referred related conduct by the group to ASIC. However, despite the media release from the Fair Work Ombudsman and the comprehensive and damning Federal Court decision, there has been no conclusion to this issue.

Mr Pena has not been paid the total amount ordered to be paid by the court. He has, however, received a notice of a creditors meeting. GPS has gone into administration and it has been resolved that the company will be wound up. I wrote to Condon Associates, who are the administrators of the company. They said it was unlikely that the employees would be paid. They also said that they had lodged section 533 and 533 (2) reports with ASIC. A representative from Condon Associates said:

The reports, among other things, detail the findings of my investigations pertaining to offences and contraventions committed by the director(s) of the company. Whilst the contents of the reports are confidential I can confirm that a number of potential director contraventions were identified and that it was my recommendation that ASIC further investigate.

Subsequent to a review of the reports, ASIC have decided not to take any further action, contrary to my recommendation.

Given ASIC's above position and the fact that I am unfunded in this matter, I wrote a special purpose report to the relevant statutory bodies advising of my concerns relating to this matter and invited same to consider providing funding to further pursue this matter. I note that I am yet to receive notice from the statutory bodies confirming their position with respect to my funding request.

Unless they are funded, the company will simply proceed into liquidation. I would have thought it would behave ASIC to demonstrate a bit more enthusiasm in performing its role in this matter than it has to date. I also wrote to the Fair Work Ombudsman and the reply confirmed significant amounts of court-ordered compensation outstanding. It said this:

The FWO has invested significant resources into this matter, however, unfortunately the FWO is limited in the further action we can take during the liquidation process. The FWO will monitor the process and at its conclusion will be in a position to decide what avenue, if any, is open to the FWO to recover the monies owed.

Despite its self-congratulatory media release from a couple of years ago, Fair Work does not seem able to do anything to ensure that court orders are actually implemented. This is obviously a troubling story. It is regrettably not uncommon and it is certainly not the first of this type of story that I have come across. It is consistent with the exploitation of workers such as my constituent by a group of crooks, frankly. There needs to be far greater concerted action to stop these crooks getting away with ripping off my constituents.

LIFELINE

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections)
(15:33:09): It is my privilege to speak today about a brilliant service that quietly soldiers on in the background. It is the service that Australians turn to in their individual moments of crisis. It is a tragedy of our age that, despite the many privileges granted to us through scientific advancement and the incredible fortune of being born Australian, we as a society are still developing the tools to deal with mental health. It is estimated that 45 per cent of Australians will deal with a mental health disorder in their lifetime. It is estimated that right now over one million Australians are dealing with depression. Tragically, if you are a young Australian you are more likely to die as a consequence of suicide than of any other single factor.

However, it is not all bad news. The New South Wales Government has been making significant investments in our health services to provide our community with the assistance needed to combat mental disorders. Combined with scientific research and the work of charitable companies such as Lifeline, our State is taking steps towards a better tomorrow. Lifeline is an exceptional service that provides all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to online, phone and face-to-face crisis support and suicide prevention services. Lifeline serves the Lane Cove electorate under its Harbour to Hawkesbury program. It has covered our region for 53 years. Each year the Harbour to Hawkesbury Lifeline service answers more than 100,000 of the close to one million calls made nationally to Lifeline. The Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury centre answers more calls than any other Lifeline centre in Australia.

Since the beginning of 2019 Lifeline has assisted 131 individuals in the Lane Cove electorate. Currently 50 active volunteers from my electorate assist in running the service. Lifeline centres are funded in part by the wonderful Lifeline stores, which recycle beautiful homewares and clothes that would otherwise become landfill. The volunteer-run stores are my go-to when I need to replace something in the kitchen or find new active wear. On 7 February Lifeline opened a new store in Gladesville. Nestled between our Westpac branch and famous Vietnamese bakery, the new store has it all: surfboards, pastry machines, books, board games and rows of designer clothes.

Supporting Lifeline stores does more than lighten the hip pocket. The global fashion industry accounts for more than 8 per cent of global carbon emissions. I acknowledge the fantastic work that the Chairman of Lifeline,

John Brogden, does each and every day in guiding Lifeline and supporting its fantastic work. I encourage all my constituents to visit this new Gladesville landmark and celebrate its opening by supporting the incredible service it provides to our community.

AUBURN ELECTORATE

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (15:36:10): The last Ethiopian Crown Prince, Haile Selassie, once mused on the inaction of those who could have acted and the indifference of those who should have known better. Over the past 12 months 2,000 people in the Auburn electorate have been made homeless. That statistic has not prompted any urgent action from the Berejiklian Government. No additional funds have been provided, no roundtable meetings have been held with providers of crisis accommodation and support services to get to the root of the problem and no plans have been made to fix it. In Parliament this week members observed a minute's silence to remember the tragic murder of Hannah Clarke and her three children. It is time the Berejiklian Government thought about how many of those 2,000 homeless are women and children escaping domestic violence.

On Tuesday in this House the Treasurer highlighted employment levels. The electorate of Auburn has double-digit unemployment—10 per cent—however we have seen no response from the Government. In fact, it has reduced train services and failed to find sites for high schools that the electorate has long been asking for. The Auburn electorate has a tertiary education level above the State average. However, the Berejiklian Government has never asked why 10 per cent of the electorate are unemployed and what can be done to fix it? The Government has no plan or strategy. I am surprised that a government that should at least be looking at the data seems to have tunnel vision. Every statistic indicates that if the Government were interested in improving the New South Wales economy, addressing growing inequality and giving every child a chance, the Auburn electorate would be at the heart of the Government's plans. But it does not appear to be on its radar.

Before the last election the Premier said, "You can have it all." But if you inhabit the great swathes of western Sydney you can have bugger-all. Under this Premier, the reality is that Sydney has two parts. If you are in a Liberal or marginal electorate you can have it all. If you are wealthy you can drive on our toll roads and if you live in the Ryde electorate you get a halt on more housing. If you live in the Auburn electorate—the second most populous electorate in the State, with a 36 per cent increase in density over the past five years—you get more high-rise developments. More than the 7,500 additional dwellings are being built at Wentworth Point and in the Carter Street precinct. However, the electorate gets no additional schools.

While 5,500 dwellings are being built, land for the shiny new school on the master plan—the school the planning Minister has said is coming—will not be handed over by the developer until 2026. The long-promised Sydney Olympic Park High School still has no site. The foreshore park adjoining Wentworth Park Public School was to be completed before the school opened. The school opened over a year ago. Since day one it has operated at capacity because the Government failed to deliver the 1,000 required spaces. It now has four demountable classrooms. The park is still a dirty great hole surrounded by fencing. The only thing that seems to have changed is that the plans now include a road separating the school from the park. Needless to say, the school community is hardly thrilled.

As traffic grows through Granville South following the introduction of the tolls, clogging Wellington Road and Mona Street, do we see any government plans to realign roads to ensure that traffic flows, as happens in the inner city? Of course, the answer is no. Do not judge this Liberal-Nationals Government on what it says it does; judge it on what it does not do. The inaction of the Government speaks to the heart of who its members are. New South Wales faces numerous emergencies, from bushfires to floods, and an expected downturn in the economy. The short-sightedness of successive Liberal-Nationals governments in failing to take action over the past eight years has created an ongoing crisis in the Auburn electorate—in unemployment, homelessness, education facilities, public transport, planning and traffic congestion—that will remain unresolved. That unresolved crisis represents the inaction of those who could have acted and the indifference of those who should have known better.

DUBBO CYCLE CLUB

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (15:40:32): I recognise a cycling club that has pulled away from the peloton. In December, Dubbo Cycle Club was announced as the number one club in the country at the Cycling Australia Awards. It was a fitting reward for a club that has a long history in the city of Dubbo and has produced many champions over the years. Current president Matt Gilbert leads a committed group of club members who spend countless hours each week developing State, national, Commonwealth and world champions. Dubbo cyclists have excelled for decades on the track and on the road.

Danny Barber is the current under-17 New South Wales Cyclist of the Year and two-time Oceania Cycling under-19 Champion. Kurt Eather is the current national points race champion in the under-19s. Recently Kurt also

joined another fine young Dubbo product Luke Ensor and raced internationally at the Tour South Korea. Together with Dylan Eather, those young men have been picked up by National Road Series teams to compete both nationally and internationally in 2020. On Australia Day Haylee Fuller was announced as Dubbo's young sportsperson of the year after myriad wonderful results, which included winning the Australian under-19 criterium and road race titles at Ballarat. That is amazing. All her achievements are fantastic, especially when members consider that Haylee is one of the younger riders in the age group.

All those riders have talent in abundance. However, talent is nothing without guidance. Dubbo Cycle Club is blessed to have Gus Dawson and Vaughn Eather coaching the riders. Gus and Vaughn have years of experience. The record of riders who pull on the red-and-green lycra is the envy of many other clubs. The current crop, while doing amazing things in their own right, are following in some significant footsteps. When I was a broadcaster, one of my fondest memories was following and reporting on the progress of a young superstar by the name of Megan Dunn. She took the cycling world by storm. Megan is now married with a young family and a business in Dubbo. In 2008, at the age of 16, she became the youngest winner in the history of the Bay Classic Series before going on later that year to win the scratch and points races at the Junior Track World Championships and being named Australian Junior Female Cyclist of the Year.

Two years later, after further success at Junior World Championship level, she was thrust into the spotlight when she emerged to win the points race and scratch event at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi. That amazing period for Dubbo culminated in a special parade and civic reception for Megan, her family and the Dubbo club. A lot of the Dubbo club's success has been centred around junior riders. However, I acknowledge the achievements of Darrell Wheeler, who has been a mainstay for many years and is still riding competitively at international level in the seniors categories. All these riders are following a path laid by Bob Spears, who was the first world champion cyclist to be based in Dubbo.

The results indicate how wonderful the Dubbo Cycle Club is. It is a fitting time for the club to be bestowed with these honours. Since its inception about 130 years ago, the club has been based at No.1 Oval in Dubbo. Earlier this month, on Saturday 8 February 2020, it hosted its maiden carnival at a new custom-built cycling facility to the north of the city. In 2017 my predecessor, former member for Dubbo Troy Grant, joined with Dubbo Regional Council administrator Michael Kneipp and then General Manager Mark Riley to announce a revamp of the No.1 Oval and State Government funding for a dedicated cycling facility for the Dubbo club. The announcement caused some ripples in the Dubbo cycling fraternity. However, that complex is now built and is in operation. It is world class and there is a lot of excitement about what can be achieved in the future. With a flat track, criterium track and a sensational clubhouse, the new facility is modern and will provide more opportunities both on and off the track for the club and its riders.

Its location in North Dubbo is very close to the planned sports hub, the future of which was secured last November when I joined Deputy Premier John Barilaro to announce \$10 million in funding to take the total State investment to \$23.3 million and ensure the project will go ahead. The sports hub makes up part of a wider health and wellbeing precinct in Dubbo, with the likes of Charles Sturt University, Dubbo Hospital, Dubbo Private Hospital, Sydney University's School of Rural Health and Dubbo College all within close proximity and all to be fed directly by the planned River Street Bridge.

A few weeks prior to the club hosting the 2019 NSW U9-U13 Junior Track Championships, I managed to hop on a bike and do a couple of very slow laps. But it was appropriate that Darrell Wheeler, a much more accomplished rider, had the honour of riding the first official training lap on the new track after the club left the No.1 Oval. Weekly Tuesday racing is now being hosted at the new location. I wish the club well for a long and prosperous future at the new location—which I will be helping to open officially next month—and I look forward to attending numerous events there over the coming years. Good luck to the club, the committee and all the riders.

MICHAEL ALBERT GRIFFIN

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:45:49): It is a great pleasure to comment on the recent retirement of Australia's Commonwealth Integrity Commissioner, who is also my father. Who will guard the guards themselves? This phrase sums up the contribution that Michael Albert Griffin has made to Australian society as Australia's Commonwealth Integrity Commissioner. In this role, my dad provided independent assurance to the Commonwealth Government about the integrity of our nation's law enforcement agencies. Dad was a gentleman of great humility. He served as an infantryman in the field and has held almost every rank in the army, from private to brigadier. His military career saw him deploy from places as diverse as Somalia to Iraq, finishing as a brigadier in charge of the military justice system.

Most recently, he ensured that Australia's law enforcement community was one of integrity in his role as Commissioner of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity [ACLEI]. With no fanfare, dad has stood as a pillar and an advocate of the rule of law and maintained the integrity that most Australian's expect to

exist in their most trusted civic institutions. A soldier for 39 years and a lawyer for 26 years, he has been a military judge and has held several Governor-General appointments as an independent statutory office holder. As commissioner, Michael saw ACLEI's jurisdiction gradually expand since it began operations in 2007.

As Australia's integrity commissioner, Dad has been responsible for the detection and investigation of corruption issues in the following agencies: the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission; the Australian Federal Police, including the Australian Capital Territory police; the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre; the Department of Home Affairs, including the Australian Border Force; prescribed aspects of the Department of Agriculture; and any other government agency prescribed by regulation under the Law Enforcement Integrity Commissioner Act 2006.

Dad deployed on active service to Kuwait and Iraq—twice during 2005-06—as senior counsel assisting two commissions of inquiry. Those serious cases involved highly sensitive international issues and, in the Kovco case, considerable public interest. Dad also saw active service with the United Nations in Somalia in 1993 and spent two years as a prosecutor with the British Army in Europe in 1994-95. Dad was engaged by the President of the Australian Senate as legal adviser to the Senate Committee of Inquiry into the Effectiveness of the Military Justice System. He authored the issues paper that was adopted unanimously by the Senate Committee and subsequently formed the basis of the Senate report.

From 2005 he was appointed as foreign attorney consultant to the United States military commissions at the request of an Australian citizen, Mr David Hicks, and appeared before the commissions in Washington and Guantanamo Bay from 2005 until Mr Hick's release in 2007. He was the principal member of the Veterans' Review Board from 2007 to 2009. In 2010 the immigration Minister appointed him as independent reviewer of refugee and asylum seeker assessments. In 2011 Dad was appointed an adviser to the Australian Army Administrative Inquiries Cell and in 2012 the Governor-General appointed him as an examiner on the Australian Crime Commission. In that capacity, Michael, as an independent statutory officer, exercised the coercive powers of the Commonwealth of Australia and worked closely with law enforcement agencies in the fight against organised crime.

Using his 30 years experience as a member of the Australian Defence Force, Dad volunteers his time in a pro bono capacity as Chairman of the Veterans Centre Sydney Northern Beaches. In this role he has overseen the growth of the centre and its ability to support veterans and their families across Sydney and the northern beaches. He has done this while volunteering his time to improving the wellbeing of our veterans community and being a loving husband, father and grandfather. The pressure placed on any individual who is responsible for the detection and investigation of often sensitive corruption issues in law enforcement agencies is significant, to say the least.

I make this observation with complete certainty as I have watched Dad absorb and manage the burden of his role as Commissioner of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity over the past number of years. In addition to the enormity of his role, I know he enjoyed the respect and admiration of his colleagues, who know him to be an eminent legal professional of the highest standards with a diverse and storied career. Dad has contributed selflessly to Australia both as a soldier and as a respected public servant. Dad, well done on your career and may retirement look after you.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (15:50:18): I thank the member for Manly for that information about his father, who is retiring as the Commissioner of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity. It was interesting to hear about Mr Griffin Sr and his career as a military judge, an infantry soldier and a lawyer. It is outstanding to hear about his military service and his role not only as the integrity commissioner but also as counsel assisting in various important military inquiries. I did not know that he was a military judge. Just as the member for Manly is proud of his father, I am sure Mr Griffin Sr is very proud of his son.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sure I speak for other members of the House in wishing Michael Griffin the very best in his retirement and thanking him for his service to our country.

COFFS COAST FLOODS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (15:51:32): The force of nature can be nurturing, frightening, furious and catastrophic all at once. Communities on the Coffs Coast, including the Orara Valley, in recent months have had to contend with the devastation of the drought, fierce bushfires and now flash flooding. When the deluge did come—from about 6 February—it seemed like it would never stop. Coffs Coast SES Local Commander Bill Roffey remembers the rain starting fairly lightly and then ramping up. The bulk of the SES volunteers work was done on 10 and 11 February, when massive rain and flash flooding surprised many residents and destroyed many properties. SES crews carried out flood rescues and provided other help at Dairyville, the Orara Way, near Glenreagh, Darlington Park, Nana Glen and Coramba.

As always, the SES was assisted by its emergency partners the NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance, NSW RFS and Fire and Rescue NSW. The SES also set up sandbagging at Brelsford Park in central Coffs Harbour, where community self-help during the floods became particularly self-evident. The February rainfall readings at Coffs Harbour Airport have so far reached 686 millimetres on top of 152 millimetres for January. Outlying areas have received far more, including our own farm, which received over 1,500 millimetres in February alone. In the gallery there are people from the Murray area of the State who would probably wish for even 10 per cent of that rain, but it was more than enough for us. From 29 January to 24 February, the SES had a staggering 180 requests for assistance in the Coffs Harbour local government area, including road crash rescues, flood rescues, general land rescues, assisting police and ambulance workers, and storm and flood support. This equates to 7,384 SES volunteer hours. I thank our SES members for responding when we need them most.

I acknowledge Coffs Harbour City SES volunteers Tonique Atkins, Stephen Benten, Michael Bergin, Annabelle Brett, Ian Christensen, Mitchell Coyne, James Daniels, Jerome Dorman, Michelle Down, Kevin Gibson, Ian and Jill Gill, Rebecca Gill, Terry Griffiths, Deklan Griffiths, Nikita-Lee Griffiths, Shakyra Griffiths, Andrew Hammond, Christine Hatton, Paul Hatton, Geoffrey Haycraft, Alex Helyar, Jason Hiscox, Ian Horncastle, Jade Houghton, Glendon Jones, Abel Lajoso, James Linsley, unit commander Cliff Mitchell, Narelle Molineux, Walter Mulholland, Kerrie Nicol, Samantha Oakes, David O'Brien, Kel Pearce, Steven Perry, Susan Perry, Jacco Philippo, Stephen Raymond, James Robertson, the SES commander Bill Roffey, Parry Sellings, Tyson Sellings-Bibby, Michael Simpson, Trudy Stubbs, John Sutherland, Haylea-Anr Tarran, Johnathon Tarran, Michael Vimal Du Monteil, Karyn Wells, Martin Wells, Alexander Wilson, Shaun Wilson and Mark Wyborn.

The Corindi SES is made up of Christophe Adams, Denise Anderson, Ken Boyle, Raymond Browne, Barry Carter, Clare Constantine, Jeffrey Eggins, Dianne Forrester-Clarke, Jane Gantevoort, Dennis Houghton, Johnny Isoniemi, Fiona Kealy, Tania Lamberth, the SES unit commander Paul Maher, Paul Mannion, Susan Perry, Idona Powell, Raymond Powell, Graham Richards and Kevin Wilson. A day or two after the floods I visited the area with the member for Tamworth. We were nearly caught out after heavy rains caused the river in front of us to rise a few inches. We then had to take the long way back into town. The following weekend I made sure to visit the Orara Valley Progress Association at the Coramba General Store where we heard stories about how the community had been impacted by this flooding and the significant damage that properties had sustained.

One of those properties was Engelhardt Citrus Nursery, belonging to John Engelhardt. He told the story of the Urumbilum River rising overnight. The river rose and water came from a different direction. There was just so much rain—some people said about 700 millimetres fell in two hours. John lost half of his nursery stock, which was unable to be recovered, but due to a fantastic community effort, a lot of the nursery stock, especially the citrus stock, was saved. Other residents have had significant property access destroyed. Our community has had a rough year due to drought, fire and flood. I recognise the resilience and toughness of the Orara Valley.

The SPEAKER: For those in the public gallery, we have been hearing private members' statements from members speaking on an issue that is relevant to their electorate.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome into the public gallery the Vice-President of the German Bundestag, Wolfgang Kubicki, accompanied by the Consul General from Germany, Mr Peter Silberberg. I look forward to meeting them.

Rulings

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

The SPEAKER: I advise members of the House that earlier this week I received correspondence from a member of this House that raises a matter of privilege not suddenly arising under Standing Order 92 in relation to the member for Murray. I will not go into any detail, intentionally. For the benefit of members, the standing order provides that the Speaker—that is, me—must consider the matter and determine whether a motion to make a referral to the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics is to take precedence under the standing orders. The Speaker has 14 days within which to make this decision. I intend to make my decision by the end of next week. In the meantime, while I have the matter under consideration, a member must not take any action or refer to that matter in this House. Some members do not know the detail of what I am talking about; some do. I make it clear that members must be careful.

*Petitions***MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN**

The SPEAKER: For the benefit of those in the public gallery, I will explain the process and rationale behind this unique debate. It is unique because it enables the public to bring their concerns directly to the attention of the House. The petition debate will start with a speech from a member, which in most cases will be the member who lodged the petition; followed by up to four other members; followed by a Minister in response. To conclude the debate, the first speaker will speak in reply. After all members have spoken, the House will vote on the question that the House take note of the petition. The question will, in most cases, be determined on the voices and be passed. However, if that is challenged by a member, it may proceed to a division, in which case the bells are rung and members vote on the question to take note of the petition by sitting on the appropriate side of the House.

