



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday, 2 June 2020

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 2 June 2020

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[Notices of motions given]

Business of the House

SESSIONAL ORDERS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: By leave: I move:

That the following sessional orders be now adopted:

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION STATEMENTS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, standing order 108A shall read as follows:

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

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

Written Statements

- (2) Each member can make two written Community Recognition Statements each sitting day until 31 December 2020 and then one each sitting day thereafter.
- (3) Statements must be lodged electronically with the Table Office by 12.00 noon on a sitting day for publication in Hansard that day.
- (4) Written statements must not exceed 200 words.
- (5) A statement not conforming with the rules or with the practice of the House can:
 - (a) Under the authority of the Speaker, be amended by the Clerk.
 - (b) Be ordered by the Speaker not to be included in Hansard.

Statements given in the House

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

133.

- (1) A notice of motion for:
 - (a) A bill;
 - (b) Government Business;
 - (c) No confidence in the Government, Minister or Speaker, or censure of Member or Speaker; and
 - (d) Business with Precedence (SO 118) with the exception of motions of condolence and the printing of papersmust be given verbally at the time prescribed in the Routine of Business.
- (2) General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices):
 - (a) May only be given when called for at the time prescribed in the Routine of Business each day;

- (b) The period for giving a General Business Notice of Motion (General Notice) must not exceed thirty seconds;
- (c) The period for the giving of General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) is limited to a maximum of 15 minutes. The Speaker has discretion to allow the giving of notices to exceed this 15 minute period.

COPY HANDED TO CLERK

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 134 shall read as follows:

134.

- (1) After a General Business Notice of Motion (General Notice) is given in the House, it shall be dated, signed and emailed to the Table Office.
- (2) At the time any other type of notice is given, the notice must be dated, signed and emailed to the Clerks at the Table. Wherever possible, notices should be given to the Clerks in advance of being moved in the House and in accordance with any prior notice specified under the Standing Orders.

REMOVAL OF A MEMBER ON GROUNDS OTHER THAN DISORDER

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

249B. The Speaker may direct a Member to leave the Chamber in circumstances where the Member concerned cannot demonstrate that they have cleared temperature and symptom screening that day or where the Member exhibits symptoms of Covid-19. This sessional order operates until 31 December 2020 or an earlier date to be advised by the Speaker, in consideration of public health advice on the Covid-19 pandemic.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 132 shall read as follows:

132. The procedure for written questions is as follows:

- (1) Questions shall be lodged in the Table Office by 12.00 noon on a sitting day for publication in the next sitting day's paper.
- (2) A question containing argument, unbecoming expressions or otherwise not conforming with the practice of the House may:
 - (a) Under the authority of the Speaker, be amended by the Clerk or divided if it contains matters that are not relevant to each other.
 - (b) Be ordered not to be printed by the Speaker or removed from the Questions and Answers Paper.
- (3) The number of questions able to be lodged over one sitting week are:
 - (a) Members – Nine questions per sitting week;
 - (b) Leader of the Opposition – Twelve questions per sitting week.
- (4) Ministers shall lodge answers to written questions within 35 calendar days after the question is first published. On sitting days answers must be submitted by 12.00 noon on the due date, to be published in the next sitting day's paper. Any answers lodged after this time will be published at a subsequent time. Answers must be signed and lodged in hard copy and also electronically.
- (5) If an answer to a written question is not received within 35 calendar days the Speaker, at the next sitting day after the expiry date, shall forthwith inform the House and the Minister shall immediately explain to the House the reason for non-compliance.
- (6) If the Minister, after explanation in the House, has not submitted an answer within 3 sitting days the Speaker shall again inform the House and the Minister shall again be called to explain. The Minister will continue to be called each sitting day until a written answer is submitted.

TABLING AND PRINTING OF PAPERS

That, during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 266 shall read as follows:

266. The following procedure shall apply for the tabling and printing of papers:

- (1) Wherever practicable, Ministers should table papers to the Table Office electronically and announce the tabled papers at the time provided in the Routine of Business or at other times by leave of the House.
- (2) Papers also can be tabled in hard copy in the House at the time provided in the Routine of Business or at other times by leave of the House.
- (3) Papers that are to be deemed as tabled, by way of a Minister's announcement in the House, must have been provided in electronic copy, under the Minister's written authority, to the Table Office by 12.00 noon on the day of tabling, or at least two hours before.
- (4) Papers received in accordance with paragraph (3) are authorised for publication, including to the Parliament's website.
- (5) The Leader of the House, on a subsequent sitting day, may give a notice of motion regarding the printing of papers tabled. Consideration of this motion shall be Business with Precedence.
- (6) Alternatively such motion may be moved without notice at any time.
- (7) The question on the motion is open to amendment and debate.
- (8) Any Member may speak on the motion for up to 3 minutes, including the Minister in reply.

- (9) The Speaker may call on the Minister to reply if the debate exceeds 30 minutes.
- (10) The provision for the tabling of papers, in accordance with paragraph (3), operates for the remainder of this session.

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: QUESTION TIME

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide that during each question time in the sitting weeks commencing 1 and 15 June 2020, no question shall be asked after the answering of five questions.

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: BILLS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the passage through all stages, at this or any subsequent sitting, of the Residential Apartment Buildings (Compliance and Enforcement Powers) Bill 2020.

Motion agreed to. [*During the giving of notices of motions*]

Notices

PRESENTATION

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I will make three comments before I call the member for Prospect to give notice of his motion. Firstly, I know the member for Canterbury is redrafting the motion of which she will give notice. I remind members that, as I have said previously, notices of motions should be drafted as motions rather than as speeches. Secondly, the delivery of notices of motions should be dispassionate—members are giving notice of a motion, not a giving a speech or making an impassioned plea. The member for Newcastle was pushing the boundaries too much. Thirdly, not everyone will have the chance to deliver their notice of motion today because some members have gone over their 30-second time limit. A standing order will soon be in place that will limit to 30 seconds the giving of each individual notice of motion. Some notices of motion are far too long.

Bills

RESIDENTIAL APARTMENT BUILDINGS (COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POWERS) BILL 2020

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Kevin Anderson, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (12:19:22):
I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am proud to introduce the Residential Apartment Buildings (Compliance and Enforcement Powers) Bill 2020. This bill delivers on the New South Wales Government's commitment to arm the Building Commissioner with a suite of comprehensive powers against noncompliant developers and serious defects identified in residential buildings. The bill provides complementary enforcement and investigation powers to the department to order the rectification of work or prohibit building work from being completed. Specifically, it will empower the regulator to operate proactively while buildings are under construction to prevent defects from being inherited by future owners. The bill also extends to existing buildings which have been completed within six years of the issue of the occupation certificate, providing protections to owners of existing defective buildings.

Property developers are a critical part of the building and construction industry, which is a vital contributor to the growth of the State's economy. The industry employs more than 300,000 people, representing more than 8 per cent of its workforce and accounts for nearly 10 per cent of the State's industry output. While supporting growth, this Government is strongly committed to ensuring the quality and safety of buildings through effective regulation and enforcement. Importantly, the bill provides the secretary and, through delegation, the Building Commissioner and his staff with the compliance and enforcement powers necessary to detect, investigate and require the rectification of serious building defects for the benefit of consumers in New South Wales.

The bill is one of the many reforms that this Government is progressing to improve the quality of construction and to provide enhanced protections for consumers by targeting noncompliance in the residential

building sector. Together with the Design and Building Practitioners Bill 2019, this bill presents a comprehensive reform package to transform the building sector into a consumer-centred industry that is focused on the quality of construction. People purchasing and occupying units in buildings deserve to know that they are buying a quality design and expert construction that is protected by strong and modernised building laws. They also deserve to have recourse available in the event of a defect while the building is under construction and during the building's life.