The question is that the House take note of the petition.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (15:59:47): I hope I am allowed to debate this petition today, which calls on this Parliament to lobby the Federal Government for a water royal commission and a national water register. This morning the House told me an anonymous National Party MP objected to me doing so. How fitting. An anonymous Nat tries to stop a debate exposing anonymous water barons. This faceless man claimed I have a conflict of interest. How ridiculous. I am the only one here to declare my water interests. How many members opposite own water and have not declared it? I ask them to leave the Chamber because they have a conflict of interest.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I remind the member for Murray of the Speaker's very recent comments. While the Speaker is considering his decision, a member must not take any action or refer to the matter in this House. I refer the member to Standing Order 92. We are clear: The member is not to refer to this matter in the House.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: Noted. Thank you. Can I continue? This petition has already achieved a result. We all remember in August last year when The Nationals voted against a royal commission; today, in a massive backflip, they support one. That is a credit to the 11,000 people who signed this petition. They have made things happen and it is an honour to have some of them in the public gallery today. Ever since the water register issue has come up, I have seen grown National Party people shiver in fear, because that is the exact thing they do not want to talk about. It is what their donors and special interests groups also do not want us to talk about. Today we are forcing them to speak up.

Speak Up is a group of farmers and community members who have had enough. They are sick of seeing corporations making millions from water trade. They are sick of watching their neighbours being forced off their farms. And those at Pooncarie are tired of relying on the delivery of water after the Lower Darling and Menindee Lakes were decommissioned needlessly. They are angry and desperate, but seeing this petition come to this House gives them hope. Watching this debate today from the public gallery is an endangered species: a dairy farmer. Lachie Marshall is one of the last remaining dairy farmers in the Riverina. Three years ago there were 90 dairy farmers in his area; now there are just 25. What is killing the Australian dairy industry? It is two words: no water. It is not drought, but water mismanagement—shame!

Dairy farmers are watching full rivers flush past them, but have been on zero allocation themselves. At the same time they are reading about foreign corporations making millions from buying and selling our most valuable natural resource. Honestly, we could not create a worse system if we tried. Their petition demands that this Government lobby the Federal Government for a royal commission and a national water register, which is an online database that publishes the name of every individual and company who owns water. Essentially, this petition asks the Government to do what it promised to do way back in 2004 when it signed the intergovernmental agreement. In that agreement every State and the Federal government mandated themselves to implement a public water registry that was available online, noting all individuals and organisations that owned water, with all the information and relevant details attached to each entitlement. That was supposed to happen in 2006. Spoiler alert: It never did. But now is the time for Australia's biggest State to take the lead; the people have demanded it.

The petition could not be timelier, given the events of water-related scandals we have seen over the past few weeks. Last Friday afternoon we saw the water Minister lift an embargo on water pumping, in secret and despite not having any consultation with farmers and communities. We need to get to the bottom of those dodgy, secret decisions. We need a royal commission now. That is exactly what The Nationals leader, John Barilaro, said before the election. He went to Menindee and filled the people with hope, telling them that he believed we needed a royal commission. Since the election he has gone completely silent. But today is his chance to speak up and push for this to happen.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the member for Canterbury that she is already on three calls to order.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: People in regional New South Wales want to lift the lid on water secrecy. They want to expose the secret water barons. They want to see a proper investigation, with those guilty of water corruption going to jail. The Nationals call themselves the only party for regional Australia. Why is it so resistant to what people in regional Australia want and demand? What are The Nationals hiding? That is the question for them today. Do they support our farmers and regional communities or do they support the secret water barons? Last week John Barilaro said he was prepared to cross the floor to oppose the green ideology in the Liberal Party and support the bush. Is this a fake fight just to win votes, John, or are you serious? [*Time expired.*]

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (16:06:26): From conversations with my community I get the hurt, how infuriating it is to see water flow past when you are desperate for a break, and how the basin plan has impacted on your communities. In my electorate I have seen how the basin plan has compounded the challenges of drought and industry rationalisation. I recall an earlier conversation with a Victorian colleague who, when I pressed him on his views, said that his view is shaped by the fact that he represents farmers where water is collected and, therefore, naturally, his perspective would be different from those downstream. This fundamentally has been at the forefront of my thoughts on this matter. How the Murray-Darling Basin Plan is seen by you is how you perceive it impacts on you—and this changes with your involvement—a southern basin irrigator, a northern basin irrigator, a river manager, an environmentalist or a community member.

This is very much evident in the petition when it calls for a Federal royal commission with "just and broad terms" to investigate the impacts of floodplain harvesting on the historically estuarine nature of the Lower Lakes from the southern basin where these two issues are perceived to have the greatest impact on their access to general security allocations. Tensions around floodplain harvesting have been evident these past few weeks, with media reports quoting southern irrigators about concerns of "big corporate irrigators" and being "prepared to rob" downstream communities along the Darling in relation to the lifting of an embargo. This is as the latest WaterNSW data tells us 170,000 megalitres are expected to be received in Lake Wetherell. Interestingly, the blog of the National Irrigators Council states:

Northern Basin irrigation farmers are no different to any other farmer in Australia, they are hard working people whose livelihoods and communities depend on having some water to grow an agricultural product. They—like so many others across Australia—have been in drought for far too long, massive, worst on record, drought with no incomes and small-town businesses grinding to a halt.

It is upsetting to see the lack of regard to mental health demonstrated by some media, some politicians and even more disappointingly by some other farmers.

The Northern Basin irrigation farmers ... absolutely understand and accept the need to ensure that water gets down the river for essential needs; they accept that we need to have first flush protections—but (just like their colleagues on the Murray) it hurts to see water flowing past.

Yes, we need to ensure that we have best practice in the management of floodplain harvesting, and policy that ensures equitable water sharing arrangements, triggers for pumping, floodplain harvesting and embargoes when required. Through the Water Reform Action Plan, the New South Wales Government will continue to improve the management of our waterways using science and consultation. We will seek to better protect downstream users and the environment. The petition also specifically raises the issue of water management for the Lower Lakes. I welcome the announcement in December 2019 that the science of South Australia's Lower Lakes will be reviewed by an independent team led by Australia's lead science agency, the CSIRO. The management of the Lower Lakes and Coorong are of significant concern to my community and, again, a rigorous study that is independent and transparent is important to all communities in the basin.

The member for Murray has called on the Government to "implement a water register like we have a land register, where we can find out who's who in the zoo". This call comes as we await the final response from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (Price Inquiry—Water Markets in the Murray-Darling Basin) Direction 2019. Announced in August 2019, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC] is required to provide the Federal Treasurer with an interim report in May 2020 and a final report to be completed by November 2020.

The ACCC has been asked to recommend options to enhance markets for tradeable water rights, including options to enhance their operations, transparency, regulation, competitiveness and efficiency. It is important to have a robust inquiry in place with terms of reference to explore processes to help address concerns around water trade and the water market. Should that not be the proper process, giving well-informed backing to decision-making? In a submission to the Select Committee on the Multi-Jurisdictional Management and Execution of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, Steve Whan, CEO of the National Irrigators Council, said:

Complication in managing rivers and catchments is inevitable because rivers and catchments all have different characteristics—and because, for better or for worse, we have a federated structure of Government.

Mr Whan goes on to say:

It is important to note that there are already thorough, independent, recent reports with recommendations still to be implemented. There are many issues that need to be fixed with the Basin Plan and we need action, not grandstanding to do it.

I welcome the opportunity to speak to this petition. I will continue to advocate that the local environment, local farming and local economy in the Albury electorate are no less important— [*Time expired.*]

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (16:11:41): The longer this Government denies transparency and accountability around water, the harder it is to believe that all is well in water management. The South Australian royal commission, the Vertessy report, the Natural Resources Commission Keniry report—just to name a few high-profile examples—all pointed to major issues with the way water was being managed in New South Wales. This is no secret: The reports and findings are known to people around New South Wales. The ability to know who has an interest in water is a key step in allowing people who rely on water up and down our rivers to trust government decision-making around the management of water.

The previous attachment of water to land made holding these assets transparent to the public. Why would we resist seeing that again? Water trading is a much bigger issue that needs to be tackled at a Federal level, but transparency around ownership is a key step forward to ensure that public interest is served in decision-making, not a private interest. The perception at the moment is that private interests are being served, and that is doing nothing to build trust in government. The ultimate in transparency and accountability is a Federal royal commission.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member will be heard in silence.

Mr ROY BUTLER: It means that instead of just showing the cards you like, you have to put the whole hand on the table, including the crappy cards. The reason that nothing but a Federal royal commission will do includes bureaucrats refusing to give evidence at the South Australian royal commission, perceptions of State bias in findings, and the power to compel people to give evidence and produce documents. The main reason, though, goes back to trust. If we as a Parliament want people to trust that water decisions are being made in the public interest and are delivering public value, it is the first step in a long journey to re-establish that trust. I think too often governments have this around the wrong way.

For any of us, being in Parliament should not be about being in a position of power where information is tightly held and secrets guarded. Being in Parliament is a position of service—of identifying what the people of New South Wales want and making that a priority. If this House does not support a Federal royal commission it is acting against the wishes of the majority of the people we are here to represent. It is time to listen to the people—to support a Federal royal commission and to make transparent the ownership of our most precious resource.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:14:23): I acknowledge those from Speak Up 4 Water who have travelled here today from across the State. I was a macadamia and blueberry grower just before entering politics in 2019, so I understand what it means to be a farmer. The drought that is still gripping much of this State is no stranger to my electorate. Whilst we have had some rain on the coast, water is and will remain a top order issue for the New South Wales Government. The Speak Up 4 Water petition highlights the concerns that many of us have with the way that the Murray-Darling Basin Plan was developed and is being implemented. The petition, supported by The Nationals, calls for a national water registry and a Federal royal commission into the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

These calls are not new. Most recently the South Australian Government undertook a royal commission that ignored issues in its own backyard. The South Australian royal commission recommended more water be removed from New South Wales. Removing more water from New South Wales is simply not an option for this Government. It is important to remind the member for Murray that she will not control the outcome or recommendations of the commission. The New South Wales Government has and will continue to support a wide range of initiatives to improve transparency in the water market. We are working hard to increase the amount of information available to the public to enable them to be even better informed about our water, its availability, allocation and use.

The Government has published a suite of online tools so that anyone can go to the web or the WaterNSW app to find details on water—information on water trading, including water allocation, volume of water being traded and the prices paid. It is all there in an online dashboard updated regularly, with the latest information available to everyone. Businesses, customers, regulators and the public now have access to up-to-date water trading information. This access supports increased market confidence, confidence in the openness and transparency of the market, and enables everyone to make informed decisions about the water trading market. Almost universally, people support improved transparency in the water market. This is why The Nationals are making changes. However, when amendments were made to the Water Act in 2018 submission after submission made it clear that people do not support the publication of all the private details of the mum and dad farmers who are just trying to do their jobs growing food and fibre.

We have already consulted with communities and water users to work out what information we can publish without overstepping what is reasonable and fair. For instance, the disclosure of personal information in a public register naturally would be subject to appropriate protection under legislation, in particular the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998. That Act was created explicitly to safeguard personal information and to protect the privacy of individuals, something this Government takes very seriously. New South Wales already has a Water Access Licence Register, which began on 1 July 2004 under the Water Management Act 2000, that provides an online record of every water access licence in New South Wales.

The register aims to make information on water access licences available to the public and includes details such as share and extraction components, licence conditions, current ownership details, and mortgages and charges. Searches of the register can be undertaken at a NSW Land Registry office or through an authorised information broker. In all cases, that information search is carried out in accordance with the relevant privacy laws. Balancing the public's right to information with the right to privacy is enshrined in the law.

I also draw the attention of the House to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC], which is currently conducting an inquiry into markets for tradeable water rights in the Murray-Darling Basin. The ACCC will recommend options to enhance markets for tradeable water rights, including options to enhance its operations, transparency, regulation, competitiveness and efficiency. The interim report is due by 31 May 2020 and a final report by 30 November 2020. Once delivered, the Government will consider the ACCC's report recommendations, particularly those regarding increased transparency, carefully. We will await the independent commission's investigation and its recommendations.

Ultimately, regional communities expect and deserve transparency on water, without invading the privacy of farmers. This balance must be achieved in any reform to the water register. In closing, I am proud to be a member of The Nationals delivering for regional New South Wales. I urge the member for Murray to get behind our Deputy Premier, who has done more for the people of the Murray electorate than the member of Murray ever will. The member for Murray has done nothing in the past 10 months except play silly politics in this Chamber with her outrageous remarks.

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

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (16:19:08): I support my colleague the member for Murray in relation to this very important petition. I thank those who are in the gallery today and those many thousands of people who are at home watching this debate on TV, listening to everything that is said.

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

Mr PHILIP DONATO: I am calling for the support from The Nationals who today have formally supported our calls for a basin plan royal commission. I note that at about midday today the Deputy Premier issued a press release indicating that he supported our petition. My call on behalf of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party for a New South Wales royal commission comes after consultation with communities, irrigators, graziers, towns, water researchers and ecologists, all of whom raised serious concerns about government decision-making on water management. There is a need for a royal commission to restore public confidence and identify how certain decisions contributed to the current conditions in the New South Wales Murray-Darling Basin. I emphasise the importance of ensuring any inquiry into water management in New South Wales is independent of government and Parliament, and has sufficient authority and resourcing to comprehensively investigate the matters arising from a royal commission. That is the only way to ensure its independence.

This inquiry is not about drought. It is not about the actions of other States. It is about previous New South Wales Government decision-making and the people who were involved in those processes. This inquiry will be focused on looking at past decisions and their impacts on water management and industry in western New South Wales. This inquiry is about clearing public concerns around the integrity of the irrigation industry and water management practices. The intention of this inquiry is to restore public confidence. It is important that this inquiry take place free of influence so we do not find ourselves in this situation again. Today The Nationals can join with us and other parties in bipartisan support for a royal commission. I seek leave to move a motion to suspend standing and sessional orders under Standing Order 365 to permit consideration of a motion regarding the appointment of a royal commission into the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. There is no more important issue in rural New South Wales than drought and water.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you seeking leave to suspend standing orders?

Mr PHILIP DONATO: Yes, I am, under Standing Order 365.

Leave not granted.

Mr PHILIP DONATO: There you go, ladies and gentlemen, and those watching on the television. You have just seen The Nationals attempt to gag—

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

Mr PHILIP DONATO: —this debate, because they do not want to hear the truth.

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

Mr PHILIP DONATO: There you go. The people from all over western and southern New South Wales who have been able to watch this debate have seen The Nationals clearly trying to gag this debate to prevent the truth from coming out, to prevent a division from taking place. You should all be ashamed of yourselves.

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

Mr PHILIP DONATO: You talk the talk, but you are not prepared to walk the walk.

Mr Clayton Barr: I seek leave to make a contribution before the Minister speaks in reply.

Leave not granted.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Roads) (16:23:32): This happens every petition debate. I have asked Labor members to bring forward changes to the petition structure if they want to do so. Country members have to get home tonight; they have to get to the airport.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the member for Auburn that the Leader of the House has the call.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: For the benefit of people in the gallery, there are other forms of the House if members want to continue to debate this matter, but the petition structure is very clear: It is at this time on a Thursday so country members can get flights home tonight. Labor members know this. They have tried it during every petition debate for the past 12 months. If they want the process reviewed, we will take it up with the Speaker. Let's be clear: It is not about being gagged.

Mr Philip Donato: Further to the point of order—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was no point of order.

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order: I seek clarification from the Chair. If that was not a point of order and the Leader of the House was making a contribution I would ask—

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: It was not a contribution.

Ms Lynda Voltz: It was either a point of order or it was a contribution to the debate.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: He sought leave. He moved a motion to seek leave so I addressed it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Auburn will resume her seat. The member for Orange will resume his seat. The Leader of the House was simply clarifying details about the arrangements that have been agreed to regarding petitions and seeking leave. It is not up for debate.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order. My point of order is Standing Order 52. I am a bit perplexed as to the nature of the contribution made by the member for Bega. While I appreciate and respect the purpose of his contribution, there is no place in the standing orders for him to come into the Chamber and do that unless he was taking a point of order. Because of the confusion—

Mr Andrew Constance: He sought leave.

Mr Clayton Barr: —created by the member for Bega, we now have members on this side of the House seeking to respond—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Clayton Barr: —to the point of order. Can I just clarify—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock will be allowed to finish his point of order.

Mr Clayton Barr: It is important for a member, in this case a member from the Labor Party, to respond because the Leader of the House came into the Chamber and said that he has explained multiple times to the Labor Party and that on every petition the Labor Party seeks to debate something other than what is in the petition. This is the first petition that the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party has tabled and debated and it is the first time it has sought to amend or change anything. Therefore, the Leader of the House's accusation that Labor has somehow

distorted this afternoon's proceedings so that members might miss their flights is entirely inaccurate. As a member, I need to be able to respond and that is why his contribution needs to be in the standing orders of this House.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: You are filibustering. Sit down.

Mr Clayton Barr: I am not filibustering.

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

Mr Clayton Barr: Madam Deputy Speaker, I ask you to point out to me where in the standing orders the Leader of the House has the right to come into the Chamber—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Cessnock will resume his seat.

Mr Clayton Barr: —and make comments like that with my having no right of reply.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will not take any further points of order on this matter. The Leader of the House clarified the issue about seeking leave in petitions through a point of order. That is final. All members should be clear on that. If the member for Auburn continues to argue she will remove herself from the Chamber. I am happy to speak further with the member for Cessnock afterwards, if he wishes. The Minister for Water, Property and Housing has the call.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (16:28:17): I acknowledge the fact that in a very short time 10,000 names were put on this petition. I respect those names, I respect those people and I respect their contribution to our national economy and to our State. I know that they are hurt and desperate. That desperation was made very clear when they elected the millionaire from Murray to this place.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I remind the Minister about Standing Order 92, which both the Speaker and I referred to at the commencement of the petition debate. The Minister has the call.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I will not stand in their way to seeking a royal commission to try to fix something that is clearly not working. We are in the midst of one of the worst droughts in our State's record. I respect that people who live in the south and who have been unable to access the water that washes freely past them into South Australia are fed up. I also have a responsibility to show leadership and to not pit farmer against farmer and community against community by whipping up a social media lynch mob to attack farmers simply because of where they live, the way they farm or what they grow. I acknowledge the very mature contribution by the member for Barwon. I also acknowledge the very nasty contribution and comments in the media by the member for Murray, who claims that we are standing in the way of Mick Keelty getting whatever information he wants to look into entitlements and allocations. I will not stand in the way of Mick Keelty. I have said that publicly and will continue to say it. We need to have more evidence and more information available so that the community can see what is going on. I will never stand in the way of transparency.

In the past couple of hours the member for Murray has misled this House about our party and our Government supporting this petition. By her own admission, we should be very concerned that dodgy dealings are continuing and we will be keeping a very close eye on that. That is why we established the Natural Resources Access Regulator. We have 150 staff going around New South Wales to ensure that people are not doing the wrong thing. It is astounding that the member for Murray continues to play off the emotions of people. People are brittle; people are hurting. They have not had general security allocations this past year and if we do not get more rain we know what it will be like for the year ahead. They are not privileged to have 1,300 megalitres of high-security water. The member has highlighted the need for a royal commission into the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, which would make rulings on how water is shared in a way that could potentially increase the value of some people's properties. [*Time expired.*]

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (16:31:50): In reply: We have a very schizophrenic National Party, there is no doubt about that. When John Barilaro went to Menindee he said he would support a royal commission, but then in August he voted against it in this place.

Mr Philip Donato: And all Government members did.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Orange has had an opportunity to contribute to the debate.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: That is exactly right. They all did. Now all of a sudden the Government wants a royal commission and a national water registry because we are calling it out about a lot of things. Why has it done nothing about this for the past nine years in government? When will it meet with Scott Morrison and make

this royal commission happen? Give us the date. They are all talk today. The National Party controls water at a Federal level, so why can The Nationals not get their heads together? What is wrong with them? Melinda Pavey seems to be incapable of addressing this issue. She makes personal attacks, she cannot make a decision, she leaves it to her bureaucrats and she hides behind the media. The media has been hunting her down and she has refused to speak with the media in the past couple of weeks.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: That is rubbish. It is another lie.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: All she can do is resort to personal attacks and personal smears. Trust in government has been eroded—that is what we have gained here today.

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

Mrs HELEN DALTON: We in this Parliament must listen to the people and support the petition and act on it. After all, the Coalition is in power at both the Federal and State levels. I urge the Government to support this petition and actually act on it for a change.

Petition noted.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank the guests in the public gallery for visiting to listen to this debate.