The reform package, made up of this bill and the Design and Building Practitioners Bill 2019, is a priority for this Government and will provide consumers with the protections that they deserve. This bill is critical to support the building and construction sector and will provide New South Wales with a built environment where safety and quality is prioritised and where there is strong consumer confidence. In fact, this Government has specifically designed the bill so that it can function as standalone legislation without the need for supporting regulations, providing immediate consumer protection upon its proclamation. However, the Government has futureproofed the bill by including broad regulation-making powers for regulations to be developed if necessary. For example, it will be possible to create penalty notice offences through regulation.

It is important to note that the bill is only part of the reform agenda. This Government recognises that industry is vital to the success of those reforms. We will continue to partner with key industry stakeholders representing developers, practitioners and trades from across the sector as we roll out those reforms. Members will be aware of the appointment on 1 August 2019 of Mr David Chandler, OAM, as the NSW Building Commissioner. Mr Chandler has now taken on the responsibility of driving crucial reforms to transform the building and construction industry to create a culture of accountability and pride. Mr Chandler has publicly stated that his aim is for New South Wales to become Australia's State of quality construction.

The bill will support the Government's six-pillar work plan that will be led by the Building Commissioner to regain public confidence in a new, customer-facing industry by 2025. The work plan outlines a new regulatory playing field, financiers taking an active and constructive role, private insurers returning to the market and public confidence returning through a chain of stewardship that enables the observation and enforcement of the design and construction of buildings. The passage of the bill and the Design and Building Practitioners Bill 2019 are crucial first steps to achieving the overall objectives of this plan.

To further enshrine the Government's commitment to partner with industry, the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation has established Construct NSW, comprised of industry experts, to provide input to the delivery of the work plan's reforms. The bill, together with the Design and Building Practitioners Bill 2019, are the first tranches of reform that provide the Building Commissioner with the compliance and enforcement powers necessary to transform the industry. Importantly, all critical powers contained within the bill that are afforded to the secretary will be delegated to the Building Commissioner to ensure he can get on with doing his job.

I now turn to the substance of the bill. The bill establishes a scheme for developers to notify of the intended completion of building work. In doing so it is the first of its kind in Australia. Specifically, the scheme requires developers to notify the secretary at least six months, but no more than 12 months, before an application for an occupation certificate is made. The bill also makes provision for subsequent notices to be provided where circumstances change and the date for an application for an occupation certificate is brought forward or pushed back. This notification requirement will enable the secretary to have early awareness and oversight of the developer and the building work.

This will allow the secretary to be able to actively monitor and regulate the performance of building work at any residential building site. It will positively assist in the early detection and rectification of serious building defects. Failure to notify, or to notify within the required time frames, will have serious consequences for the developer. In those circumstances, the bill empowers the secretary to make an order prohibiting the issue of an occupation certificate and, if relevant, the registration of a strata plan for a strata scheme. This prohibition order power can also be exercised by the secretary if any building bond required under the Strata Schemes Management legislation has not been given to the secretary, or if the secretary is satisfied that a serious defect in the building exists.

The bill also introduces comprehensive and wideranging investigation powers for authorised officers. This will enable the secretary and, by delegation, the Building Commissioner, to be able to proactively conduct an in-depth inspection process to detect serious building defects. The secretary will also be able to use the powers of entry to premises, the extensive information-gathering powers that will be enshrined in the legislation and a suite of powers that can be used on premises to detect and investigate building defects. Most importantly, if a serious building defect is found, the secretary will have a range of powers available to immediately address it. The bill enables the secretary to issue building work rectification orders to the developer if the secretary is of

the reasonable belief that the building work was or is being carried out in a manner that could result in a serious defect in a building.

A key component of the bill is the building work rectification order, which requires the developer to carry out, or refrain from carrying out, building work to eliminate, minimise or remediate the serious defect or potential serious defect in a building or part of a building. Clause 4 of the bill defines the meaning of "developer" for the purposes of the legislation. It includes the person who contracted or arranged for, or facilitated or otherwise caused, the building work to be carried out. If the building work is the erection or construction of a building or part of a building, the owner of the land on which the building work is carried out at the time the building work is carried out is also taken to be a developer for the purposes of the bill.

A developer also means the principal contractor for the building work within the meaning of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and, most importantly, the developer of the strata scheme within the meaning of the Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 in relation to building work for a strata scheme. The regulations will be able to prescribe other persons as developers or exclude persons from the definition. Recent building incidents have emphasised that residential home owners are particularly vulnerable to building defects. To respond to growing community concerns and provide the greatest benefit to home owners, the new obligations under the bill will apply to a residential apartment building. This means a class 2 building within the meaning of the Building Code of Australia, which are those buildings that are multistorey and multi-unit residential buildings.

Recognising that many modern apartment buildings have a combination of apartments, shops and offices in the one building, the bill extends the definition of a residential apartment building to include any building containing a part that is classified as a class 2 component, so that these mixed-use buildings are regulated by these reforms. To be clear, this means that the entire building is subject to the provisions of the legislation, not just the class 2 component. The bill has enough scope to exclude any building or part of a building from the definition of residential apartment building through the regulations. This power will enable smaller class 2 projects to be excluded if it is determined that they are low risk and should not be regulated by this legislation.

Clause 6 provides that the bill only applies to building work in respect of a residential apartment building that is or was authorised to commence in accordance with a construction certificate or complying development certificate issued under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. This means that other forms of development, such as exempt development, which do not require consent authority approval are not captured by this bill. This approach ensures that the requirements set out under this bill are harmonious with those required by key planning legislation.

I want to be clear that the Government has listened to the concerns of home owners and noted recent incidents of building work with serious defects in residential apartment buildings. The bill therefore applies to existing residential apartment building work that has not been completed or has been completed within the previous six years. Completed in this context means the date that the occupation certificate for the building or any of its parts was issued. Specifically, the bill will work alongside the statutory warranty periods in the Home Building Act 1989 to allow consumers to access and, where appropriate, commence action for defective building work.

Part 1 of the bill defines a series of key terms that are used throughout the legislation. These terms underpin the new requirements and responsibilities of developers in this bill. Clause 3 defines a serious defect as "a defect in a building element that is attributable to a failure to comply with the performance requirements of the Building Code of Australia, the relevant Australian Standards or the relevant approved plans". To align this limb of serious defect with the existing planning legislation, approved plans mean those plans and specifications issued for a construction certificate or a complying development certificate for building work, together with any approved variations under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. It also means any regulated designs under the design and building practitioners legislation. This approach will ensure that key terminology that has existed and will exist in the future is picked up by this bill. Importantly, it will ensure that there is cohesiveness across the three schemes.

To ensure that this bill operates effectively with other legislation, a building element has the same meaning as in the design and building practitioners legislation, capturing the critical elements of a building such as the fire safety system, waterproofing and load-bearing components that are essential to the stability of a building or any of its parts. Reference to these building elements recognises that these types of elements may have a significant safety impact if they are poorly designed or defective. To futureproof the new legislative scheme, the bill enables the regulations to broaden the types of building elements in the future.

The bill also defines a serious defect as a defect in a building product or a building element that is attributable to defective design, defective or faulty workmanship or defective materials, which causes or is likely

to cause the inability to inhabit or use the building or part of the building for its intended purpose, or the destruction of the building or any part of the building, or a threat of collapse of the building or any part of the building. The definition of serious defect also includes the use of a building product in contravention of the requirements of the Building Products (Safety) Act 2017, as well as any other kind of defect prescribed by the regulations.

The act of building work is critical to the operation of this legislation. Clause 5 defines building work as the physical activity involved in the erection of a building, and includes work involved in, or involved in coordinating or supervising work involved in, the construction of a building or part of a building, making of alterations or additions to a building or part of a building, or any repair, renovation or protective treatment of a building or part of a building. As I have previously highlighted, this bill will require developers to notify the Secretary of the Department of Customer Service when they propose to make an application for an occupation certificate.