Private Members' Statements

ROCKDALE ELECTORATE CLEARWAYS

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (16:34:44): I speak tonight on the haphazard implementation of the Bexley and Arncliffe clearways project, which has recently been undertaken in my electorate of Rockdale and the neighbouring electorate of Kogarah. Although what has been implemented is not quite as irresponsible, ill-considered and damaging to local businesses and residents as what was initially proposed, it will still have terrible long-term consequences for the viability of the Bexley town centre local business hub and the amenity of residents who have relied on having on-street parking for decades. I cannot help but feel that after the Government was forced to back down on its initial proposal for 24/7 clearways, those opposite forced through the half-baked mess we have now just to prove a point to my constituents that the Government is unaccountable and can do what it wants to the lives of ordinary people.

Tidal flow clearways operating inbound to the city in the morning and outbound from the city at night have worked successfully for many years in suburban areas across our city, providing a reasonable balance between the needs of the local community and those of commuters. Creating clearways both morning and night on both sides of the road is unnecessary and unhelpful. It will nevertheless suppress activity and make many local businesses unviable. Any of those opposite who claim to care about small business should hang their heads in shame at what is being done across suburban Sydney through the Government's clearway program. Some of those businesses relied on Forest Road for loading and unloading of goods; clearways operating both morning and afternoon will make it impossible for them to maintain stock.

During the consultation period they were told by Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] contractors that they would still be able to unload and load goods, which was obviously misleading. What people do not understand within the massive bureaucracy of the New South Wales Government is that it is dealing with people's livelihoods when it makes decisions. Those opposite should remember that it is the Government that is responsible to the taxpayers, not the other way around. Community consultation has become an absolute joke. As I am sure many in this Chamber would be aware, government departments like Roads and Maritime Services no longer undertake their own community engagement, but instead hire contractors to fulfil their statutory obligations.

It used to be that if the Government was doing something that would affect your life, you would have the opportunity to talk to a suitably qualified professional. Now instead of talking to a traffic engineer, you get somebody with a clipboard who will generally have little to no idea what the project is actually about. This sort of lip service is just not good enough. When one of my local councillors went to ask a question of the government consultant, they were told that the consultant did not have the authority to speak to them but would instead get somebody from RMS to get back to them. It should be unsurprising to all here that they were never contacted. On the very first day these restrictions were being rolled out, consultants were on the street giving people the wrong information. They were telling people and businesses that 24-hour clearways were in operation and they clearly had not been informed about the Government's backflip and the half-baked approach that was actually being implemented. This kind of misinformation further degrades the actions of the Government and undermines public confidence in this entire process—what an absolute joke.

Compounding the damage that the reckless implementation of these clearways has done to my area, there is a great deal of concern around revelations that there are secret plans to move massive quantities of aircraft fuel

between Port Botany and the new Western Sydney Airport until 2034. The Commonwealth Government's report *Western Sydney Airport Aviation Fuel Supply Corridor Options* identifies that hundreds of B-double trucks will be the preferred option to deliver jet fuel to Western Sydney Airport. This means that 41 B-double trucks will be travelling along Forest Road and Stoney Creek Road through my suburban shopping precincts because dangerous goods are unable to travel through the M5 tunnel. How ridiculous that they are too dangerous for the motorway so they are sent through residential suburbs and business precincts instead. Despite the Government's partial backflip, the rollout of this clearway program remains a dangerous, unfair and unreasonable burden on the people and businesses of Bexley and Arncliffe and I call for its immediate repeal.

MIRANDA ELECTORATE AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (16:39:22): I acknowledge the recipients of the 2020 Australia Day Honours from across the Miranda electorate. It is an honour to acknowledge Lisa Beehag of Sylvania who was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to netball. Having first represented the shire at the mere age of 13, Lisa went on to play for Australia from 1987 to 1989 and even captained the team on a tour of China. Upon her retirement as a player Lisa held top coaching positions in Australia and overseas, including at the Australian Institute of Sport, as assistant coach of the Australian Diamonds for six years and as coach of the NSW Swifts from 2011 to 2013. Today Lisa devotes her time to nurturing and developing the skills of other young netballers through the Miranda Magpies Netball Club, which she was president of from 2015 to 2019 and has been on the executive committee for over 15 years. I congratulate Lisa on this achievement and commend her tireless dedication to giving back to the young netballers in our community.

Richard Bignold of GyMEA received the Medal of the Order of Australia for his contribution to surf lifesaving. Richard joined Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club at the age of 15 and has since been a prominent member of the surf lifesaving community at a national, State and Sydney branch level. A life member of Surf Life Saving Australia, Surf Life Saving NSW, Surf Life Saving Sydney and Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club, Richard has filled no shortage of senior positions across all four levels over the last few decades. It has been reported that Richard considers surf lifesaving to be "one of the greatest organisations for learning and assisting people to become better citizens". Having dedicated so much of his time to this community, it is safe to say that Richard has had a large impact assisting club members to become the best version of themselves. I commend his longstanding commitment to the surf lifesaving community at all levels.

Richard Mailey of Bonnet Bay received the Medal of the Order of Australia for his contribution to the community through emergency response organisations. Richard was one of the first crew members of the Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter started by Sydney branch surf lifesaving in 1972. In 1986 Richard mortgaged his home in order to co-found the CareFlight rescue helicopter. Whilst this was an incredible risk for someone with a young family, CareFlight carried out 50,000 rescue and medical transports over the next three decades with the most recent figures revealing that the service transported and medically treated 6,500 people in 2017-2018. I congratulate Richard on this most well-deserved recognition and commend his steadfast dedication to not just those in our community but to all Australians.

Dr Gunvantrai Naker of Sylvania was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the international community and to medicine. Dr Naker has worked as a general practitioner for almost 50 years, with his proudest achievement being the confidence that his patients have in him. Recognising that many of his patients required after-hours care, Dr Naker was heavily involved in the founding of the St George After Hours GP Service, voluntarily serving as its chairman from 1999 to 2002. For decades Dr Naker has also held executive positions on the Sathya Sai Organisation of Australia and Papua New Guinea, an international multifaith spiritual movement which engages in philanthropic work across education, health and rural village service. I commend him for continuing to put his patients and our community first. Councillor Tom Zreika of Illawong was deservedly awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the community, to local government and to the law. Tom is an outstanding example of a migrant story that embodies the Australian spirit of working hard and having a go.

Having fled war-torn Lebanon as a child, Tom has dedicated his time to building bridges between communities across Australia and abroad and founding AusRelief in 2014. AusRelief is a non-government organisation dedicated to alleviating poverty, sickness and under development and today has over 150 volunteers across the world dedicated to numerous campaigns and projects. Tom also co-founded the Australian National Imams Council and has served as president of the Lebanese Muslim Association, which saw him heavily involved in building bridges between the Lebanese community and the residents of Cronulla following the 2005 riots. I congratulate Tom on his achievement and dedication to so many facets of our community. I am honoured to be able to acknowledge the hardworking members of the Miranda community and recognise their contributions in our society. I congratulate all the recipients of the Australia Day Honours and wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (16:44:15): I acknowledge again the bushfire crisis that we have witnessed in New South Wales and across the country has been unprecedented and devastating. I have joined with my colleagues and all Australians in paying tribute to the thousands of professional and volunteer firefighters across this State and across the country. My office has been contacted by thousands of constituents concerned about the impact that climate change has had on this fire season and calling on me to do more to progress climate action through throughout New South Wales. I have written, or am writing, to each of those constituents affirming my commitment to push this Parliament to take greater action to reduce carbon emissions and transition to renewable power and I again make that commitment to my constituents of the Coogee electorate.

Without a doubt, the nature of bushfires in Australia has changed. Bushfire conditions are clearly now more dangerous than in the past, and the risk to people and property has increased. The catastrophic fire conditions that affected New South Wales and many other parts of the country have undoubtedly been aggravated by a changing climate. Both bushfire risk and severity have been exacerbated by crippling drought, very dry fuel and record-breaking periods of extreme heat, all of which I believe are clearly linked to a warming climate. For well over 20 years, climate scientists have warned that climate change would increase the risk of extreme bushfires in Australia. In 2007 Labor Prime Minister elect Kevin Rudd commissioned the first Garnaut Climate Change Review. This report was delivered to the Federal Government in September 2008. Along with many other warnings, the Garnaut report made clear that if the rate of warming continued at the rate observed, fire seasons will start earlier, and later be more intense. It said this effect increases over time but should be directly observable by 2020.

During the Rudd and Gillard Governments, Labor introduced several key climate policies, including the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, a carbon pricing mechanism and the Clean Energy Futures package. Each of those policies was repealed under Tony Abbott's Coalition Government in 2014. We are facing a critical juncture in our efforts to tackle those issues. In this country we are all well aware of the polarisation between belief sets sabotaging any form of progress. We can see this not just within our State Parliament, not just across our country or between countries, but, most critically, between corporate cultures and economies around the world. We can see a contest between shareholder activism and the maintenance of currently profitable but environmentally devastating industries and consumer sentiment by those wanting to make a sustainable change in their consumption. Without the regulatory hand of government, change may take too long and the one variable we do not have enough of is time.

As policy makers and legislators we have a responsibility to take the lead on innovations in renewable forms of energy production as well as the vast opportunities it presents for abundant job opportunities and ensuring a just transition for those who currently work in coal and gas. Our goal must be to transform renewable energy companies from boutique to mainstream energy suppliers. One of the ways governments can do that is by legislating mandatory renewable energy targets for each of their departments. The absence of legal, regulatory and incentive- or investment-based policy change is preventing the development of a critical mass and an ability to scale. As a practical example, when Kevin Rudd was first elected Prime Minister in 2007, renewable energy comprised less than 4 per cent of total electricity supply. The Labor Federal Government then legislated a 20 per cent renewables share of the electricity supply by 2020, and today we are at 19 per cent because the private sector was incentivised to innovate.

What we are so clearly missing in the matrix of a transition to a renewable energy market is finance as well as a program for a just transition for those who are currently working in coal and gas. The framework for transition is there domestically and observable in world-leading renewable energy markets in Europe and China. The technology is there, progressing despite the lack of investment from government. Capital investment is the missing link. Renewable energy is already becoming an attractive investment for some large superannuation and venture capital funds. Our job is to increase the attractiveness of this investment by expediting the decision-making and investment process. Furthermore, we need to look no further than Germany, which has already developed comprehensive, just transition programs developed with a multi-stakeholder perspective bringing together policymakers, industry representatives, unions, residents from coalmining areas, and non-government environment organisations to create a fair process for a just transition and an end date for phasing out coal power.

Again, one thing we know is that we are running out of time. It is therefore our job as legislators and representatives to facilitate and expedite this process, in a just and timely way. To do this, we need a consolidated effort between Federal, State and local governments to make sustainable energy production projects a bankable investment. An investment in the transition to renewables is not only the right thing to do for our environment; by investing in this industry we will be developing sustainable jobs for the future. In my inaugural speech and in many speeches in Parliament since, I have pushed for greater action from this Government to address climate concerns, which I see and hear every day. We need to fight for a first-class plan for this State to move forward,

build upon the great opportunities offered in the field of renewable energy and drive the movement of tangible change in the energy sector, both in New South Wales and across the country, and ensure that nobody is left behind during this transition.

SENIORS FESTIVAL

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:49:22): I refer to the New South Wales Seniors Festival. This annual festival is not only a fantastic chance to acknowledge and appreciate our seniors, but also a chance for our seniors across the State to socialise and engage in various community activities. I know that in my electorate of North Shore, North Sydney Council hosted a variety of events across the Seniors Festival ranging from yoga classes, local history talks, local seniors luncheon, senior driving safety and ballroom dancing. We know that with friends and family so often moving away later in life, many seniors are left feeling lonely. The Seniors Festival is such a great way to engage with our local seniors.

To recognise and celebrate seniors I initiated the North Shore Seniors Forum a number of years ago. This year it was held at the Crows Nest Centre. I thank North Sydney Council for its support. As part of this forum, I invited various State Government services to talk with the locals about some of the services available from the New South Wales Government to help support them. I thank the representatives from the following departments and services who attended on the day: NSW Fair Trading; Service NSW, which kindly provided one of its support vehicles and booked out the Chatswood Service NSW Centre for a couple of weeks following; the NSW Police Force; the Trustee & Guardian NSW; the NSW Seniors Card and Ageing Team; and of course our friends from Cancer Council NSW. As well as hearing about some of the services available, it was a chance for our representatives to hear feedback on what really matters to seniors at a State level.

That is why I was very thankful that the Hon. Geoff Lee, the Acting Minister responsible for seniors, was able to join us on the day. It was fantastic to have the Minister attend and speak about what the Government is doing to help ease the cost of living for our seniors, and to help me present the North Shore Seniors Appreciation Awards. Those awards are a chance to recognise some of the outstanding community service from our local seniors, who do not seek the spotlight, but should be commended for all that they do. We acknowledged and awarded recipients from our local State Emergency Service, Rotary clubs and other volunteer organisations, showcasing an array of local seniors who give so much of their time to help others.

I acknowledge our award recipients: Gay Banks who volunteers by assisting older people with a disability to stay independent in their own homes and works with Meals on Wheels; Lorna Bassett who has in recent years raised thousands of dollars for Indigenous education and drought relief; Peter Young who has volunteered so much time with the Rotary Club of Mosman and assisted in seven major projects over the years affecting our local community and further afield; Paul Boswell who volunteers at the Crows Nest Centre assisting with the community linen service and Meals on Wheels; Allen Dodd the secretary and supervisor of the North Sydney Men's Shed who ensures that both skilled and unskilled men can share time together and enjoy the accomplishment of working with timber; and Margaret O'Brien who has volunteered with the Crows Nest Centre for 13 years, first on reception and now assisting elderly members of the community to get to the hospital to attend appointments.

Other award recipients are: Alan Price who is a dedicated member of the North Sydney SES, serving for 25 years, and also as a level one volunteer with the Rural Fire Service, and seeing him in his SES uniform on the day made everybody in the room proud to see and thank him for his contribution in the recent summer; Seethalukshme Ayakad who was awarded for her green thumb, using her passion for gardening to look after the gardens in her unit block for all the residents—she has invited me to dinner and I hope I can take up that invitation; Graham Reed has dedicated countless hours to the sport of cricket through the NSW Cricket Umpires Association and Cricket Australia; Sam Swaminathan was awarded for the contributions he has made in various fundraising activities with significant funds raised for Westmead Children's Hospital and the Old Peoples Home in Chennai; Frank Woodhams was nominated for his service as a former reservist and his work in forming the NSW Scottish Association, organising various Anzac parades and serving in the Mosman RSL Sub- Branch.

Vera Yee was recognised for her tenure as leader of the Waverton Hub Tai Chi group, and her volunteer work with the bushland care group in and around the Waverton area; and lastly the Rotary Club of North Sydney, which was awarded for ensuring the enjoyment, wellbeing and happiness of seniors through the various events run by the club. All the award recipients have contributed to our local community in one way or another either through volunteering work, assisting other seniors through services such as Meals on Wheels, or serving in the State emergency services such as the Rural Fire Service and SES. I thank those who assisted in organising this forum: Councillor Stephen Barbour, the Deputy Mayor of North Sydney Council, who was our master of ceremonies on the day, and Camelia Tobia from North Sydney Council. I give a big thank you to Denise Ward and the chairman, Chris Scarf, from the Crows Nest Centre for providing the venue for the forum, and of course to North Sydney Council for including us in its program of events in its incredibly impressive festival and for providing refreshments on the day. I thank everyone for their assistance.

BUSHFIRES AND PROSPECT ELECTORATE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:54:27): On New Year's Eve 2019 a bushfire threatened the suburbs of Greystanes, Pemulwuy and Prospect in my electorate. The initial fire and a series of related fires burned for three days. Without the brave and determined intervention of firefighters from Fire and Rescue NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Service this fire would have been a catastrophic event. Due to the hot, dry and windy conditions fireworks started a grass fire that quickly spread into the large trees on Prospect Hill and then spotted into the industrial estates of Pemulwuy, the residential area of Greystanes and Pemulwuy and across to the Prospect Reservoir.

Residents were warned that it was too late to leave and were advised to take shelter. The danger to life and property that this fire presented cannot be overstated. It does not bear thinking about how disastrous this event could have been. If not for the heroic efforts of our firefighters and emergency agencies who defended our community without question, hundreds of homes and perhaps many lives would have been lost over that period. That bushfire proved that the bushfire season was a national emergency affecting not only the regions but also the centre of western Sydney. I never thought that I would fight a bushfire in my own western Sydney neighbourhood. I thank all of the firefighters involved in protecting our community. I also thank the Cumberland and Blacktown Police Area Commands, NSW Ambulance, the Holroyd unit of the State Emergency Service, and the Cumberland Council and Blacktown Council staff who supported the firefighting effort. Our community is grateful to all of the Fire and Rescue NSW brigades from across Sydney that immediately responded to the call.

I thank the 22 brigades from Fire and Rescue that came to defend our community: Smithfield, Seven Hills, Kellyville, Wentworthville, Huntingwood, Blacktown, Baulkham Hills, Mortdale, Guildford, Rhodes, Cabramatta, Cranebrook, Merrylands, Yennora, Cabramatta, Eastwood, Horningsea Park, Macquarie Fields, Gladesville, Mount Druitt, Parramatta and Busby. Those Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters were joined by 13 rural fire brigades, which were coordinated by the Cumberland Zone RFS operational centre, communications unit and zone fire control unit. I take this time to thank and name those RFS brigades: Horsley Park, Eastern Creek, Plumpton, Erskine Park, Marsden Park, Shanes Park, Orchard Hill, Londonderry, Castlereagh, Berkshire Park, Casula, Regentville and Middleton.

Greystanes, Pemulwuy and Prospect would have been devastated without the dedication and bravery of our NSW RFS firefighters. Those volunteers spent all summer fighting fires throughout New South Wales. Many of them had been rotated back to Sydney to rest and recover before being redeployed, but without any hesitation they put up their hands again to defend our western Sydney community. The Cumberland Zone strike team of which I am a member was fighting the Dunns Road fire in the Snowy Mountains when it received a "Broadcast. Alert. Respond. Turnout." notification about the Prospect fire. Later that night we were sent back to join the efforts. Thanks to Fire and Rescue NSW brigades working with the NSW Rural Fire Service, no houses or lives were lost in our community.

A catastrophic outcome was avoided only due the efforts of our volunteer and professional firefighters coming together as a team and standing between the fire and our community. Our emergency services agencies worked as one team. Those firefighters have worked with their colleagues across New South Wales to protect our State. I know that they and all their colleagues have the eternal gratitude of not only the Pemulwuy and Greystanes communities but also every resident across New South Wales who has suffered through this devastating fire season. It is only through their efforts that our community and our State have not suffered even more catastrophic losses. We thank and honour them for their service.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (16:59:09): I endorse the comments of the member for Prospect and acknowledge once again that he is one of those volunteers who participated in that for which we are so grateful. As a member for a western Sydney electorate, I can add that there were a large number of fires that started across western Sydney at different times and they were pounced on with speed and efficiency by all those fire services that the member for Prospect named. Because of that, they did not get out of hand and they did not pose the risk to communities across the region that they might otherwise have done. The volunteers are to be congratulated and thanked for their service.

MARY IMMACULATE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (16:59:52): On 2 February I had the privilege of attending a commemorative mass at Mary Immaculate Catholic Church at Quakers Hill to mark the seventy-second anniversary of Sri Lankan independence. The mass and celebration that followed were organised jointly by the parish and the Sri Lankan Catholic Association New South Wales and was the first of a number of national community events which will be held throughout 2020 to celebrate the centenary of this multicultural parish. It is that centenary on which I wish to focus.

Going back in history, by one account the first recorded mention of Quakers Hill was in June 1789 when Captain Watkin Tench stood on what he called "the Quakers' hill" and said that from there he had a clear view of Prospect Hill. Other sources speculate that the name came about because a group of Quakers who had first settled in Parramatta later relocated to the area early in the nineteenth century, and that the name entered common usage at that time. The name was later recognised in the 1860s when Thomas Harvey named his property in the area "Quakers Hill". At the turn of the twentieth century Quakers Hill was a rural area dotted with farms and orchards. It was traversed by the Richmond rail line, which connected the town of Blacktown with the Hawkesbury district.

In 1905 the railway station, which had previously been called Douglas Siding, was renamed Quakers Hill. In June 1919, at the request of Catholic families, parish priest Father John Moriarty came from the parish of Blacktown-Prospect to celebrate the first mass in Quakers Hill at a home in Ramona Street. Parishioner Thelma Harbrow remembers that Father Moriarty often walked from Blacktown to Quakers Hill—a distance of about seven kilometres—to celebrate mass. Prior to his visits, Catholics in the Quakers Hill area had to walk that distance to be able to access a Catholic mass in Blacktown.