Clause 7 sets out the notification requirements of a developer, also known as an expected completion notice. A developer in relation to building work must not cause or permit an application to be made for an occupation certificate for any part of a residential apartment building unless at least six months but not more than 12 months before that application is made they have given the notice. The expected completion notice must set out the date that the developer expects to make the application for the occupation certificate for the building or part of the building. The expected date is important, as the issue of an occupation certificate permits a number of key things to occur. With an occupation certificate, purchasers can lawfully occupy the premises. Developers can also complete purchases and obtain their remaining funds. This notification requirement is therefore critical, as it provides the secretary with sufficient lead time in which to examine the construction of the residential building and to detect and act on serious building defects that may be discovered before the occupation certificate is issued.

It is recognised that in some instances building work may take less than six months to complete. The bill has been designed to enable building work that is in a new building to be notified to the secretary within 30 days after commencing the work if the expected date of completion is proposed to be in less than six months. This approach will allow the secretary to utilise its investigative powers while the work is still being undertaken so that the work can be inspected for serious defects at the most appropriate time. To reflect the seriousness of these requirements the bill imposes large penalties on a developer where they fail to notify. Maximum penalties can apply of \$110,000 in the case of a body corporate and \$22,000 in any other case.

This bill does not unfairly penalise developers who have complied with the law. Accordingly, if there is more than one developer in relation to a building, the bill provides a defence to one developer if it is proven that another developer gave the required expectation completion notice to the secretary. It is a practical reality that the expected completion of a building may be delayed or may occur faster than initially thought due to factors that are outside the control of the developer. For example, critical building materials may be out of stock, delaying the project, or they may arrive earlier than expected. Likewise a developer may not always be in a position to know when an application for an occupation certificate is proposed to be issued.

Where circumstances change and the expected completion date is no longer accurate, the bill requires developers to notify the secretary of a new expected date. This notice is known in the bill as the "expected completion amendment notice". This notice must be given within seven days of the developer becoming aware of the change in circumstances. However, developers will not be required to notify the secretary of a new completion date if it is within 60 days of the expected completion date specified in the original expected completion notice. This means that developers will have a 60 day grace period from their expected date, so that if a developer is 60 days early or 60 days late they will not need to notify again. It is important to be clear that developers will not, however, be able to combine the two periods and notify within 120 days.

This grace period will ensure that developers are not forced to unnecessarily and repeatedly notify in the case of any minor change from the expected completion date. Where the developer needs to change the date several times, the legislation allows this to occur and provides that a developer may give more than one expected completion amendment notice, in accordance with clause 8. Any developer that fails to notify of a change in the expected date or a new expected date will face a maximum penalty of \$55,000 in the case of a body corporate and \$11,000 in any other case. Developers who begin constructing a residential apartment building within six months of this bill commencing will be required to comply with a transitional arrangement. Within this period a developer will not be able to apply for an occupation certificate unless they notify the secretary of the proposed application within 14 days of the commencement of the legislation.

Clause 9 of the bill empowers the secretary to take immediate compliance action by prohibiting the issue of an occupation certificate in relation to a residential apartment building or, if relevant, by prohibiting the registration of a strata plan for a strata scheme. As a safeguard the bill also provides that any occupation certificates that are in contravention of a prohibition order will be invalid. The occupation certificate allows purchasers to occupy their units for the first time and to complete their purchase with the developer. Following this time the

developer can complete all sales and take their profits. Meanwhile, the registration of a strata plan brings the owners corporation into existence, which commences the initial period. Strata lots are able to be allocated and the developer can then sell them off the plan.

Prohibiting the issue of an occupation certificate or the registration of a strata plan is the ultimate signal to the developer that they must resolve any noncompliance or face never having the building sold or occupied. The bill empowers the secretary to make a prohibition order under defined circumstances, including where a developer fails to give the required notice or change of expected date or does not provide the notice or change of expected date within the required time frame. The secretary may also issue a prohibition order if any building bond required under the Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 has not been given.