A significant event took place in 1919 when a number of Catholic families held a meeting to discuss the needs of the group. This was known as "the Meeting on the Log" and a photograph was taken of those pioneers sitting on a log on a block of land bordered by Montrose, Highfield and Pentland streets, where the first church building was subsequently built in 1922. This photo now has pride of place in the new church on Barnier Drive. In 1921 that land was purchased and arrangements were made to build a hall. It was named Therry Centenary Hall after Father John Therry, who had been a significant figure in the early days of the colony. The public opening of Therry Centenary Hall was held on 26 August 1922 and the official opening was held on Sunday 5 November. The Right Reverend Monsignor Moynagh presided at the mass, assisted by Monsignor O'Gorman and Reverend Father J.P. Rafferty. The hall was to become the local church for the Quakers Hill Catholics for the next 71 years.

After World War II western Sydney began to experience more growth in population, so areas were split off and new parishes were created. In 1963 Doonside was split from Quakers Hill to become a new parish known as the parish of Marayong-Quakers Hill. Therry Centenary Hall was renamed the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. In 1972 Archbishop James Freeman separated Schofields from the Riverstone parish and linked it with Quakers Hill. Father Bert Callose became its first parish priest. The renovation of the 1922 building, which had served as the church for all that time, was a priority. In February 1994 Father Callose retired and his place was taken by Reverend George O'Mara. Reverend O'Mara was a priest that I met at Windsor parish, as I was a teacher there at the time when he was the assistant priest.

Father Ian McGinnity became parish priest in 2001 and the timber building of St Joseph's Church in Schofields, which had been part of the parish until then, was upgraded and renovated during 2004. In 2005 the Melkite community of St Marys moved their worship to St Joseph's Church in Schofields. I recall that I attended one of their services as the newly elected member for Riverstone. During the latter part of 2006 renovations of the parish office took place, as well as the addition of an all-weather shade cover in the church forecourt. In July 2008 Mary Immaculate Parish celebrated World Youth Day and the arrival of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. Mary Immaculate Primary School was chosen to attend a reception for the Pope at Government House. That special occasion was shared by the school's principal, two teachers and a number of students.

The Parish continues to grow. It endeavours to meet the needs of an expanding multicultural community at its new premises on Barnier Drive at Schofields. Recently the parish was served by Father Reuben Alago, MSP, of the Filipino Order, Missionary Society of The Philippines, and today by Father Oliver Aro, MSP, also of that order. I commend all the clergy, pastoral associates and parishioners of the parish over the past 100 years for the wonderful living legacy the present day parish represents.

REGIONAL RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:04:56): Throughout Australia's history rail services have played a vital role in transporting people and freight around the country, establishing important economic and social links between urban and rural Australia. The Government has continued to invest in that essential network. It remains an important link between rural and urban areas and meets freight transport demands, particularly between the country, key ports and freight distribution centres along the coast. It is also vital in easing congestion on our roads.

I applaud the Deputy Premier for halting regulation changes proposed by the Environment Protection Authority [EPA] that would have made this investment null and void. The proposed changes to pollution and noise rules for rail freight would have made the existing rolling stock noncompliant and clogged roads with hundreds of extra B-doubles hauling huge quantities of grain and other freight. The Cootamundra electorate has a high road fatality rate already. I thank the Deputy Premier for stepping in to protect the safety of my commuting constituents and ensuring that our country roads are not subjected to unnecessary additional pressure.

I congratulate the agriculture Minister on highlighting the intense financial pressure on our primary producers, who are dealing with drought and bushfires.

The changes proposed by the EPA would have increased the cost of freighting grain on average by \$13 to \$15 per tonne. That would have added thousands of dollars to our grain growers' transport costs. I am proud of unrelenting and unapologetic efforts by The Nationals to ensure the voices of our hardworking farmers are heard. The importance of rail to our regional areas should not be underestimated. Every year more than 255 million tonnes of freight moves across regional New South Wales, contributing more than \$60 billion to the New South Wales economy. This Government has invested \$400 million in the Fixing Country Rail program to ensure the rail network's future. Almost a quarter of that fund has been spent in the Cootamundra electorate. Some \$28.6 million was spent on upgrades to the Temora to Calleen line and \$60 million was invested to upgrade the Junee to Griffith line. A further \$6 million is being invested in rail sidings at Temora West, Ardlethan and Barellan.

Since becoming the member for Cootamundra in October 2017 I have advocated strongly for the reopening of the Blayney to Demondrille rail line, also known as the Cowra Lines. Labor should never have closed that line in 2009. Reopening it will have three key benefits. First, it is a valuable freight line, especially during harvest. Secondly, it can serve as a relief line between the main western and southern lines. Thirdly, it has huge potential in promoting rail heritage tourism. It was championed by former Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer. As many people know, in 2017 up to \$5 million was announced for the reinstatement of the Maimuru to Demondrille section of the Cowra Lines. A subsequent study found it was not economically feasible to reopen this 35-kilometre section alone. The \$5 million remains ring-fenced within the Fixing Country Rail program for investment in the line.

In July 2019 I was pleased to announce a new feasibility study into the possibility of reopening the entire 180 kilometres. I eagerly await the release of that study by the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Recently the main western rail line out of Sydney closed due to the Blue Mountains bushfires. Interruptions to major freight routes place additional pressure on our roads. A reopened Blayney to Demondrille line would prevent that. The idea is supported by mayors from all local government areas along the route. In recent correspondence to the Minister, I drew his attention to the additional economic opportunities the reopened rail line would offer. It could be used to transport green logs from the Oberon area to the softwood mills in the fire-affected Snowy Valleys region. Communities in Tumbarumba, Tumut, Gundagai and Batlow rely on those mills and face a downturn after bushfires tore through local pine forests. In the long term, it will open up an efficient, safe alternative to the large number of trucks that travel through this region. I will continue to fight to reopen the line.

TUGGERAH LAKES FLOOD MANAGEMENT

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (17:09:49): Earlier in the week I spoke about the flooding that has affected members of my community who live around Tuggerah Lakes. Those floods have also affected communities in the electorates of the member for Swansea and the member for The Entrance. The comments I make tonight follow on from my comments in the House on Tuesday. The State Government's flood policy provides solutions to existing flood problems. Under the policy the management of flood-liaible land remains the responsibility of the local council. The State Government subsidises flood mitigation works to alleviate existing problems. Locals around Tuggerah Lakes—in fact, the three lakes in the system—want to see evidence of the flood mitigation grants that have been awarded in the past 10 years. I will explain why that is necessary.

As I mentioned earlier to the House, in November 2014 the former Wyong Shire Council adopted a document called the Tuggerah Lakes Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan. WMAwater was contracted to prepare that plan. It was endorsed by the then council with very few amendments. Locals assumed that once the council endorsed those measures, the floodplain risk management plan would be implemented to reduce the impact of flooding. However, from the perspective of residents, very little has been achieved since 2010 by the former Wyong Shire Council, now the Central Coast Council. I will go through some of the recommendations, each of which had a time frame. The first recommendation was adaptation planning for foreshore suburbs. It was said to be a high priority, with moderate cost and the responsibility of the then Wyong Shire Council. It is now the responsibility of the Central Coast Council. The time frame for completion was within three years of the adoption of the plan. It was due to be completed in 2017. It is not complete. In fact, it has not started.

Some 5,500 properties are affected in Chittaway Point, Chittaway Bay, South Tacoma, North Entrance, Berkeley Vale and Tuggerawong. The plan states that the level of existing flood risk is currently considered inadequate for residential purposes; the rise in water level in Tuggerah Lakes is relatively slow—24 to 48 hours—and if given adequate warning and made flood-aware and prepared, many residents should be able to evacuate safely; and the then Wyong Shire Council, in conjunction with the SES, should immediately start work on community-based emergency management, evacuation planning and ongoing flood management education.

Unfortunately, unlike Lake Macquarie Council, the council has made no practical progress in adaptation planning for the most flood-affected communities and community involvement is deemed to be unimportant.

The second recommendation was flood emergency management planning. It was given high priority. The cost was moderate and responsibility lay with the SES and the council. The time frame was within one year of the adoption of the plan. It was supposed to be completed in 2015. Communication was poor when the 2015 flood hit. No text messages were sent in 2015 or 2020. In fact, in 2015 communication with residents was via a megaphone at the end of the street. Members can understand why people became angry and heated about those floods. The third recommendation was public education and raising flood awareness. That recommendation was also designated as high priority and had a one-year time frame. A FloodSafe flyer was published in 2011 and is now out of date. The distribution of the flyer was poor and, nine years later, new residents have received no update. The fourth recommendation was the development of a management plan for vulnerable water and sewer assets. It is an important one. It had high priority, the cost was minor and responsibility lay with the council and the water authority. It was to be completed over the following two years.

During the 2015 flood, emergency power generators and portable toilets were delivered to Chittaway Point but very few locals were aware of their existence. They were not able to access them without wading through contaminated water because sewage was literally floating down the streets. The plan continues with the recommendations in the report. There has been no response to most of those things from different levels of government. It is good to see the member for Terrigal is in the Chamber as I am actually agreeing with him on some things about council's efforts. The documents are all here. People just want to see them implemented. Let's get on with it. *[Time expired.]*

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:15:01): I thank the member for Wyong for his second contribution this week on this issue and I appreciate his respectful tone this evening, unlike his compatriot. I repeat some key dates that need to be acknowledged. They are: 26 February 2018, 26 March 2018, 8 October 2018, 11 February 2019, 25 November 2019 and 9 December 2019. Those dates are important as they are dates—

Mr Mark Coure: Tell us why?

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I thank the member for Oatley for asking that, but I do not need his assistance. On those dates concerns were raised inside council chambers by councillors about the maintenance and ongoing flood mitigation controls regarding Tuggerah Lakes and The Entrance channel. On each of those occasions the motions were blocked and not proceeded with. I empathise with the people of The Entrance and surrounding areas and understand their frustration, but this is still not progressing because it is being blocked.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Felicity Wilson): Order! I call the member for Wyong to order for the first time.

LAURIE O'CONNOR

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:16:40): I acknowledge Laurie O'Connor, who has recently retired from his role as the Director of Assets and Infrastructure, a position he has held at Georges River Council since its inception in 2016. Laurie is an exceptionally talented engineer who commenced his engineering career in 1986 with the former Botany Bay City Council. He was employed as a junior engineer before moving to other councils such as Waverley and Canterbury. In 1995 Laurie joined the former Hurstville Council as the manager of engineering administration. He later progressed to director and ultimately to Acting General Manager of Hurstville Council. Since the formation of Georges River Council, Laurie was appointed as director of Assets and Infrastructure, a role he has undoubtedly excelled in during his time with the council.

While Laurie has worked on and delivered countless projects, it is fitting to outline some of the projects he has delivered that have reshaped not only Georges River Council but also St George as a whole. The Penshurst Park Sporting Hub project commenced in 1995 and is continuing to the present day. The project was launched with the opening of the Hurstville Aquatic Centre. The next stage of those works will provide upgrades to Penshurst Park, including a canteen, a massive new grandstand, as well as upgrades to the car park and lighting. This significant and long-running project has been pioneered by Laurie and is transforming Penshurst Park and surrounding facilities into a first-class sporting hub that is used widely by the community.

Another project that has reshaped my electorate of Oatley that would not have happened without Laurie's efforts is the widening of the Lily Street Bridge in Allawah. For those in this House that may not be familiar with this location, the bridge connects two sides of the St George area. It also provides a thoroughfare over the railway line at Allawah, but its two-lane bridge capacity led to traffic jams and gridlock as the area's population grew. Laurie was instrumental in lobbying our State Government for \$13 million to go towards widening this bridge and Transport for NSW overseeing the project in its entirety. The four-lane upgrade has no doubt been a tremendous benefit to the traffic flow in our local community.

A recent achievement of Laurie's has been the Oatley Park Adventure Playground, which is a fantastic space in Oatley Park that has been sensitively designed to cater to all ages and abilities as well as complement its bushland setting through the use of natural materials and nature-based play elements. Despite opening in late 2019, the playground has been overwhelmingly well received by those across my electorate. It also received support through State Government and council funding. This project would not have been possible without Laurie's leadership and community-focused approach. The adventure playground has quickly become a much-loved pocket of my electorate. From Gannons Park to Oatley Park, to Peakhurst Park to Evatt Park, to Kemp Field and the work now at Hurstville Oval, Laurie and his department have led by example to have many of those projects completed on time and under budget.

Finally, no discussion of Laurie would be complete without mentioning the millions of dollars of works that he has delivered to help the local area be a better place to live. From footpaths to road resurfacing, Laurie has overseen countless projects, improving the safety and efficiency of our area. Laurie's impressive run of 25 years in the council has sadly come to an end as he retires and moves into the next chapter of his life. Laurie has been at the receiving end of a number of letters and phone calls from my office over the past nine years and I thank him for always treating all requests with fairness. I thank Laurie for always working with me in ensuring that we can deliver together the best results for our community. His time in council may be over but the results he has achieved will have lasting benefits for our community. He may follow the wrong football team—South Sydney—but I thank him for all his hard work and wish him and his family the very best for the future.

BARWON ELECTORATE

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (17:21:39): A few weeks ago I sat on the veranda of my place overlooking the paddocks, taking time to catch up with my family before I headed off again. It was a perfect afternoon. We all stopped, sat together and took a moment to appreciate that it was raining. The paddocks were wet and the rain was still coming down. The smell of the rain hitting the dry dirt was intoxicating. We had been waiting for this rain. I acknowledge that not everyone has had rain. In Barwon, water is snaking its way down our barren riverbeds from the north where they have received rain.

In Brewarrina, 800 kilometres west of here, water from the Barwon River is now flowing through town. Downstream, this water has met water from the Culgoa and flowed into the Darling River. The welcome this water received when it flowed over the weir can only be compared to a rock star rolling into town. But let us not be fooled by the scenes of elation as the water makes its way down the Darling. We are still in drought. As we head west there is a clear line where the paddocks—tinged with green and pockmarked by puddles—dry up and the green gives way to the red dust. This indiscriminately cruel drought rolls on. It has held us in her grip for years now. Life has not gone forward. We have been stopped in our tracks. Communities in my electorate have been stuck in their own version of *Groundhog Day*. Instead of waking up to *I Got You Babe* every morning, it is the repeat of no rain, dust and a lack of definitive action from the Government.

This Government has more money than it has ever had in the history of this State. Yet, instead of distributing it to help people in their time of need, it is keeping it squirreled away in the bank, putting road block after road block in the way of people who dare to head down the road of trying to access any of the assistance on offer. Some 98.9 per cent of this State is in declared drought. Last year was Australia's driest on record. At the end of 2019, soil moisture reserves across large parts of the State were close to zero. Simply put, we are nowhere near being out of this drought. We need our mate Huey to send down a lot more rain and we need our mate the Treasurer to loosen the purse strings.

Forgive me if I sound like a broken record but there are a few things the Government could be doing right now that would deliver urgently needed assistance into drought-affected communities. I have been talking for more than eight months about the same suggested actions. I will continue to talk about them and push for them until not a single person in Barwon is crying out for the Government to take action. Rebates on local government rates are needed, and I will tell members why. A few weeks ago two people contacted me. One was from a local council and the other was a ratepayer in that same local government area.

The council was calling me to say that over 50 per cent of its rate base had failed to pay rates. The council was spending money it did not have on sending out debt collection notices, which are going to people who have always paid their rates on time and in full. The ratepayer who contacted me has for 65 years paid his rates, diligently and without issue, when they came due. After years of just scraping by, unable to turn a profit due to the drought, he and his wife decided not to pay their rates. The decision pained them but it was a choice between paying the rates or putting food on their table.

They received a letter from the debt collection agency. The tone of the letter shook them: It expressed no sympathy for their plight; it showed no empathy for the decision they had to make. If you were them, what choice would you make? Likewise, with the local suppliers carrying debt: What choice would you make when you know

you have to call up your mate—a bloke you have known for years—and ask him to pay his bill, knowing full well he does not have two pennies to rub together? But as a business owner, you do not have customers coming through the doors and you have your bills to pay. For reasons like that I am calling for immediate cash grants to allow cash creditors to be paid.

In one area of Barwon stock numbers have gone from over 425,000 head to under 87,000, and we have not seen a crop in the ground for a long time. The reserves set aside to get back up and running, buying in stock and planting have been spent on the necessities of life. So as the rain comes down and our rivers flow and our dams fill, farmers will be looking for financial assistance to re-sow and restock. They will need to show their commercial and Government creditors a capacity to generate income. That is why I have been calling for the establishment of a re-sowing and restocking grant. The time for that is starting to look pretty ripe.

Lastly, the Government must transition legacy loans. Some people are paying up to 5 per cent when people are on 1 per cent interest loans or zero interest loans for the same product. Make the change. The Government does not need to be making money off poor farmers. After a drought there is a rebuilding process and a recovery time. Farmers who manage livestock do not have a return until they have restocked, reared the stock and sold them. Sometimes that can take 25 months from the breaking of the drought—from gestation to T-bone on a plate. We must ensure that the speed of recovery for our farmers is as quick as it can be because when farmers are making money, our local cafes, supermarkets, seed suppliers, truck drivers and school fundraisers all get some money as well. Come on, Treasurer: Loosen the purse strings and help our drought-impacted communities.

CENTRAL COAST EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:26:43): From 7 to 10 February the Central Coast received hundreds of millimetres of rain, causing widespread flooding, particularly around Tuggerah Lake. It also caused trees to fall across the region, resulting in tens of thousands of houses going without power for a number of days. Those were the worst storms the region has endured since 2015. As I have said before, the best thing for a politician to do during an emergency situation is to stay out of the way of first responders. During the bushfire crisis Minister for Police and Emergency Services David Elliott and I said that unless politicians are picking up a hose or buttering sandwiches, they should stay out of the way. But it is also important that members of Parliament provide support and assistance to the communities that need it, and say thank you to those who serve our local area selflessly.

With the worst of the storms and floods behind us, last Friday I was delighted to welcome Minister Elliott to the Central Coast. Over the space of the day we visited a number of emergency services organisations that have been incredibly active with first fires and then flooding. The Wyong SES Unit received a \$5,000 grant from the Minister to purchase an additional Arkangel flood rescue inflatable boat for future flood situations. The Government is committed to providing our SES volunteers with the best possible equipment and amenities so they can get on with the job they do best: saving lives and protecting our community. The Wyong SES Unit is an outstanding organisation. I have visited it on multiple occasions. Post storm events, its members are keen to brief the Minister and me on how they responded, what they believe they might be able to do better in the future and how they are dealing with the lingering legacy of a flood as opposed to the instantaneous damage caused by a fire. The Wyong SES members were proud of their work with the local community.

We also visited the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association in Warnervale and inspected a number of the brand-new Government Radio Network portable radios as part of a \$156,000 boost to the VRA's radio infrastructure across New South Wales. The investment in radio equipment is just a small piece of the Government's \$18.8 million investment over four years in world-class equipment and training. It is important that organisations such as the VRA, SES and others have access to the Government Radio Network for continuity of communication. Often VRA volunteers face challenging emergencies across regional areas such as the Central Coast, so we want to do everything we can to ensure they are as safe as possible when responding to help others. It is an incredible organisation, located next door to the Wyong Rural Fire Service station, and it does an outstanding job with a very small and dedicated team.

The recent refurbishment of the Kariong Fire Station has been made possible through a \$2.75 million contribution from the New South Wales budget. The fire station is staffed by a mix of permanent and retained firefighters who are available 24/7 to protect the community during emergencies. The renovations will improve training and administrative services for the region, and support our professional, scientific approach to firefighting. The upgraded facility will also ensure that local firefighters are trained, rested and ready to respond to emergency situations, whether it be a fire, accident or chemical spill. The refurbishment provides a state-of-the-art base for the men and women at Fire and Rescue NSW, who work hard to protect the Central Coast. I thank four strike teams from Kariong who assisted firefighting efforts at the Three Mile Fire throughout December last year.

On Friday night the Minister, RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons and Superintendent Viki Campbell attended the Coasties' Bushfire Appeal, where people of the Central Coast came together and raised almost \$50,000. That money is being split evenly between the RFS units on the Central Coast and the families of the three RFS officers who tragically perished during the bushfire season. The Minister also visited the Gosford SES Unit. It has also received an additional \$5,000 to provide for an Arkangel flood rescue inflatable boat to help respond to floods. We also visited the fantastic team at the Brisbane Waters Rural Fire Brigade, who are doing an outstanding job. As I said before, parts of the Central Coast have been impacted by fire and flood in recent months. I pay tribute to all emergency services personnel, particularly the SES and RFS, who put their lives on the line each day.

CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (17:31:55): Last year residents of Sydney breathed a sigh of relief at the opening of the Circular Quay to Randwick leg of the CBD and South East Light Rail project. The Circular Quay to Kingsford route is scheduled to open in March, just next month. When taking the oath of office upon the resignation of Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford remarked that "our long national nightmare is over". Soon we may be able to say the same. So in 2020, at a cost of over \$3 billion, it is about time we got a look at what we have paid for. The first remark from any passenger is how slow the thing is.

If I were to take the L2 light rail from Randwick to Circular Quay, it would take me 50 minutes. But if I were to catch the 373 or 377 bus, I could arrive in 30 minutes—with 20 minutes to spare. Even the transport Minister's best-case scenario—a 40-minute end-to-end journey—is 30 per cent slower than the equivalent bus service. I am even aware of a local wag who challenged the light rail to a race. He jogged the route a full 10 minutes faster than the tram. As for the price of \$3 billion, with even a fraction of that figure, huge improvements could have been made to bus services in the CBD and south-east region. Indeed, that was the recommendation of Infrastructure NSW in 2012 when it advised against this project in favour of bus rapid transit delivered via a busway tunnel underneath the CBD. It warned:

Light rail is however, significantly more expensive than bus services, has no material speed benefits, is less flexible in traffic and if service reforms to the operation of CBD bus services are implemented, does not offer significantly greater capacity.

As an example, light rail vehicles of 45 metres in length have a greater capacity than a high-capacity bus, however high-capacity buses can be run more regularly than light rail to meet demand. So it is slower, it carries fewer people and, at three times its original price, it represents terrible value for money. I have expressed those views repeatedly, almost ad nauseam, since the project was first announced. But today I raise my grave concerns about the future of public transport in my electorate as a result of the opening of the light rail.

Already, we have seen major changes to bus services in the south-east—affecting me and the electorates of the members for Coogee and the member for Maroubra—including the abolition of the 309 and 310 bus services. The New South Wales Coalition Government has announced its intention to privatise region 7, 8 and 9 buses, marking the end of the New South Wales Government as a provider of public bus services in Sydney. Already, Transport for NSW has announced its intention to cut the M20 bus route—terminating buses at Mascot instead of Botany—which began on Sunday 9 February. The route was extended to Botany by the member for Maroubra in his capacity as Minister in 2009—a highly popular move.

I have obtained a sensitive, confidential internal Transport for NSW document that outlines the Government's plans to hack and slash our local bus services. Changes include the complete abolition of 16 bus routes, including the M10, M50, 302, 373, and 376 buses, amongst others; the slashing of 12 routes to terminate at the Kingsford light rail terminus instead of Circular Quay or the CBD; and the abolition of the 891 and 893 bus services between the University of NSW and Central station. All these cuts will be made to increase patronage on the light rail to justify that ailing project. We have had this project forced on us, which has caused countless sleepless nights, disruption on our roads and the destruction of businesses. Now plans are afoot to take away some of our most important bus services. I warn the New South Wales Government: It does not matter that your light rail is a shambles, keep your hands off our bus services.

INNER WEST FERRY SERVICES

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (17:36:22): Sydney is lucky to be home to a fantastic ferry network that makes getting around our beautiful harbour quick and affordable. It is important we continue to invest in that network and support the workers who work on that network and ensure we do not go backwards. Today I bring to the attention of the House a proposal to make significant changes to inner west ferry services that will make it more difficult for people living in my electorate of Balmain to get into the city. More than 14 million people cross Sydney Harbour by ferry every year. As congestion worsens across the city, ferries provide a remarkable public transport solution that takes vehicles off the road. In my electorate of Balmain that makes ferries a critical public transport option—as they are in your electorate of North Shore, Madam Temporary Speaker.

Ferries are particularly important in my electorate of Balmain; they provide transport for commuters to get to work and for tourists. It is a beautiful peninsula with limited space, surrounded by a huge expanse of water—one can almost touch the city on the other side of the harbour. I have been a strong advocate for improving our ferry network, particularly the infrastructure. Since my election in 2011, I am delighted to say that there has been a significant increase in investment in our ferry network—in particular, in excess of \$10 million for the upgrade of wharves across the electorate. All wharves are now accessible for people with disabilities, people with mobility issues, parents and people with prams. We should be doing more, but this proposal is taking us in the wrong direction.

Public transport patronage is soaring. The Government has completely underestimated the appetite for public transport in our city and, as a result, is planning to deliver fewer services than we need. Growth on the State's public transport network has hurtled past long-term government predictions, with 93 million more trips taken on buses and trains last year than was forecast for 2031. A 2011 report used by the New South Wales Government as the framework for investing in transport projects over the coming decades predicted rail growth would increase by 26 per cent between 2011 and 2031. As we know, the rail network reached and then exceeded the predicted figures by 2017—a decade early. It is no wonder the Government is investing in motorway projects, spending tens and tens of billions of dollars, when the predictions of transport usage were so incorrect.

The growth in bus patronage projected in the 2012 report was also reached 13 years early. Last year the number of bus trips was 54 million higher than the forecast. Those figures reinforce the need to invest more in our city's public transport. But, sadly, we do not have a plan to deal with that growth. Instead, we see nonsensical changes to ferry services that will make it harder for people to use the existing services. Sydney Ferries operator Transdev is proposing changes to the F3, F4 and F8 routes in 2021, which will impact the whole western Sydney network including the Balmain, Balmain East and Birchgrove ferry wharves. The proposal is intended to increase the frequency of ferry services, which is something our community has supported for many years. However, Transdev appears to be prioritising frequency above all else.

The changes will abolish direct services that connect Balmain and Birchgrove with McMahon's Point, Milson's Point and Circular Quay. Instead, commuters will be forced to change at Balmain East wharf. We need more frequent ferries, but that should not come at the cost of the essential direct services. More frequent ferry services are pointless if they are taking people to places they do not want to go. The changes will double the time it takes to get to Circular Quay and the North Shore, making what is now a 15-minute trip a 30-minute trip. The community is steadfastly against this proposal. Residents of the inner west have not been shy to voice their opinions on this proposal and our community has staged a big mobilisation effort, which has led to more than 140 people contacting my office directly. I have started a petition that has been signed by 1,541 people calling for the changes to be scrapped. Residents have been out supporting the campaign, letterboxing homes and sticking up pole posters. I thank all those volunteers.

I have spent time down at the Balmain ferry wharf, talking to residents. Our community loves ferries and wants more rather than less. We know that people want to go to Circular Quay, which links people to the city; they do not want to be forced to go to Barangaroo. This proposal has an impact on school students also. Making Balmain East a ferry hub will put stress on already limited parking spaces at the wharf. Opposition extends across the network all the way up Parramatta River. I have met with Transdev and the Minister and I will continue to press this matter. We call on the Government to reverse these ridiculous proposals.

SEVEN HILLS ELECTORATE AUSTRALIA DAY EVENTS

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:41:44): I inform the House of the important community events I was fortunate to attend in celebration of Australia Day last month. Each year that I have been able to call myself a member of this place I have attended the annual Hills-Kellyville Rotary Club's Australia Day citizenship ceremony at Third Settlement Reserve in Winston Hills. Each year the event has grown bigger and bigger, with more and more members of my local community joining together. This year's attendance was estimated to be nearly 500 local residents. Residents of the Seven Hills electorate are proud people and it is this pride in their community, their State and their nation that brings them out to celebrate Australia Day—Australia's national birthday. This year marked 232 years since the arrival of the First Fleet and the raising of the British flag by Governor Arthur Phillip at Sydney Cove.

This foundational moment in Australia's history is replicated with a ceremony raising the Australian flag at Third Settlement Reserve. This reserve, which obtained its name from being the third settlement of the colony of New South Wales, was a government farm that grew food for the colony. The third settlement was founded in 1792, only four years after the first settlement, and was given the name Toongabbie—an Indigenous word for "place by the water" or "meeting by the water". It is a little-known fact that Toongabbie Creek, which runs through the electorate of Seven Hills, joins the Parramatta River and then eventually flows to Sydney Harbour. I often remind the member for Manly about that. At the Australia Day citizenship ceremony we were assisted and joined

by the Winston Hills Scouts and Girl Guides, the Toongabbie Music Club, the Western Sydney Woodturners and local woman of the year for the Seven Hills electorate principal Renai Diamond.

It would be remiss of me to fail to acknowledge the Federal, State and local government representatives who were in attendance, including my colleague from this place the Hon. David Elliott, MP, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. In accordance with tradition, at the conclusion of the citizenship ceremony a community breakfast took place, all organised and operated by the Hills-Kellyville Rotary Club. There was also the novelty and spectacle of a fashion contest for the best Australian costume, which was enjoyed by all those present with good humour and in good spirits. The Rotary club is in great order under the leadership of the previous committee, including president Fran Broadbent and executive members secretary Wilf Van Emmerik, treasurer Keith Stapley, administration director John van den Berg, membership director John Collignon, foundation director Haran Ramachandran, community service director Robert Mackey, vocational service director Pady Rama, and bulletin director Jim Sifonios. The club meets on Mondays at Castle Hill Tavern. I publicly encourage all community-minded locals to get out and get involved with the club and support the great work it does in our community.

Later on Australia Day I had the pleasure of attending the Western Sydney Australia Day community event at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in the heart of south-western Sydney. It was a family-friendly afternoon that both celebrated Australia Day and acknowledged the importance of Republic Day—also 26 January—to the local Indian Australian community. At the reception we were joined by representatives from local schools, parents and community associations, and various community leaders. Like the north-west of Sydney, the south-west is booming. The Australia Day reception was a fantastic afternoon to learn about all the great community work being done in the area, including the infrastructure that is being rolled out in the area as well as right across western Sydney. All in all, I am glad that we celebrate Australia Day the way we do in Winston Hills, and in western Sydney more generally: always with a focus on community and volunteers. I commend all those involved in the celebrations for their great efforts.

SYDNEY GAY AND LESBIAN MARDI GRAS

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:45:52): This Saturday hundreds of thousands of people will gather on Oxford Street to bask in the rainbow glory of the biggest celebration of LGBTIQ+ people, lives, communities and culture in the Southern Hemisphere: the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. For many of those living in the electorate of Newtown, Mardi Gras is one of the biggest events on the social calendar and a yearly reminder for us to join together in celebration of diversity and equality within our community. At its heart and its origins, Mardi Gras is a defiant, music and dance-filled protest. We must always honour those who took part in the first Mardi Gras on Oxford Street in 1978 to demand equal rights, and also how they paid so dearly for their courage in the form of extreme police brutality and horrendous public shaming through the media.

Mardi Gras equally celebrates all those who have continued that struggle and won so many important reforms over the past four decades, including marching for marriage equality and then marching to celebrate the achievement of marriage equality. As well as being a massive celebration and party, perhaps one of the most important functions of Mardi Gras is to shine a very public, very bright, very glittering and rainbow light on the mainstream issues and barriers that remain and discrimination barriers that continue. This year, like every year, we can expect to see political parties in the parade, waving to the crowd and soaking up the atmosphere. This is despite the fact that some of those—namely the Liberal and Labor parties; actively promoting in the case of the Liberal Party and failing to oppose in the case of the Labor Party—one of the most concerning pieces of legislation to impact on the equality and rights of the LGBTIQ+ community members: the religious freedom bill.

At the recent Mardi Gras Fair Day we received thousands of signatures on our petition at The Greens' stall opposing the Federal Liberal Government's despicable religious freedom bill. The bill would make it legal for people to discriminate, to treat people unequally. It would provide cover and protection for bigots, homophobes and transphobes, and it would empower those with discriminatory religious views to inflict those views on others with impunity. The bill is being championed by the Liberals in what has been described as a "consolation prize" for those who ran the No campaign during the marriage equality plebiscite. The LGBTIQ+ community has suffered enough as a result of that horrific marriage equality survey and this saga needs to end now.

But it is not just the Liberals who are failing when it comes to the rainbow communities. When it comes to their legislative priorities and policies, disappointingly, Labor is also failing. Shamefully, the Labor Opposition has not come out strongly against the religious freedom bill. This year the Mardi Gras theme is "What Matters" so it is perhaps worth considering what matters to the community. I would guess that maybe what matters is for people to be treated equally. What matters is for people to be treated with dignity. What matters is people being able to live free from discrimination. Also what matters is not being a hypocrite.

With that in mind, I offer three tips for not being a Mardi Gras hypocrite. To those who may wish to join the parade—particularly those members of Parliament who may have views that are discriminatory towards the LGBTIQ+ community—I say listen up. First, we need to see anyone who wants to participate in Mardi Gras urgently and publicly withdraw their support for the disastrous religious freedom bill, which will serve only to further entrench discrimination against the LGBTIQ+ community, not to mention women and people with disabilities, in every facet of our society. Secondly, we need to see people who participate in Mardi Gras and want to bask in its rainbow glory call publicly on NSW Labor to bin its plans for draconian and fear-mongering mandatory HIV testing of people whose bodily fluids come into contact with emergency services personnel. As Nick Parkhill, CEO of ACON—which is based in the Newtown electorate—made very clear:

Mandatory testing is a confused and poorly regulated policy ...

Punitive laws based on outdated misconceptions and myths about how HIV... are transmitted, and which perpetuate stigma and discrimination, do not need to be introduced during a time when HIV notifications are at historic lows in NSW.

Thirdly, like The Greens, I call on those who wish to dance up Oxford Street on Saturday night to express their support and commit to achieving vital reforms to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act to remove the requirement for surgical intervention before a person can change the sex on their birth certificate. It is totally unacceptable that realising your true identity should rely on this expensive and unnecessary surgery. I look forward to joining all those people who want to dance down Oxford Street on Saturday night and I feel very proud to be a member of a party that votes for equality and to end discrimination. Every vote, Every MP, Every time.

EAST HILLS ELECTORATE FLOOD

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (17:51:14): On Friday 7 February the rain that everyone had been hoping for began. It continued to rain on Saturday 8 February, and by 3.00 p.m. on Sunday 9 February some schools in the East Hills electorate began to announce they would not be opening on Monday. The Georges River was flooding. With a year's worth of rain in one weekend and a king tide, there was no stopping the rising water that saw the river break its banks and reach levels higher than the previous significant flood in 1988. Evacuation centres were established by Minister Gareth Ward and his Department of Communities and Justice team. Many centres—the Dunc Gray Velodrome, Revesby Workers Club, Windsor RSL, North Richmond and Cromer Community Centres and Mona Vale Memorial Hall—became sanctuaries from the tempest hitting Sydney and its surrounds.

Not only was the Georges River flooding; the Hawkesbury River was too. The unprecedented storms brought not only rain but also wind gusts of up to 107 kilometres per hour. This caused 140,000 homes and businesses across Sydney to be adversely impacted by 3,000 fallen and snapped powerlines and trees, forcing 180 poles and 1,000 spans of powerlines to be replaced across Sydney. On Saturday East Hills residents who have the Georges River on their doorstep began to notice that the water was beginning to rise. The local Bankstown SES Unit issued a notification that what was to come on Sunday would be worse. Just before midday on Sunday the SES began knocking on doors in parts of Milperra notifying residents that they needed to evacuate immediately as streets in the suburb had begun to flood and their exit points would be blocked.

Clothes were quickly packed and important home items moved to what was hopefully a height to avoid damage. With the river rising very fast, some residents left their exit too late and their vehicles got stuck in the floodwater. Due to the fantastic local SES volunteers, many people were assisted to escape the rising waters safely. The storms resulted in damage to many houses. The floods necessitated the closure of a number of roads, including Milperra Road, Henry Lawson Drive and Tower Road—a road that services the Bankstown Aerodrome, which is the second busiest airport in the State. By Tuesday, some of the roads had reopened and anxious residents were able to return home to see what condition their property was in and begin to assess what was required for the clean-up. On Tuesday the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, David Elliott, and I visited parts of the community that were affected by the severe storms and flooding. We saw firsthand the impact of the flooding after the devastating storm around the Georges River, particularly at Picnic Point and, notably, around East Hills.

We met with Ian Watson, the Gurney family and other residents of Carinya Road, Picnic Point, who have lived on the Georges River for a long time. We walked through the Gurney family home and saw the devastation and impact of the flood to their lower floor, with the water lines still fresh on the plasterboard. We saw just how far into their backyard the waters had risen by the muddy marks left on their back garden shed. They acknowledged that when you live in a beautiful area along the Georges River in a country like Australia, you have to accept that flooding is an unfortunate reality. That is what I love the most about the people from my electorate—they, quite frankly, just get on with the job even when times are tough.

A key theme from residents impacted by the floods was their undying gratitude to the Bankstown SES for its efforts during that weekend. Our local volunteers completed over 3,000 jobs across Georges Hall, Milperra, East Hills and Picnic Point. I thank the NSW Bankstown SES Unit for its amazing dedication and hard work not

only over that weekend of the floods, but also whenever it is called upon. Many of the volunteers from the Bankstown SES Unit had just returned from the Australian Capital Territory, where they had assisted that community during and after the bushfires. I also thank everyone for their efforts in providing assistance to those in our community who could not access their homes over that weekend, giving people somewhere to stay, a meal, a cuppa, a beer or a wine or two or three. The NSW SES Bankstown Unit worked with Fire and Rescue NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Service throughout this incident. I am extremely grateful for all its help in assisting thousands of East Hills residents over that weekend and in the clean-up that followed.

SYDNEY COLISEUM THEATRE

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (17:55:57): I report to the House the successful opening of the new 2,000-seat, \$100 million Sydney Coliseum Theatre located at West HQ in Rooty Hill in the Blacktown City Council area. I know that the member for Mount Druitt, Edmond Atalla, like me, is extremely proud of this wonderful new entertainment centre. Performances began on 12 December 2019 and, although it is just three months young, there have been some 25 performances already and approximately 30,000 attendances. The list of performers includes David Campbell and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Tina Arena, Dame Edna, John Butler, Keith Urban, Wolfgang's Magical Musical Circus, *Storytime Ballet: The Nutcracker* from the Australian Ballet, Anh Do and Missy Higgins.

The WSFM's Pure Gold Live show came to the Sydney Coliseum Theatre on 12 and 13 February 2020. Aussie rock legends including Richard Clapton, Ross Wilson, Glenn Shorrock, 1927, The Radiators, Steve Kilbey, Pseudo Echo, Wendy Matthews, Dragon, and the Eurogliders all performed and raised over \$100,000 for the bushfire appeal. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* will also be a fabulous family-friendly performance at the theatre. I cannot wait for that one.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: One of your favourites, no doubt.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: Yes, one of my favourites. The design of this new facility is also important because it is not only set up to provide the best atmosphere for attendees, but also designed so that performers and production staff can deliver the best show. Technological improvements and innovation have been driven by its partnership with NEC to showcase the Sydney Coliseum Theatre as one of the best entertainment facilities being delivered at a world-class standard. The Sydney Coliseum Theatre features a world-class hyperreal sound surround system, brought to us by Jands and L-Acoustics. West HQ has redeveloped its food and beverage offerings, resulting in some of Australia's—might as well be the world's—best chefs and restaurateurs now calling West HQ home.

Us westies no longer have to spend hours driving into the city to pay a fortune for parking when we have some of the best Sydney CBD restaurateurs opening up new restaurants at West HQ in Rooty Hill. Famed restaurateur Steve Anastasiou, of China Doll and China Lane, has opened Chu Restaurant, with a quality \$4 million fit-out. The godfather of Italian pizza in Australia, Stefano Manfredi, has opened PizzAperta Manfredi and Sean Connolly of The Morrison Bar & Oyster Room has opened the Steak & Co by Sean Connolly. West HQ has invested \$140 million into a new entertainment complex, new restaurant and food courts, and a multistorey car park. The building of the Sydney Coliseum Theatre and all the other business units at West HQ has resulted in 700 jobs in specialised areas not readily available in western Sydney, including roles such as audiovisual experts, riggers and booking agents for some of the world's leading performers and stage productions.

West HQ is now a megacomplex of sport, health and entertainment. The eight-hectare estate consists of assets such as the Sydney Coliseum Theatre, Sydney Gymnastics Aquatic Centre, One55 Health & Fitness, Rooty Hill RSL, Novotel Sydney, Zone Bowling and Sydney West Sports Medicine. A massive investment by the private sector and the council has resulted in economic growth of Blacktown City of about 4.6 per cent, one of the highest in the nation. In March, Athletics Australia will hold the second RunWest, western Sydney's premier running festival, with the finish line at West HQ. I pay tribute to the board of West HQ, led by chairperson Dennis Dewhurst and his predecessor Ray Johns, vice-chairperson Chris Pilao and all the board members for having the faith, commitment and strategy to deliver one of the best entertainment, sport, health, and food facilities in Australia.

Dennis, Chris and all the directors have put forward a courageous agenda and have been strongly supported by club members to implement it. Richard Errington is the chief executive officer who implemented the plan. Richard's strength of character, knowledge of the industry and impeccable integrity has resulted in the best entertainment industry builders, designers, architects and leading restaurateurs reciprocating and joining him and the board to be part of their vision. Richard would be the first to acknowledge that he is supported by wonderful and dedicated staff, and a strong and visionary board. West HQ has placed Blacktown City, western Sydney, on the international entertainment map. I congratulate West HQ.