Perhaps most importantly the secretary can issue a prohibition order if the secretary is satisfied that a serious defect in the building exists. Without limiting this provision, the secretary can be satisfied that a serious defect exists if a building work rectification order has been made in relation to a building and has not been revoked or if a development control order has been made under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 relating to defects in building work and has not been revoked. These circumstances tie in with the secretary's new power relating to rectification of defects, which I will discuss later, as well as with other comparable powers that can be used under the planning legislation so that there is no duplication between the two schemes.

To further support the efficiency of the planning system the secretary will be required to give notice to the local council or, if the local council is not the certifier, the relevant certifier for the building work. This will ensure that the principal certifier does not issue an occupation certificate in contravention of the prohibition order and that local councils can take all reasonable steps to manage any serious defects identified by the secretary. In fact this legislation makes it an offence to issue an occupation certificate in breach of a prohibition order. This is coupled with a maximum penalty of \$110,000 in the case of a body corporate or \$22,000 in any other case. To ensure that the developers, the owners of the land and the Registrar General—the government regulator for the registration of strata plans—are aware of the prohibition order, the secretary will be required to notify these parties when an order is issued. It is important to note that clause 10 of this bill includes key procedural fairness provisions so that a developer can appeal a prohibition order at the Land and Environment Court within 30 days of the notice. The bill provides that an appeal may be made after 30 days but only with leave from the court.

Parts 3 and 4 of the bill provide a robust investigation and enforcement framework that will be delegated to the Building Commissioner and his compliance staff. These powers will be sufficiently broad and will empower the secretary to investigate, monitor and enforce compliance with the Act and with any future regulations relating to the carrying out of building work. The powers will also extend to investigation and monitoring of and enforcing compliance with the performance requirements of the Building Code of Australia, the relevant Australian standards and approved plans. It goes without saying that these powers will also be able to be used to investigate whether buildings have serious defects as well as to obtain informational records and to enforce, administer or execute the requirements of this legislation.

The framework will implement a suite of investigation and enforcement powers provided in other newly developed legislation that is administered by Fair Trading, such as the Building and Development Certifiers Act 2018 and the modern framework to be established by the Design and Building Practitioners Bill 2019. Under part 3 of the bill authorised officers will be granted a range of powers to be able to do their job more effectively. Clauses 17, 18 and 19 empower authorised officers to require information and records, require answers and make records of questions and answers as evidence. To support these investigatory powers clause 20 allows an authorised officer and their assistants to enter any premises at which business is in progress, including building work, without a search warrant.

However, under clause 21 an authorised officer will only be able to enter residential premises with the permission of the occupier or with the authority of a search warrant. To be clear, this means that construction sites will be able to be entered by an authorised officer at any reasonable hour or during business hours. When on the premises authorised officers will be afforded a suite of powers under clause 24, which include, among others, the ability to examine or inspect anything, take or remove samples of anything and make examinations, inquiries, measurements or tests that are considered necessary. Significantly, an authorised officer would have the power to open up, cut open or demolish building work if they have reasonable grounds for believing that it is necessary to do so because it is connected with an offence against the legislation or a serious defect in the building.

Clause 24 also provides additional powers that are more robust than those afforded to the regulator under other building legislation. For example, while on premises, the bill will enable an authorised officer to direct a developer to carry out building work at a specified time, or in a specified manner, to enable the authorised officer to exercise a further compliance and enforcement function under the legislation. For example, an authorised officer may direct a developer to uncover a part of building work so that they may then take samples of the building materials from the newly uncovered site.

Likewise, an authorised officer will be able to direct a developer to carry out specified building work only after giving the authorised officer notice in advance. This power will enable an authorised officer to be notified of certain types of building work before it is undertaken, for example, before the pouring of concrete. This would enable the authorised officer to inspect the installation of a critical building system before it is covered up. It is noted that authorised officers will also be able to enter common property under a strata scheme or association property under a scheme without a warrant or an occupier's permission. This power will ensure that authorised officers can respond quickly and begin their investigations based on observations and findings related to the common property of a building, such as its exterior, the car park or its surrounds.