CPR FRIENDLY

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (18:01:08): I update the House on the excellent work being done by a community organisation called CPR friendly, which operates in my community of Pittwater and now more broadly across the northern beaches and, hopefully, before long across New South Wales. CPR friendly was the brainchild of local resident and friend of mine Ian Hutchinson. He is a very fit former ironman who was going for a jog one day when he experienced a sudden cardiac arrest. He was very fortunate that people were able to rush to his aid and he was revived. Today he is hale and hearty and healthy, but he had an epiphany through that experience of being clinically dead and revived. He has made part of his life's mission to spread the message about cardio pulmonary resuscitation and to make it much more available for the community to have both knowledge of how CPR works through education and access to automated external defibrillation [AED] devices everywhere throughout our community.

One of CPR friendly's excellent initiatives is the idea of getting a whole group of local residents together for a community barbecue where they learn how to do cardio pulmonary resuscitation, to collect some funds to buy a defibrillator device and to determine somewhere convenient for people in the street to get to one of these devices if there is a sudden cardiac arrest event—maybe a garage or a mailbox. Even an eight-year-old can figure out how to use one. As a surf lifesaver, I am experienced in the use of AED devices, but they are really straightforward; they are idiot proof—even I can use them. People just have to follow the voice prompts and, as long as they can deal with an irritating and American accent, they should be fine to use a defibrillator. It works by identifying the heart rhythm, determining whether there is arrhythmia and determining whether to administer shock. It also coaches people as to timing and which cardio pulmonary resuscitation needs to be undertaken.

The mission of CPR friendly is quite simple: It is to help create CPR-friendly and heart smart communities quickly and easily, starting in their own backyard. To that end, since it has been established over the past year, it has had over 30 CPR events with an average of 40 participants, making about 1,000 people or more CPR friendly. They have had more than 10,000 page views and about 200 CPR e-learners monthly supported by an easy-to-use app. CPR friendly's goal is to help everybody get CPR friendly quick smart and to equip people to host a CPR friendly community event for anyone, anywhere. Their goals are also to create 50,000 additional CPR-friendly Australians every year and get 2,000 defibrillators into the community every year. The New South Wales Government is supporting the efforts of CPR friendly by installing more AED devices in community facilities and easy-to-reach places across the community, whether it is bowling clubs, golf clubs, surf clubs, churches or places of worship.

It is crucial to ensure that access to these devices is easy. Many people think if they have easy access to an emergency department that they are safe in case of sudden cardiac arrest. The reality is quite different. If you experience sudden cardiac arrest you literally have only a matter of minutes. It is simply not long enough to get an ambulance to you or to get you to an emergency department. Instead, you need access to defibrillation as quickly as possible or for someone trained in enough first aid to commence CPR until a defibrillator can be brought to you. I commend the excellent work of Ian Hutchinson to the House. His is a greatly compassionate vision to serve his and our community by making sure as many people as possible know about CPR to be able to treat sudden cardiac arrests. He has some novel ideas as to how we can achieve that as a community. I commend the great work of members of my community in bringing this message to everyone across New South Wales.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:06:16): Hannah Clarke, Aaliyah Clarke, Laianah Clarke and Trey Clarke. Those four names have been etched into all our minds recently for the most tragic of reasons. This young mum and her three beautiful children were brutally killed after being set alight by their father on their morning drive to school. There are no words to describe how gutless and horrific this crime is and I, like so many other Australians, am in complete shock. Sadly, events like this one are not anomalies. Domestic violence is still a prevalent issue that has infected too many homes and touched too many families in Australia.

Every 8½ minutes the New South Wales police deal with a domestic violence-related incident. Police officers from the Lake Illawarra Local Area Command estimate they spend half of their time on domestic violence incidents every single day. The suburbs of Warilla and Lake Illawarra in the Shellharbour electorate have become hot spots for domestic violence, with record high rates of domestic violence—well above the State average. Obviously, these figures can only reflect the incidence of domestic violence that is reported, which is just the tip of the iceberg.

It is recent events like the tragic fate of the Clarke family and these disturbing statistics that make me grateful I have an organisation like the Illawarra Women's Health Centre, and Sally Stevenson and her team working in my community. Unfortunately, what this organisation can achieve is limited by the amount of funding that it receives from those opposite. Last year I successfully lobbied the Minister for health for an additional

\$35,000 to address critical staff shortages at the Women's Health Centre. I thank the Minister for health again for providing this one-off funding, but unfortunately for very obvious reasons the grant does not go far enough. This centre, and I am sure others centres across the State, need improved and recurrent funding; demand is drastically outstripping supply. I have been advised that some of the waiting lists for services at the Illawarra Women's Health Centre are two to three months long. Vulnerable women should not have to wait three months to receive the care and support they desperately need.

I ask every member of this House to pause for a moment to reflect on Hannah, Aaliyah, Laianah, and Trey. They should take a moment to think of every individual in their electorate who has been killed or injured as a result of domestic violence. They should feel sad and angry, and turn these feelings into action. Members should reach out to local organisations and domestic violence services in their electorate to find out what they need, then take that fight straight to the Premier and her Cabinet. Right now I am fighting for a domestic violence trauma recovery centre in the Illawarra in tandem with the Illawarra Women's Health Centre. We need funding for frontline services. There is currently a backlog of women requiring support and if we do not act now there is a real chance that local women and families will fall through the cracks.

New legislation protecting victims of domestic and family violence is needed. Police and law enforcement officers need to be given additional powers. Coercive control has been outlawed in England and Wales since 2015. Last year Scotland's Domestic Abuse Act criminalised coercive and controlling behaviours covering psychological, financial or sexual abuse with the single offence carrying a maximum of a 14-year sentence. We need a law like this that would allow coercive patterns of behaviour to be criminalised, one that would see offenders who are isolating their partners from support networks, making their partner dependent, controlling their activities, restricting their freedom or punishing them found guilty of a crime and punished accordingly.

The recent tragic event involving Hannah, Aaliyah, Laianah and Trey must incite action. Those young lives taken from us so violently must motivate us for change. I ask every member of this House to join the fight for additional funding for domestic violence services in New South Wales. I ask the Minister to pledge recurring and improved funding for the Illawarra Women's Health Centre. I ask those opposite to get on with the job of changing things. We need real action on domestic violence; words are simply not enough.

PARRAMATTA ELECTORATE AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

PARRAMATTA STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (18:11:29): I was honoured to attend the Parramatta Australia Day Local Awards Ceremony, which recognise the outstanding achievements and contributions of members of our local community. The awards celebrate and acknowledge a diverse range of individuals from youngsters to seniors with different skills and talents. I congratulate the many nominations this year, which I am sure made it hard for the judges. I congratulate Kevin McSweeney, who received the 2020 Citizen of the Year award. Kevin is a Parramatta local and a full-time NSW Ambulance inspector. Kevin is also a founding director of the Michael Hughes Foundation, which teaches the public how to perform CPR and use defibrillators.

Acknowledgement must go to Fouad "Fred" Nakhle, who received the Lord Mayor Humanity award. Fred has been a Parramatta Community Care volunteer for almost 20 years and is also currently involved in three services: Meals on Wheels, Over 55's Leisure and Learning Service support and Social Inclusion Service home visits. I commend Anthony Bolton from Redeemer Baptist School, who won the Young Leader of the Year award. He regularly volunteers his time to help indigenous communities and church projects. I applaud Daphne Fong, who was awarded Young Citizen of the Year in honour of David Shakespeare, OAM. Daphne attends Our Lady of Mercy College in Parramatta and is the chairperson of Toongabbie Rainbow Senior Guides. Daphne has also been chosen as one of the New South Wales UNICEF Young Ambassadors for 2019-2020.

I mention Gwen Ilic, who received the Senior Citizen of the Year award. Gwen is the president of her region's St Vincent de Paul Society and a local parish, and also assists a disabled family member. I congratulate Heather Sheehan on receiving the Volunteer of the Year award. Heather has been a Bushcare volunteer for 30 years and leads a group of other volunteers at the Burnside Gollan Reserve at Oatlands. I have been impressed by her passionate commitment to the community and the bush. Well done to Harrison Knight from Parramatta Marist Brothers, who received the Sports Achievement award for his outstanding achievements in karate. Harrison won a gold medal at the New South Wales open championships in the junior under-18 division.

I acknowledge Avijit Sarkar, who was awarded the Arts & Cultural award. Avijit is a musician and composer as well as a cartoonist and writer. He serves as the director of Natraj Academy of Performing Arts in Rosehill. Lastly, I applaud Harris Park Community Centre and the Redeemer Baptist School for winning the Community Group Award. Well done to all the award winners who devote their time to provide support and

services to others in the community. They are a sample of the wonderful people in Parramatta. They exemplify the wonderful community of Parramatta and all the work of its members.

I pay tribute to all our SES volunteers from the Parramatta SES who did outstanding work not only with the bushfires but also with the recent storm damage that we sustained. We call on the volunteers when we have a problem. Parramatta is an example to all other places around Australia of a wonderful harmonious community that goes above and beyond the call of duty to look after one another and come together. I am privileged to honour the Parramatta Australia Day heroes.

Community Recognition Statements

PATRICK BRENNAN

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:15:42): Patrick Brennan is the Artistic Director and Chief Executive Officer at Central Coast Conservatorium of Music. I am pleased to inform the House that Patrick is one of the latest recipients of the 2020 Australian Conducting Academy. He is just one of eight conductors who has been chosen by a rigorous selection process to take part in a summer school in Tasmania. Congratulations—this is fantastic recognition for Patrick, but also for the Con. I also mention the fantastic work happening at Central Coast Conservatorium. In September last year we welcomed the Premier to the Central Coast, and together we announced \$2 million to refurbish the facilities at Mann Street, Gosford. The current facilities have been in use since 1987, so it is high time it was brought up to date with modern equipment, furniture and safety upgrades. Not only is this an election promise that our Government has delivered, but also it will set up the conservatorium for its future to provide better music education and more opportunities to our Central Coast community.

TERRY PROSSER, OAM

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:16:46): I bring to the attention of the House, Terry Prosser of Barrack Heights and his incredible volunteer work for the Illawarra Canoe Club over the past 40 years. Mr Prosser was recently recognised under the 2019 Queen's Birthday Honours and presented with an Order of Australia Medal for his service to canoeing. Over his 40 years' of volunteering, Mr Prosser has coached Shellharbour locals alongside Olympians and Australian titleholders alike. Back in the 1970s and 1980s he competed with the Illawarra Canoe Club, before becoming a life member of the club in 1977. He has guided young rowers into champions and is still coaching today, but he proudly proclaims he will coach anyone who wants to give the sport a go. On behalf of my community and the broader canoeing community of Australia, I thank Mr Prosser for his incredible skill, effort and guidance over the past four decades.

BALD FACE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:17:41): I acknowledge the success of Bald Face Public School's 2019 Presentation Day, which I attended on 17 December. The event was a fantastic opportunity to reflect on another year of progress and productivity for Bald Face, which is one of our outstanding local primary schools. The students spoke confidently and the whole presentation ran smoothly. Excitingly, Bald Face has recently received part funding from the New South Wales Government to install a bike track around the playground of the school. The bike track is focused on improving the accessibility of the school for students, the community and students who use wheelchairs, making it easier to move around Bald Face Public School. It will also help to encourage students to undertake more regular physical activity and enjoy a healthy lifestyle. I thank principal Sonia James for the invitation to the presentation and the whole Bald Face community for their continued dedication to the wider community. I wish the recently graduated students all the best as they begin their high school journey this year.

JOSHUA MAXWELL

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (18:18:44): I congratulate Joshua Maxwell on being recognised as Central Coast Council 2020 Citizens of the Year under the category Arts, Culture and Entertainment. This award acknowledges extraordinary members making a difference in the local community. Jopuka Productions was established in 2016 providing independent performing arts training and development across the Central Coast of emerging artists aged 16 to 30 years. For the past 14 years Joshua Maxwell has been dedicating his life to the Central Coast arts community, co-founding Jopuka Productions, which is now Central Coast's leading independent youth arts company. I have seen several Jopuka productions and have met the talented casts. They are amazing to watch when performing. I again congratulate Joshua Maxwell on creating an innovative theatre where young people can write and direct their shows.

SEVEN HILLS NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:19:34): Recently it was a pleasure to attend Seven Hills North Public School's 2020 leadership induction. I acknowledge captains Tara Tozer and Atilla Sami; vice-captains

Alexie Potts and Jake Emery; and prefects Bethany Saunders, Jessica Alegre, Shane Tozer and Muttahir Mahmood. I also congratulate the new sports captains for Best House, Madison Rice-Lowe and Sahan Ghimire; for Pye House, Hazel Burbridge and Santhosh Selva; and for Hume House, Imogen Gordon and Charlie Toovey. Well done to the elected SRC representatives, including Curtis Overton, Peta Coleman, Nyanza Meddings, Finn Smith, Esma Mehmedali, Sebastian Ramirez, Suravi Dey, William Domensino, Madeline Munro, Ryan Payvand, Alexander Camba, Rheya Singh, Lorena Aravena, Ryder Aslin, Hamish McIntosh, Zoe Saperas, Sophie Green, Riley Graczol, Victoria Steely, Anish Rajbanshi, Edwin Grover Thayil and Rachael Yang. I also acknowledge all the elected library monitors.

TRIBUTE TO JOSHUA LEVI

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (18:20:36): On Monday 3 February Australia's Jewish community was rocked by the sudden and untimely passing of Joshua Levi, Editor and Chief Executive Officer of *The Australian Jewish News*. Our community has lost an outstanding journalist in his passing. Josh was well known to many members of this House, and his contribution to journalism in just 36 short years of life was exceptional. He received a number of awards for excellence in journalism, particularly for his coverage of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. A person of immense integrity and a passionate Zionist, Josh's contribution to the community by informing us and fearlessly holding all parts of our community to account made us better—far better than we were. I wish long life to Josh's family, particularly his wife, Lia, and newborn daughter, Lara. May his memory be a blessing to all who knew him.

MOUNTAIN LAGOON RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:21:31): I acknowledge Mountain Lagoon Rural Fire Service brigade, which recently put on a community barbecue immediately after its monthly training day. It was very well attended and to be honest, very hard to beat! It was 47 degrees that day, but the great food, friendly company and plenty of foot-tapping entertainment got many of us dancing, including me, overshadowed by the heat. It was a chance to show the lighter side of the RFS community, with plenty to smile about. They had been battling fires since early August 2019 with little or no reprieve, yet still found the strength, time and energy to bring the local community together in a more social, relaxed and friendly way. During these catastrophic conditions no homes were lost in Mountain Lagoon and for that we will be forever grateful to all the members of the Mountain Lagoon RFS brigade for giving so freely to ensure the safety of others during very difficult fire conditions.

MARIVAL CUP

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (18:22:40): I congratulate the organisers, judges, volunteers and gymnasts who participated in the inaugural Marival Cup held by the Australian Aesthetic Group Gymnastics Federation at Rooty Hill Leisure Centre on 22 February 2020. Participants were from the United States of America, New Zealand, Mongolia and Australia. Aesthetic Group Gymnastics has arrived on the shores of Australia with this inaugural internationally recognised event and we thank International Federation of Aesthetic Group Gymnastics President Tatiana Miroshnychenko for her support. A fantastic opening ceremony led into great competition as the crowds cheered on these magnificent gymnasts. The evening celebratory dinner saw gymnasts let their hair down and dance the night away. I particularly congratulate Marival D'Jarnirze on all her hard work in organising the event as well as training many of the gymnasts. I know her parents, Irina and Vladimir, are very proud of her. She is a credit to our community. This is a wonderful sport showcasing the talent of women. I hope the tournament continues for many years.

MICHAEL MOLLOY

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:23:43): I acknowledge the 2020 Miranda Senior of the Year, Michael Molloy. Michael is to be commended for his outstanding service to the Miranda RSL Sub Branch, which he first joined in 2007 and served on the executive committee from 2011 to 2019. As president of the sub branch between 2016 and 2019, Michael oversaw the historic Centenary of Anzac commemorations and an increase in attendances at Dawn Service. It is very much in Michael's nature to volunteer his time selflessly and not require any thanks for his efforts, so it is my pleasure to recognise his dedication to supporting our veterans and ensuring significant community events like Anzac Day occur. I was incredibly pleased to name Michael the 2020 Miranda Senior of the Year and to acknowledge the unwavering support of his wife, Kerry, at a morning tea held during Seniors Week. Seniors like Michael deserve recognition for the important contribution they make to our community. I was delighted to recognise his efforts. I thank Michael for his service to our veterans and our shire community, and extend my best wishes for the future.

BARRY PAULL 6 POINT PAIRS BOWLS TOURNAMENT

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:24:41): I congratulate Mr Steve Lacey and Mr Stuart Ellem who were this year's winners of the Barry Paull 6 Point Pairs tournament at Dapto Citizens Bowling Club.

Mr Lacey and Mr Ellem were the best of just three unbeaten teams and they finished with four wins, plus 22, to collect the top prize of \$800. Barry Paull, the guest of honour, was in attendance to congratulate the day's winners. The event is now in its fifth year and was named after Mr Paull to honour his service to the Dapto Citizens Bowling Club. Mr Paull served as treasurer and was a member of the club's committee for 25 years. I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Lacey and Mr Stuart on their resounding victory and to offer my thanks to Mr Paull for his service to our local bowling community.

CANINE COURT COMPANION PROGRAM

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (18:25:33): The Canine Court Companion Program comforts court users on the most stressful days of their lives. I pay tribute to Humphrey, who was one of Lismore's original therapy dogs when the program started a year ago. Humphrey was just three years old when he died after being bitten by a snake. Humphrey not only unleashed his goodwill on anxious court users, but also brought immense joy to his caregiver and handler, Chelle Cole. Chelle says that Humphrey knew how to relax, especially on walks, when he would just flop. Few could resist his demands for attention when he just rolled over onto his back. Because of Humphrey's death we need volunteers to come "fur-ward" to be a handler for the Canine Court Companion Program at Lismore courthouse. Anyone interested should contact Guide Dogs NSW/ACT to help another fab lab follow in Humphrey's inspirational paw prints.

NAGOYA SISTER CITY ART EXCHANGE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (18:26:28): Northlakes High School students Jacob Harris, Katie Arnold and Paul Munday have had artworks selected for the Nagoya Sister City Art Exchange. The Nagoya is an annual international art event held in Japan and has been running for the past 41 years. Principal Warren Welham took great pride in announcing the three visual arts students who have been selected from thousands of school entries from around the globe each year. The three students were amongst only 80 works that were selected to be exhibited in this international exhibition alongside artworks by students from Japan, USA, Mexico, France, China and Italy. Congratulations to Jacob, Katie and Paul on the great opportunity they have to experience building international relationships and cultural understanding.

LITTLE ATHLETICS

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (18:27:13): I recognise Guyra's Brooke and Scarlett Newberry on their participation and enormous success at the recent regional Little Athletics carnival. Brooke won gold in the under-13s 1,500 metre event with a time of eight minutes and 28 seconds. She also came third in the 800 metres, fifth in the 100 metres and sixth in the javelin event. Scarlett also had some wonderful achievements, placing third in the under-8s long jump, fifth in the 70 metres sprint, fifth in the 60 metres hurdles and fifth in the 400 metres event. Brooke will now represent our region at the State Little Athletics championships on 14 and 15 March. On behalf of Guyra and the rest of the Northern Tablelands, I wish her every success.

STUDENT CLIMATE CHANGE PROTEST

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (18:28:06): This week I had the pleasure of meeting a number of school students who for the past few weeks have been staging continual, silent protests in support of urgent action on climate change at the exit gates of Parliament. Students from various schools have been coming after school, completely of their own initiative, to convey to MPs the views of our youth. They understand the science, they know climate change is real and they know what the condition of the planet will be when it is handed over to their generation unless those in power take action on climate change and address the failures of governments to take strong action to protect their future. One of those students is Freya Waring from Sydney Girls High School, which is one of the schools in my electorate. She and her fellow protestors showed immense moral clarity and courage when they met with me and some of my Labor parliamentary colleagues and challenged us to do our utmost to urgently address climate change. Meeting young people like Freya gives me a lot of hope for our future. The kids are alright.

ADAM RICHARDS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:29:06): I take this opportunity to acknowledge Adam Richards, a constituent of mine and an employee of Fire and Rescue NSW. Adam was on holidays with his family at Bendalong on the South Coast over the Christmas and New Year period. Locals and visitors were trapped when the area became isolated by bushfires. Adam was instrumental in establishing a community centre, becoming the liaison with other emergency services and organising the logistics of evacuating people. It is remarkable that Adam was able to have such an impact on a number of people. It was his outstanding leadership and proactive actions that kept levels of fear and alarm to a minimum. Many members in this place have thanked our emergency

services personnel for their service over the past few weeks. I add my voice to this by thanking Adam for his selfless service—all while he was on holidays. He is a Copacabana resident, president of Copacabana Surf Life Saving Club and a very proud member of Fire and Rescue NSW. Once again, Adam, thank you so much for your service to our community.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, HEBERSHAM

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (18:30:06): I congratulate the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Hebersham Stake on celebrating its fortieth anniversary. Elder Kome Purcell has been the stake president since 2013 and has provided strong leadership and commitment to the local community. The church plays an important role in our community through a range of activities. It actively participates in clean-up days, raises money for the homeless, participates at council festivals and interfaith youth activities, and takes a leading role in the Blacktown city Network of Faith. Forty years has seen many changes in our community, but a constant has been the way that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints' Hebersham Stake not only conducts Christian services but also practises what it preaches by doing its best to assist the community and provide help to the vulnerable and hope for all. Happy fortieth anniversary to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Hebersham Stake.

MORTDALE PROBUS CLUB

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:31:00): I inform the House of the success of the Mortdale Probus Club's Christmas luncheon. Mortdale Probus Club assists semiretired and fully retired individuals to continue to engage with the community. The club gathers monthly at Mortdale RSL, the same venue where the Christmas luncheon took place. Given its connection to local Rotary clubs, Mortdale Probus is in a unique position to be able to benefit the whole community, not just retirees. The luncheon was a great occasion that provided the opportunity to wind down after what had been a productive year for the club. It was also an opportunity to announce a one-off \$500 grant from the New South Wales Government to the Mortdale Probus Club. The funding will assist with the printing of its monthly newsletter and the distribution of the official Probus magazine. The funding will also assist with the continuation of the club's highly regarded community work. I thank president Alan Taylor, secretary Colin Bishop and the Mortdale Probus Club for the luncheon and I wish them all the best for 2020.

TAMIEKA GARCIA

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:32:02): I bring to the attention of the House the recipient of Shellharbour City Council's Young Citizen of the Year award, Tamioka Garcia. Tamioka Garcia was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when she was 13 years old but she has not let that get in her way. Tamioka runs her own gym, where she trains people of all ages. She also loves to work with students from the area, specifically at Warilla High School and St Joseph's Catholic High School. Recently, at just 20 years old Tamioka became one of the youngest promoters in Australia when she organised the iFIGHT Night at Towradgi Beach Hotel. The event raised much-needed funds for Diabetes Australia. On behalf of my community, I take this opportunity to congratulate Tamioka Garcia on receiving this award. I wish her all the very best for her future.

PHILLIP HAYES

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:32:50): I commend Phillip Hayes for his ongoing dedication to our community. I was incredibly pleased to present Phillip with a NSW Seniors Festival Local Achievement Award at a morning tea held last Friday, in conjunction with the member for Cronulla, the Hon. Mark Speakman. These awards acknowledge the unique insights, abilities and experience that seniors like Phillip contribute to our community and I was delighted to recognise his efforts. Phillip has worked with Activus Transport on a voluntary basis since 2012 both as a driver and an active member of the organisation's board and its risk committee. During this time Phillip has been transporting seniors twice a week to vital medical and social appointments, going above and beyond to ensure that they arrive safely and continue to have some level of independence. He has also previously volunteered with Caringbah Rotary and Scouts NSW. I thank Phillip for his service to our community, particularly our seniors, and extend my best wishes for the future.

SHARYN BURGESS

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (18:33:43): Congratulations to Sharyn Burgess on being recognised at the Central Coast Council's 2020 Citizen of the Year awards under the category "Business Connecting Communities". This award acknowledges extraordinary members making a difference in the local community. Sharyn Burgess created the Community and Business Women's Network [CBWN] and brought it into existence on the northern end of the Central Coast with the aim to connect women in business and women in the community. CBWN is about connecting, supporting, growing, learning, networking, sharing and encouraging people to spend locally at small businesses. Sharyn Burgess is also involved with Wyong Neighbourhood Centre and supports

other local charities to achieve great outcomes for the community. Well done to Sharyn Burgess for creating a safe community environment for women to meet on the Central Coast.

SYDNEY ROYAL SHOWGIRL COMPETITION

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:34:34): Recently I attended a dinner in my electorate of Hawkesbury. It was no ordinary dinner—it was the Hawkesbury District Agricultural Association dinner for the zone two final of the Sydney Royal Easter Showgirl Competition. I was proud to be in the company of some amazing young women from around New South Wales who all had a massive interest in agriculture and rural activities. They were able to highlight the importance of rural work. The judges spent many hours adjudicating. It was difficult to decide on two winners to go onto the Sydney Royal Easter Showgirl finals held at Easter.

I am pleased to say that one of the finalists was Hawkesbury's Eliza Babazogli. Eliza was a worthy candidate and I was very proud to have her there. Emily Quinn from Milton attended also. The competition is a very proud tradition for Hawkesbury and other areas. Entrants also came from Penrith and down south where the bushfires were. It was wonderful to have them participate. I hope the tradition continues in the future.

REAL PET FOOD COMPANY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (18:35:58): I recognise the Real Pet Food Company for its incredibly generous donation to the Inverell Lions Club drought appeal. The Real Pet Food Company donated 50 pallets of its highest quality cat and dog food to the cause, assisting many rural landholders not only in Inverell but also across the wider region to keep their hounds and their cats wonderfully well fed. I commend the Real Pet Food Company for its substantial support of the Inverell Lions Club drought appeal. On behalf of the community, I thank the company for its contribution. The Real Pet Food Company is a major employer in Inverell. Like many in the community, it has been hit hard by drought but continues to give to those in need.

GUNDAGAI SHOW

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:36:42): Recently Gundagai celebrated its 129th annual show. Despite drought and bushfires in the neighbouring regions, show president Paul Luff was delighted that hundreds of people visited the exhibits, displays, demonstrations and events. A big drawcard was the showjumping program, which ran for the three days of the show. Gundagai is becoming a major show jumping venue and attracts some of Australia's best competitive riders. Gundagai was lucky to have rain just before the show. The dust settled and showgoers enjoyed a fun day. I acknowledge the hardworking committee, volunteers and sponsors who supported the event. Gundagai should be proud of all the people who put up their hands again this year to put on a successful 129th show.

DAVISTOWN PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:37:56): The Davistown Progress Association does a fantastic job. I congratulate President Jenny McCulla. She is an incredible powerhouse for that great organisation. I joined 521 local residents in signing a petition to help secure funds from health Minister Brad Hazzard for a much-needed defibrillator for the Davistown Progress Hall. Brad Hazzard contributed \$3,600. I thank those 521 local residents who joined with me in seeking that funding. Minister Hazzard was as good as his word. His contribution will ensure that a defibrillator is installed at the Davistown Progress Hall. Training for users of this life-saving piece of equipment is also included. I congratulate Davistown Progress Association's president Jenny McCulla on her ongoing advocacy for the Davistown Progress Hall and all of the executive who do a wonderful job. They have brought this hall back to pristine condition.

JOHN GRAY

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:38:57): I commend John Gray for his long-term dedication to Jannali Uniting Church in the Sutherland shire. Last Friday, together with the member for Cronulla, Mark Speakman, I was pleased to present John with a NSW Seniors Local Achievement Award at a morning tea. The awards acknowledge the unique insights, abilities and experience that seniors like John contribute to our community. I was delighted to recognise his efforts. John served as church council secretary at Jannali Uniting Church from 2011 to 2018. Throughout his years of voluntary work John oversaw a number of community-focused initiatives, especially Joshua's Kitchen. Every Wednesday in the Jannali Uniting Church hall volunteers at Joshua's Kitchen provide a free evening meal to community members who are experiencing hardship. John was incredibly active in the management of this program, having formalised it into a not-for-profit enterprise and established a committee and constitution. I thank John for his service to our community and extend to him my best wishes for the future.

PENSHURST WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:39:52): I congratulate Penshurst West Public School on its 2019 school presentation, which I attended on 18 December. School presentations are a highlight of my year, as they provide an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the future leaders of our community. I was impressed with the quality of the presentation, which was largely student led. I am proud to say that the Government enthusiastically supports Penshurst West Public School. Construction is currently underway on a new two-storey building that features seven innovative learning spaces, new student amenities and a special programs room. I thank principal Ross Angus for the invitation and the whole Penshurst West Public School community for their continued contributions to our wonderful community. I wish the students who graduated on the day all the best as they begin their high school journeys this year.

SURF LIFESAVERS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:40:42): I acknowledge the fantastic work of our surf lifesavers. Throughout summer, up and down the eastern seaboard of New South Wales, those volunteers give freely of their time to ensure that beachgoers are safe and protected. Not only do they save lives but also they ensure that our nippers are well trained in reading the surf, knowing where the rips are and how to rescue people. Surf lifesaving is a healthy, family-friendly sport. I want to ensure that every surf lifesaver, particularly those who are volunteers, are recognised in all New South Wales communities. The job they do cannot be underestimated. People know if they get into trouble in the surf they can look for that yellow-and-red jersey for assistance.

SAM JENNER

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (18:41:43): I congratulate and recognise Armidale's Sam Jenner for his participation and enormous success at the recent Melbourne to Warrnambool Cycling Classic. Sam finished in fifth place as a part of Team Bridgelane. At the 185-kilometre mark Sam was part of a five-man breakaway group that rode away from the initial pack of 27 riders. Sam was the first of the Bridgelane riders to cross the line. His team went on to take out the teams classification, with three riders finishing inside the top 10. The event was the start of this year's National Road Series season. Sam is an exceptionally gifted cyclist and a young man who is a very proud ambassador for Armidale and the Northern Tablelands region. I commend him for his result and wish him every success for the rest of the National Road Series.

DONGES IGA, YOUNG

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:42:43): I recognise Robert Donges and Wendy Silk of Donges Independent Grocery Alliance [IGA] in Young for the money raised and goods donated through their bushfire appeal. On 2 January, Donges IGA commenced its appeal for donations of non-perishable food, water, toiletries, baby needs, pet supplies and money to bushfire-affected communities on the South Coast and Snowy Valleys. To date, Donges IGA has distributed the following IGA gift cards: \$5,000 to Snowy Valleys recovery centre, \$12,000 to the South Coast, \$1,700 to Cobargo, \$4,000 to Eden and \$2,000 to Tumbalong. It has also distributed water, food and toiletries valued at \$20,000 in Tumut and Cobargo. The generosity of the Cootamundra electorate continues to astound me. I am privileged to be part of that amazing community.

ILLAWONG PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (18:43:39): I congratulate Illawong Public School on receiving \$15,000 under the inaugural Sustainable Schools Grants program. The four-year, \$10 million program gives schools the opportunity to develop innovative hands-on projects that help students learn about environmentally sustainable practices. Led by principal Jennifer Birch, Illawong Public School's innovative sustainability project "From Pump to Produce to Plate" will install pumps, taps and hoses on existing rainwater tanks. Each class will establish its own vegetable garden and use the rainwater irrigation system, in conjunction with sustainable practices such as worm farms and composting, to nourish the gardens and reduce waste. Finally, the fresh produce will be sold by students to the school community at farmers' markets or simply taken home to their families. I was pleased to visit Ms Birch and members of the student leadership team last week to announce the funding and learn more about this exciting project. I acknowledge school captains Blake and Hayley and prefects Jacob, Lucy and Phoebe. I commend Illawong Public School for embracing this exciting opportunity.

COASTIES BUSHFIRE APPEAL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:44:42): I acknowledge the Coasties Bushfire Appeal that was held at the Reef Restaurant in my electorate last Friday night. This was also attended by the Minister for emergency services, David Elliott, MP, and my colleague in the other House the Hon. Taylor Martin. We were blessed to have Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons join us along with Vicki Campbell, our local superintendent, and also

Angela Burford, the captain of the Wamberal Rural Fire Brigade. This bushfire appeal fundraiser was put together by local resident Gareth MacRae along with a group of volunteers, plus local businesses who all joined in and were happy to provide gifts and raffle items for the evening. I am proud to say that the evening raised almost \$50,000. Half of that \$50,000 will be going to all the local Rural Fire Service units on the Central Coast. The remaining half will be donated to the families of those brave heroes who lost their lives during the fire crisis in New South Wales.

MAROUBRA ROTARY CLUBS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron)—On Monday 17 February I had the pleasure of attending Maroubra Rotary Club's 60th anniversary dinner at the Bonnie Doon Golf Club, Pagewood. The evening was a joyous affair, and I joined my Parliamentary colleagues Michael Daley and Matt Thistlethwaite, as well as Rotarian District Governor Dianne North, Assistant District Governor Hilary Lloyd, District Governor-Elect Warwick Richardson, Maroubra Rotary President Vivienne Pusey, Botany Bay Rotary President Christine Baramilis, Eastern Beaches Police Area Commander Superintendent Rohan Cramsie, and Mayor of Randwick Council Councillor Danny Said, in toasting Maroubra Rotary's sixty years of service to our community.

We were also joined by the many Maroubra Rotarians, past and present, who have contributed to that organisation over the years. It was a chance to recognise their work, which is too expansive to properly list here, but includes annual participation in Clean Up Australia Day, their Pride of Workmanship Awards, donations to international humanitarian projects, and weekly meetings with informative presentations on a wide variety of topics of interest such as finance, mental health, or even the virtues of civil disobedience. Congratulations to Maroubra Rotary and best of luck for your next 60 years.

BRIAN MITCHELL

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Congratulations and thank you to Mulgoa resident and previous owner of Mulgoa Pharmacy, Brian Mitchell for his 18 years of service to the Mulgoa community, closing a very memorable chapter in his life. Brian first started at the Mulgoa Pharmacy in December 2001 and soon took over the business in February 2002 along with his wife, Marilyn. Over the last 18 years, Brian has made many professional and personal connections with local families resulting in a large number of loyal customers who became like extended family. Brian always aimed to make work enjoyable, a place to have a laugh and to joke where possible – making the pharmacy a happy place to visit. Now looking to focus more on their own dreams, Brian and Marilyn hope to travel the world and catch up on some quality time with their children and grandchildren, but look forward to seeing the pharmacy grow and thrive under its new ownership. Thank you Brian and Marilyn, I wish you all the best!

INNER WEST SENIORS FESTIVAL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Seniors Festival is an opportunity to come together and celebrate the contributions seniors make each and every day to our inner west community. I was proud to attend the Inner West Seniors Festival at the Gumbramorra Hall in Marrickville last week to celebrate the extraordinary contribution of seniors, particularly those in CALD and migrant communities. The event was organised by the Inner West Council in collaboration with Community and Cultural Connections, Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre, Ethnic Community Services Co-operative, Newtown Neighbourhood Centre and Addison Road Community Centre.

The festival showcased the wonderful multiculturalism of the Inner West with performances from the Hoa Mai Cultural Group, Indonesian Senior music band and exercise demonstrations from the Marrickville Tai Chi Group. Thank you to Mayor Darcy Byrne, and all the volunteers and performers for making the festival such a resounding success. Seniors across the inner west are unsung heroes, providing vital support as carers for family members, running community and sports groups, and volunteering countless hours with local community groups. Happy Seniors Week to all seniors in my electorate, thank you for all you do for our community.

MATTHEW WHITBREAD

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I would like to acknowledge the recent unanimous election of well-known Bankstown local, Mr Matthew Whitbread, as the new Chair of Athletics New South Wales. I congratulate Matthew on this well-deserved appointment. This is a wonderful achievement for Matthew, who at just 29 years of age, becomes the youngest person to lead Athletics NSW, where he has served as a director for the last six years. Matthew brings a wealth of experience, skills and knowledge to his new role at the helm of the state's peak athletics body.

He is currently the Secretary of Bankstown Sports Athletics Club and has played an instrumental role in transforming the club into one of the leading athletics clubs in Australia. Matthew is also a Senior Associate with

Corrs Chambers Westgarth, one of the largest legal firms in the country, where he has built a successful practice in corporate and commercial law. Athletics NSW has a membership of over 15,000, coordinates almost 2,000 coaches, officials and volunteers at events across the state, and has an annual turnover of over \$2 million and I have no doubt Matthew will excel in this exciting new role.

PETER SAWTELL

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation)—I recognise the efforts Werris Creek's Peter Sawtell has been working for NSW Railways for 65 years and has no plans to retire any time soon. Mr Sawtell was a few months shy of 16 when he moved to the Liverpool Plains for work after growing up on a dairy farm in Dorrigo. He started out with NSW Railways on February 1, 1955 as a shop boy and lived at Mrs Faulkner's boarding house. He said his pay was "12 pounds 2 and six pence a fortnight" and worked Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 3.30pm.

His tasks including picking up waste, collecting dirty rags used by the fitters, and cleaning the tanks of the steam trains. He worked his way up the ladder doing various jobs and learning to adapt with the changing technology, coal to diesel, and electric powered trains. He is one of the longest-serving drivers with NSW Railways and still works about 90 hours a fortnight. Mr Sawtell's one stipulation has always been that he lives in Werris Creek. What a fabulous town Werris Creek is. It has a tremendous rail heritage on display at the Australian Railway Monument and Rail Journeys Museum. Thank you for your service Peter.

JUNIOR LANDCARE GRANTS

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—Congratulations to Macquarie College and Waratah Public School, who have successfully been awarded funding from Round Two of the Woolworths Junior Landcare Grants. Mr Aaron Williams has led the charge at Macquarie College, and is excited about exploring biodiversity and using native. Students will collaborate on the design of the natural growing space, the selection of species, and consider final uses for the plants. Potential uses include within senior hospitality classes as food sources, and geography classes as case studies, and to complement junior students' learnings during Flora and Fauna Fridays program. Waratah Public will push forward with their exciting nature programs, helping to build awareness of environmental issues amongst students and their friends and family. I congratulate both schools for engaging in the grants process and for their success. I look forward to seeing what these schools can accomplish with this funding, and I encourage other schools in the Wallsend Electorate to look for grants funding to build new environmental programs.

CULLEN BULLEN RESIDENTS THANK RFS HEROES

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—I would like to acknowledge the unsung heroes from the Cullen Bullen Rural Fire Service. They were treated like heroes when the close knit community gathered in early February to thank them for their bravery in defending the area from the recent bushfires. A special dinner in honour of these unsung volunteers was held at the local Progress Association Hall when I was honoured to be able to join with residents to say thank you to these RFS volunteers for going above and beyond the call of duty.

Local RFS captain Darcy McCann and his troops given a standing ovation as their efforts were officially acknowledged by guests. This has clearly been a stressful and emotional time for everyone in the town, but what it does show is the resilience and determination of residents who band together when the going gets tough. These special people put their lives on the line for not only their local community, but in other areas too. We are forever grateful to these quiet achievers. It was evident on the night as to how the community feels about these people who are our heroes.

FIRST CLASS 19 ART EXHIBITION

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—On 14th February 2020 I was delighted to participate in the opening of the 'First Class 19' art exhibition in the Museum of Art and Culture. The exhibition, now in its twelfth year, celebrates the work of Hunter and Central Coast students, and showcases excellent work that has been selected from Higher School Certificate submissions. The artwork focuses on the themes of nature and the environment, memories, family, and the importance of culture, and students' contemporary concerns including mental health, climate change, pollution and injustice.

Artwork was selected from 145 pieces from 37 schools, including artwork by students from Warners Bay High School: Jade Behrens, Monique Carey, Renae Cleary, Melanie Hain, Abbey Hindmarsh (who I was privileged to meet), Brad McKinnon, Jasmine McPherson, Tahnee Marriott, Ellie Pritchard and Bethany Urbanowicz; and Kotara High School students Preston Brook, Lauren Donoghoe, Kaylyn Fairhurst, Jasmine Hammond, Ainsley Knox, Serena Rossi and Lincoln Trevett. I congratulate all of the talented students whose art

work was submitted, and especially those who had their work displayed. I also recognise the art teachers of the schools of the Hunter and Central Coast, and the exhibition's curator Helen Willis.

KYLIE HILDER

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)—I wish to inform the house of the recent success of Kylie Hilder's ambition is to eventually take on a head coaching role in the NRL Women's competition. Hilder, formerly of Taree and now living in Forster, has taken another step to achieving that goal when she coached the Sydney Roosters team in the NRLW nines to be played in Perth earlier in February. This will be Hilder's first experience as a head coach, although she had an assistant's role with the Roosters last season. Retired from playing, Kylie has a new role with the NSWRL as pathways manager and attended a high performance conference held in Brisbane last weekend. She'll coach the Central Coast Roosters (formerly CRL Newcastle) in the NSW Women's Premiership this year and will also steer the Emerging Country team at the National Championships to be played on the Gold Coast mid-year. Congratulations and best of luck Kylie.

LIVERPOOL SCHOOLS

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—I wish to recognise Heckenberg, Hoxton Park and Marsden Rd Public Schools, all of which are located within the State electorate of Liverpool. These three schools are involved in the delivery of the National Community Hubs Program (NCHP) in Liverpool and all have established Community Hubs at their schools. Liverpool Council has partnered with Community Hubs Australia (CHA) to support the delivery of the Program. Council has a role as a Support Agency to provide operational support, strategic leadership and guidance to the local Hub network.

The program has been operating for some time but recently had an official lunch on 20 February at Marsden Rd Public School. The Principal of that school Manisha Gazula was present as was the Principal of Hoxton Park Public School Kylie Donovan and the Principal of Heckenberg Public School Ben Kirkman together with other members of each of the school communities. Also present, from Victoria, was CEO of CHA, Dr Sonja Hood. Hubs aim to be gateways which allow families to connect with each other, with the school and with existing services. They focus in particular on reaching women from refugee and migrant backgrounds. To date, the hubs in Liverpool have been outstanding programs.