Any person who obstructs, hinders or interferes with an authorised officer in the exercise of their functions, or fails to comply with a direction of an authorised officer, will be subject to large fines of up to \$110,000 in the case of a body corporate or \$22,000 in any other case. In support of these new investigation powers, the secretary will be afforded further powers that will assist the department in enforcing the obligations set out under this scheme in order to address seriously defective building work. Under clause 28 undertakings provide an opportunity for a developer to refrain from conduct that would lead to a breach of the legislation, or take action to prevent or remedy a contravention, as a means of avoiding a harsh financial penalty. To emphasise the seriousness of breaching an undertaking, maximum penalties of \$165,000 apply for body corporates, or \$55,000 in any other case.

Importantly, clause 29 introduces the power for the secretary to issue a stop work order for building work. The secretary can do so if of the opinion that the building work is, or is likely to be, carried out in a manner that could result in significant harm or loss to the public or occupiers, or potential occupiers, of the building or significant damage to property. This power is necessary and will enable the secretary or their delegate to manage immediate noncompliances so that buildings are safe for occupation. The breach of a stop work order is a serious offence. A maximum penalty of \$110,000 applies, and in addition up to \$11,000 for each day the offence continues. For body corporates these maximum penalties increase to \$330,000 and \$33,000 respectively.

Of course, protections apply. A person given a stop work order will be able to appeal to the Land and Environment Court within 30 days of the notice of the order being given. However, to reduce delay, the lodging of an appeal does not, except as the court directs, act to stay the order. Under clause 31 the secretary will be able to apply to the Land and Environment Court for an order to remedy or restrain a breach of the legislation. The secretary will be able to make such an application whether or not proceedings have been instituted for an offence, and without the secretary being required to show a likelihood of damage. This power will provide the secretary with the full range of powers to ensure the safety of residential apartment buildings.

Under clause 32 the secretary will be able to conduct proactive investigations of current and former developers, residential apartment buildings, the carrying out of building work including work carried out by any contractor or subcontractor of a developer or any other matters that may constitute a breach of the legislation. An investigation can be conducted regardless of whether the secretary has received a complaint. This power makes it clear that the secretary can fully investigate and target the conduct of developers, as well as any subcontractors involved in the building work, who are doing the wrong thing. There may be circumstances where the regulator needs to intervene directly in situations that may cause public harm.

The bill sets out notification requirements for developers that will alert the secretary of their building being close to completion. As we have seen it also provides the secretary with wide-ranging investigation and compliance powers once this is known. The secretary, through delegated authority to the Building Commissioner, will be able to target and investigate possible instances of defective building work before an occupation certificate is issued.

If a serious building defect is detected by authorised officers, or they otherwise become aware of its existence, the secretary must be able to directly intervene to attempt to remedy the situation where the developer fails to act immediately. Accordingly the bill provides the secretary, for the first time, with an encompassing power to be able to order developers to address serious defects before a building's completion, and at any time within six years after the building has been completed.

Clause 33 provides that if the secretary has a reasonable belief that building work was or is being carried out in a manner that could result in a serious defect in a residential apartment building, the secretary can give a building work rectification order to a developer. A building work rectification order is an order that requires the developer to carry out, or refrain from carrying out, building work or cause building work to be carried out or refrained from being carried out, as specified in the order. The purpose of the order is to eliminate, minimise or remediate the serious defect or potential serious defect. Alternatively, so that the secretary can issue an order best suited to the defect at hand, clause 34 provides that instead of specifying a type of building work that the developer must do or refrain from doing, the secretary may specify the standard that the building work must meet and indicate the nature of the building work that, if carried out, would satisfy the standard.

These orders can also be issued with conditions, such as requiring the developer to notify the secretary when compliance with the order is achieved, and will remain in force until they are either revoked by the secretary, or the term of the order ends. To reaffirm the Government's commitment to consumer protection, the bill makes a consequential amendment to the Conveyancing (Sale of Land) Regulation 2017 so that the vendor must warrant that the land is not subject to an outstanding building work rectification order. Practically, this means that where the land is subject to an order that is still in force, the purchaser of the land will be able to rescind the contract because of a breach in the contract's prescribed warranties. This change will ensure that potential purchasers can make a reasonable and informed decision before proceeding with a residential building contract.