BUDDHIST BLESSING CEREMONY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—On Sunday 9th February 2020 I had the great pleasure of joining with our local community and representatives of the Chinese Associations of Greater Western Sydney as we celebrated the Buddhist Blessing Ceremony at Freedom Plaza in Cabramatta. Present at the celebrations were my parliamentary colleagues, the Leader of the Opposition, Jodi McKay MP, Nick Lalich MP, Member for Cabramatta, and a number of local community and cultural leaders. Despite the heavy rain and wind, this joyous occasion had a very strong turn out as the community well and truly embraced and welcomed in the Year of the Rat. The blessings bestowed by our local most Venerable Buddhist Monks was that of peace, good health and prosperity for all throughout the year. I would like to commend and congratulate the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society, Australian Chin Lien Association, Australian Lao/Thai Association & Fairfield City Council for assisting in the organising and presentation of the day and for making this day of blessings a very special, memorable experience for us all.

GRENFELL PONY CLUB

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to acknowledge the Grenfell Pony Club who have welcomed 26 new and returning riders to the club for 2020. Their numbers have grown since 2019 and they are looking forward to a full schedule for the coming year as members of the club improve their riding ability and enjoy many fun days out with friends. I recognise the effort that members of the club, their families and friends put in to hold successful rally days and other events. A growing membership is a fantastic outcome and reward for hard work. I wish all of the members a fantastic, fun-filled year.

PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse)—On Friday 21 March, I was part of the Prince of Wales Hospital's Cancer Survivorship Centre Opening. The new Centre, within the historic Medical Superintendent's Cottage is a peaceful, relaxing space providing cancer survivors with a place to get access to a range of evidence-based and research-driven cancer survivorship programs and services. It was good to be there with Minister Victor Dominello MP and tour the building alongside Professor Boon Chua, Director of Cancer and Haematology Services at POW, Michael Still, Board Chair of the South Eastern Sydney LHD and Board member Janet McDonald AO as well as Nelune Foundation co-founders Nelune Rajapakse AM and Anna Guillan AM. The Nelune Comprehensive Cancer Centre is co-located in the Cottage, and the Nelune Foundation helped fund the

new Cancer Survivorship Centre along with the NSW and Federal Governments, the Sony Foundation and the Prince of Wales Hospital Foundation. We know that cancer affects patients for the rest of their lives so this state-of-the-art care to support them mentally and emotionally is so important and welcome.

QUILTS FOR TROOPS

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to recognise the students from Balranald Central School and their dedicated teacher Alison Linnett on their incredible community service project in producing several quilt tops for the Australian troops serving overseas. Alison heard about the Aussie Hero Quilts organisation and saw a great opportunity for the students to not only learn how to sew but make a difference in the lives of our service men and women. Students from kindergarten to grade 6 produced their own 8 inch square blocks which were joined together to create the quilt tops. The Balranald community were able to view and enjoy the children's work for several weeks before being sent off to the Aussie Hero Quilts. Congratulations to Alison and her students for contributing to the amazing work of Aussie Hero Quilts and being a part of the some 11,368 quilts sent to our service personal since the organisation was formed. Good luck and continue sewing and learning.

NRRRL WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I acknowledge the women from the Ballina Electorate who were selected to become part of Northern Rivers Regional Rugby League representative team. Illarah Roberts-Hickling, Eden Hanna, Emma Stockham, Kerene Bienke, Katrina Anderson, Michelle Clark and Sharyn Blundell were selected from over 40 players across the Northern Rivers to make up this team. Officials have noted that the calibre of female players in this male dominated sport is so high that it was difficult to make a final selection. I commend these women for their sporting prowess and representation of our region. I wish the team all the best for the season ahead.

PAULINE JENSEN

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I recognise the contribution of a tireless community advocate, my friend Pauline Jensen. Pauline was a free spirit, a world traveller, committed to education and a tireless local community advocate in Balmain, being an active and dedicated member of the Greens. Pauline had a remarkable passion for education and a long career as a primary school teacher which took her from Balmain Public School to Kalang in NSW and indigenous schools in Kununurra Western Australia. Her students describe her as a teacher full of energy and keenness to instil a sense of independence in everyone she taught.

Pauline lived life to the full, taking one of the last camel tours through the desert, riding a pushbike over sand hills, volunteering on a farm on a tiny island in Vanuatu and spending time in India perfecting her yoga practice. Her last accomplishment was building her straw bale house, a remarkable achievement on many fronts. Sadly, surrounded by her friends, Pauline died far too early of mesothelioma in November last year. Pauline will be missed enormously, but lives on in the hearts and memories of all the people whose lives she touched. Vale.

MAITLAND FESTIVAL WEEKEND

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—This weekend writers and visual artists will descend upon the city of Maitland for the second annual Artastique Festival and the inaugural Indie Festival, or IF. It will be wonderful to see Maitland celebrate writing, publishing and visual artworks through events that take creative works from the halls and walls and into public spaces. Artastique turns all of central Maitland into a living art gallery. Visual artists register to provide their works, and our Maitland retailers register to display the art. The event has proved so popular that in only its second year, Artastique has boomed from 45 entrants to about 120 applicants. Maitland boasts a proud pedigree of writers, artists, musicians and performers and I am delighted to see these festivals so well received by the people of our community. I encourage all our retailers to support our arts community in this exciting and innovative initiative of Maitland City Council and Mayor Councillor Loretta Baker.

MENAI SES UNIT

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge the dedicated volunteers from the Menai SES Unit who were vital to local recovery and clean-up following the supercell storm which hit on 20 January. Over 15 minutes the Shire was hit with hail up to five centimetres in size and winds reaching 120 kilometres per hour. State Emergency Service teams from across the State addressed 783 jobs throughout the Shire, totalling 220,000 volunteer hours and 944 individual team taskings. I commend the volunteers from the Menai SES Unit who worked tirelessly to clear roads, remove fallen trees from homes and cars, and ensure that our community was back to business in a matter of days. Led by Unit Commander Peter Carrigan and Deputy Unit Commander Daryl Brett, I acknowledge Keith Barnes, Ryan Beeby, Stephen Brown, Roy Cowley, Anne Davies, Mark Deacon,

Denise El-Rab, Dennis Fabris, Paul Hammond, Paul Harvey, Teddy Haryjanto, Steve Logan, Graeme Lundie, Julius Maniago, Natalie Overall, Hemant Raval, Peter Robinson, Barbara Thorn, Madeleine Whitby, Andrew Wong and Heather Woods. I thank these volunteers for their selflessness and steadfast dedication to our community.

MUN GLOBAL

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer)—I recently had the opportunity to visit an excellent business in my electorate of Epping called Mun Global. Mun have been operating in Epping for nearly 20 years, and is a worldwide premium health product supplier that specialises in high-end medical and surgical gloves as well as other health products. Their goal is to become the brand leader in premium healthcare products that enhance peoples' wellbeing and welfare around the world. Members will be especially interested to know that more recently Mun have been assisting NSW Health with containing and quarantining the spread of the Coronavirus through the production and distribution of top quality level 2 and level 3 surgical masks. During my visit I was given an insight into Mun's operations by the senior management team, and was interested to learn that they had produced and distributed over 350,000 masks in Australia. I also heard about the work they have been doing with NSW Health and the opportunities that exist for more collaboration between the Department and similar businesses. Thank you to David Teng and Andrew Teng and the whole team at Mun for your hospitality and your presentation. I look forward to visiting again soon.

PENSHURST RSL SUB-BRANCH CHRISTMAS CHEER LUNCHEON

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—On the 8th of December 2019 I had the pleasure of attending the Christmas Cheer Luncheon organised by the Penshurst RSL Sub Branch. We are very lucky to have a number of very active sub-branches in my electorate of Oatley. The Penshurst RSL sub-branch is no exception. Since its establishment in 1927, the sub-branch has provided assistance and welfare support to ex- and current service personnel, as well as their widows and their dependents. The sub-branch provides an advocacy service at no charge for those lodging claims under the Veterans Entitlement Act as well as the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Scheme. It was great to attend the Christmas Cheer luncheon and celebrate the festive season with branch members. I would like to acknowledge Mr John Hoban, President, as well as Mr Graham Grant, Honorary Secretary, for their dedication to the sub-branch.

PICTON CWA

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—I would like to recognise the outstanding work done by the Picton CWA. They have been a beacon of light and hope in all of the devastation that has occurred in the villages of Buxton and Balmoral as result of the Green Wattle Creek fires. They co-ordinated the setup of the Recovery centre at the Balmoral Community Hall. The recovery centre was the focal point for the community and for the many donations that came on a daily basis. The locals felt comfortable at the recovery centre. The work done by the CWA led by Kerrie O'Grady was inspirational. Locals were able to visit on an informal basis to discuss things with their friends and neighbours. There was always a welcoming smile or a shoulder to cry on. The centre was this week visited by His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Mrs Hurley who like others paid tribute to the great work being done at the centre and of the wonderful community spirit that exists in Balmoral and Buxton. I congratulate Kerrie and the Picton CWA on their outstanding work.

HELENSBURGH RFS AND SRI VENKATESWARA TEMPLE

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—I take this opportunity to commend the Sri Venkateswara Temple for their extremely generous donation to the Helensburgh Rural Fire Service Brigade (RFS) to assist with supporting their efforts. The members were welcomed to the temple for the first time with a blessing ceremony to exchange the donation and I was pleased to be part of the ceremony. The ceremony was followed by an afternoon tea filled with staples of Indian cuisine which was enjoyed by all. Helensburgh RFS also recently celebrated a huge milestone of 80 years and I was pleased to join the Hon David Elliott Minister for Emergency Services to commemorate this special occasion. The Brigade has a rich history officially forming following the devastating bushfires which occurred along the Illawarra Coast on 13th January 1939, also known as "Black Friday". On the day 23 past and present members were presented with the "Brigade Life Membership" for their service to the Helensburgh Brigade spanning over 20 years. A "National Medal Clasp" and two "Long Service Medal Clasps" were also presented. The brigade lives up to their motto of "Ready for Action" and I thank the members for their dedication, commitment and service to our community.

HARTLEY COLLEGE PAST PUPILS ASSOCIATION AND JAFFNA UNIVERSITY GRADUATES ASSOCIATION

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)—Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting with two community organisations to discuss their efforts in supporting our fantastic New South Wales Rural Fire Service. I'd like to

commend Hartley College Past Pupils' Association of New South Wales for donating \$2,550 to the state's Rural Fire Service. This is a tremendous effort by the former students of Sri Lanka's Hartley College. Those who donated were not just members of the New South Wales community, but from similar school associations across Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom. Recently, I was also fortunate to meet with the Australian arm of the Jaffna University Graduates' Association, who tirelessly fundraised \$3,200 for the NSW RFS. Jaffna University is in Sri Lanka and its members of the Association worked with similar bodies across the world for to raise funds to support those in need across our state. Thank you to our Sri Lankan-Australian community for supporting those affected by bushfires and supporting the New South Wales Rural Fire Service.

EQUALITY AUSTRALIA

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney Electorate, I wish to put on record my appreciation of the work of Equality Australia, the leading national advocacy body for LGBTIQ+ rights and ably led by Anna Brown, previously co-chair of the national Yes campaign for marriage equality. Equality Australia works across the political spectrum to inform and educate, to lobby decision makers and to build community momentum for reforms that recognise human rights and empower vulnerable people. They lobby decision makers directly, educate and inform affected communities, and run online campaigns. Equality Australia is working on LGBTIQ+ inclusion in Census data collection and getting correct identity documents for transgender and gender diverse people across the country. Importantly, Equality Australia is focussed now on informing the wider community about the serious risks in the revised federal Religious Discrimination Bill. They are making sure that those affected by the debate about religious freedom know what the exposure bills would mean, and it has never been more important for strategic leadership working within and for LGBTIQ+ communities.

ERICA HENLEY AND OPERATION HOPE

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—I wish to acknowledge the wonderful work of Coal Point resident Erica Henley and a small group of volunteers behind Operation Hope in Lake Macquarie. Operation Hope, founded by Erica in 2017, has been sourcing and collecting donations of unused medical equipment and supplies from hospitals and shipping them to northern Iraq where they are used to treat thousands of refugees and people in need. The charity raised \$28,000 in 2017 which funded two new wards in an emergency field hospital outside of Mosul. It then raised a further \$17,000 to fund surgeries and treatments for women and children who had fled Mosul. Since then, it has acquired several shipping containers and filled them with donated medical equipment from hospitals and medical centres throughout NSW. The value of that equipment, which no longer meets Australian standards, is in the order of a million dollars and is now being used in hospitals in Syria and Northern Iraq, and refugee camps in Kurdistan. It is obviously not an easy job, but one that has provided enormous benefit to those in need. I applaud Erica and all associated with Operation Hope.

BATLOW COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Despite the imminent threat of the Dunn's Road Fire Batlow's community spirit was strong. It was that same community spirit that saved the town on January 4, embodied in the firefighters and local mosquito fleet, who battled the blaze, as well as the business owners, who threw open their doors to shelter those who remained. When evacuees were allowed to re-enter their town days later, they were cut off from telecommunications, power and safe access to water. Without appropriate assistance, they learned which of the 50 homes destroyed belonged to whom. Support services were not ready for that. However, with that great community spirit, there were locals who took up the gauntlet for Batlow, despite their own traumatic experiences. Some of the many who helped included: Ray Billing, who became a conduit between authorities and the community and his wife Tina; Batlow Pub's Matthew and Linda Rudd and RSL manager Kylie Boxsell, who provided food, water and shelter; and Deb Wiltshire and Tim McDonald, who kick-started and ran an emergency relief distribution centre unaided. To them and to the many others who stepped up, thank you.

BETTY SEARLE

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter)—I would like to congratulate Mrs Betty Searl of Singleton who was presented the Uniting's "With Heart" award for her 20 years voluntary service at Uniting Elizabeth Gates Singleton and Uniting Alroy House Singleton. Mrs. Betty Searl who is 87 years old, helps out the residents on a weekly basis by doing hand and nail care for residents. She also helps out with church services and organising fetes. Again Congratulations to Betty Searl for her many years of volunteering and I thank her for her wonderful service to the Singleton community.

PERRY LOPEZ NORTH SYDNEY BEARS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Today I rise to acknowledge the North Sydney District League Football Club. The North Sydney Bears are an icon in my electorate of North Shore. Behind these brilliant players is a team of people who are passionate about the game and the club. Of this team I would particularly like

to acknowledge Perry Lopez. Perry, after a successful tenure as Chairman, is stepping down and handing over to a new Chairman of the Bears. Perry has followed the North Sydney Bears since the age of 5 and has been a passionate and committed supporter ever since. Perry has achieved a lot during his time with the Bears, ensuring the club remains an important part of our local community. I recognise Perry's support in the launch of the club's women's team into New South Wales Rugby League. This has helped inspire young girls in the district to play rugby league, and ensures that they too have role models to look up to. I would like to thank Perry for his time as Chairman, and for everything he's given for the club and the game.

JUNIOR LANDCARE GRANT RECIPIENTS

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—I don't normally speak about corporate grants, but am pleased to acknowledge two successful applicants for Woolworths Junior Landcare Grants in my electorate of Davidson: St Martin's Primary School and Frenchs Forest Public School. The program aims to inspire children to learn about sustainable food production, waste management and enhancing biodiversity. So it provides primary schools and community organisations grants of up to \$1000 for worthwhile environmental initiatives. St Martin's Primary School, located in the suburb of Davidson, has received a grant of \$875 for their project 'A New Buzz in the Playground'. Students will be involved in the installation and ensured survival of a hive for stingless bees, encouraging them to be stewards of the earth. Frenchs Forest Public School received a grant of \$1000 for their 'Bush Tucker Garden Project', which encourages diversity of native bush food plants. Well done and congratulations to all involved, especially both schools for successfully promoting environmental sustainability to students.

SWIMMER JARROD DYER

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I bring to the attention of the House the recent achievements of a young athlete from the electorate of Shellharbour, Mr Jarrod Dyer. Jarrod recently competed in the INAS 2019 Global Games in Brisbane. The event is held every four years and is organised by the International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability. Outstandingly, not only did Jarrod win a gold medal alongside his team mates in the 4x100 metre relay, they broke the World Record for the event. So far, Jarrod's swimming career has been marked by a number of impressive achievements. He was awarded the 2019 Brett Stibners Athlete with a Disability Athlete of the Year award. He took home in an incredible, 15 medals from the Australian Age Swimming Championships and School Sport Nationals. He also place in the top 10 at the Australian Open Swimming Championships and has been selected for the Swimming NSW Para Potential Squad. Jarrod has his great work ethic to thank for these results. I would like to wish Jarrod all the best in his very bright future. Congratulations Jarrod, the whole community of Shellharbour is behind you.

HILLS RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Hills Relay for Life 2020 Organising Committee for a successful launch earlier this month. Over 200 people attended the Event Cinemas Film screening of 'A Beautiful Day in the Neighbourhood' which raised funds and more importantly awareness for the pinnacle event of the Relay for Life Calendar, the overnight 24hr walking challenge where members of the community pledge money for the number of laps completed. Administratively overseen by the Cancer Council, the event is an international occurrence which goes a long way, not just in monetarily providing for cancer sufferers and survivors, but also in providing moral support and hope. Last year the Hills Relay for Life raised over \$320,000 for the Cancer Council, adding to the more than \$4 million raised overall since the chapter's inception. My thanks goes out to the entire team for their contributions and hard work over the years, notably to Ruth Didsbury, the 2020 Hills Citizen of the Year, and I wish them all the best for the main event on the 16th May.

WENDY BAWN

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Our volunteers make a beautiful, vibrant and sustainable community. They drive change and seek to encourage the moral principles of fairness, respect and egalitarianism. Moreover they put service above themselves and lobby to ensure our towns and regions have the adequate facilities people deserve. Wendy Bawn is best described as a tireless community advocate and hardworking member of Johns River who has served her town in a number of roles, immortalising her place in the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll. I recently announced Wendy's inclusion as one of 78 women across NSW to be listed on the Honour Roll for her outstanding volunteer service to the Johns River community. Wendy has passionately supported many groups in her home town, including 34 years volunteering for the Johns River Community Hall and 15 years with 'For Australia Wildlife Needing Aid (FAWNA)' organisation. Wendy has also loved donating her time to the Johns River P&C, volunteering in the canteen and teaching our youth at Sunday school. Women like Wendy provide an enormous amount of support to our community and really are hidden treasures who deserve our utmost respect and gratitude.

HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI WOMEN'S SHELTER

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)—Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter provides invaluable services to my local community. It is with great pleasure that we welcome new President Louise McCann and Vice President Lucy Garnier. This year, the shelter will be looking to expand, with the hope of building a permanent shelter to further help women in need. They are also looking to be able to provide support to children, specifically those in the care of women. Community support is what makes organisations like the Women's Shelter flourish. I implore Hornsby residents to help our local Women's Shelter in any way they can. I would also like to acknowledge the Secretary – Belinda Flatters, Fundraising Coordinator – Catherine Knox, Head of Public Relations – Marianna Papadakis and Volunteers Organiser – Tracey Sigler. Without the tireless work of these amazing women, our community would not have this vital support service. I would also like to recognise outgoing President Salliane McClland and former Vice-President Kiki Paul for all their fantastic work over the past few years and I wish them all the best in their future endeavours. Well done team, I wish you all the best moving forward. Our entire community is extremely grateful for your work.

KOKODA RESIDENCES BREAKS NEW GROUND

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai)—I recently attended the official Groundbreaking Ceremony for the new retirement development, Kokoda Residences located in Waitara. The \$90m project was funded by Vasey Communities, a not-for-profit organisation originally established to build affordable accommodation for war widows. I was joined by The Honourable Margaret Beazley AO, QC, Governor of NSW, Vasey Communities CEO, Graham Hooper and their Chairman, Kate Graham, Hornsby Shire Council Mayor, The Honourable Philip Ruddock and distinguished guests. The site is located near several convenient amenities, including the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai PCYC, shops, and health clubs and is only a short walk to Waitara Station. This project is essential for our local area, meeting the needs of our growing senior community. Kokoda residents will have their own exclusive facilities to socialise and enjoy, including an array of lifestyle features such as central gardens, a bar, lounge, library and gym. With construction due to commence this month, I look forward to seeing how the site develops and how Kokoda will offer a welcome housing option for seniors in our area.

MACARTHUR CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I would like to congratulate the Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living on winning the Return and Earn Litter Prevention Award for Non-Profits at the Keep Australia Beautiful 2019 Sustainable Cities Awards. I acknowledge the passion and leadership of the board, staff and volunteers of the Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living in driving the Centre's achievements. I note the value of the Return and Earn NSW container deposit scheme in not only cleaning up the environment but also helping others in the community.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:48 until
Tuesday 3 March at 12:00.**