Building work rectification orders are one of the key compliance tools in this bill. Importantly, while an order is in force, the secretary can prohibit the issue of an occupation certificate or the registration of a strata plan for any new building until the serious defect is rectified. This power works hand in hand with other obligations under the bill and the Design and Building Practitioners Bill 2019 so that compliance can be effectively enforced by the regulator across multiple legislative schemes at once. A failure by a developer to comply with an order means that potential serious building defects could exist within a building to the detriment of occupiers and consumers and their safety. To demonstrate the seriousness of these orders, heavy penalties will apply where a developer fails to comply with the order. Developers can expect a penalty of up to \$110,000 and, in addition, up to \$11,000 for each day the offence continues. For body corporates these maximum penalties increase to \$330,000 and \$33,000 respectively.

The legislation provides that a person is not required to obtain consent or approval under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to carry out work in compliance with the requirement of a building work rectification order. This ensures that developers can rectify serious defects as expediently as possible. This approach aligns with the planning legislation that similarly permits persons to carry out work under a development control order so long as it is necessary to achieve compliance with the order. Of course, this legislation provides a range of natural justice and procedural fairness protections for the developer before a building work rectification order can be issued. For example, clause 44 provides that notice of a proposed building work rectification order must be given to the person who will be subject to the order. This notice must include the intention to give the order, the terms of the proposed order and the period within which the order is to be complied with.

The notice must also set out that the person can make a written representation to the secretary about the order, its terms or the period for compliance. Where representations are made, clauses 47 and 48 provide that the secretary must consider the representations and determine to give the order as proposed, to give the order with modifications or not to give the order. However, in instances where the secretary believes there is a serious risk to public safety or it is an emergency, the secretary is not obligated to give notice of a proposed order or seek to consider any representations. This provision ensures that seriously defective building work, which could impact on the safety of the public, is rectified immediately.

Where the secretary determines that an order is necessary, notice must be given to the developer together with the reasons. Additionally, other persons and bodies must be notified of the order, including, among others, the relevant local council, the principal certifier and the relevant owners corporations if the order relates to a strata building. The bill explicitly requires an owners corporation to notify in writing the owners of lots in the strata scheme within 14 days of receiving a notice. This obligation will ensure that owners of existing buildings are kept abreast of any rectification orders issued and are aware of any serious defects located on their property or any common property within the strata scheme. Any identified serious defect that is not rectified could potentially impact on the safety of owners and occupiers of these buildings. If these circumstances arise, clause 42 provides that the secretary in lieu of the developer acting can do anything that is necessary or convenient to give effect to the terms of the rectification order.

The Government recognises the considerable regulatory costs that may be imposed by the requirements of the bill. Ordinary consumers should not, as much as is reasonably possible, be responsible for those costs. Through a compliance cost notice, the Government can recover any costs and expenses incurred by the secretary, including remuneration and other staff expenses in connection with a building work rectification order. Under clause 51 the secretary may be able to issue a compliance cost notice on the developer at the same time as giving a building work rectification order or at any other time after. The compliance cost notice will specify the amount required to be paid and the time within which it must be paid. The secretary will be able to seek recovery of costs as a debt due in a court of competent jurisdiction. As with other orders and notices under this bill, a developer served with a compliance cost notice may appeal against a notice to the Land and Environment Court. An appeal may only be lodged within 30 days after serving of the notice unless the court grants leave for it to be made after that time.

As I have noted, serious financial penalties apply for breaches of this legislation. That is only right and proper in order to act as a deterrent and to protect the interest of consumers. The bill makes it clear that any poor behaviour of executives of corporations will not be tolerated by this Government. Specifically, clause 58 provides

that if a body corporate contravenes a provision of the legislation, each person who is a director or was concerned in the management of the body corporate, if they knowingly authorised or permitted the contravention, is taken to have contravened the same provision. The Government is taking a robust approach to the safety of buildings in New South Wales. This legislation empowers proactive investigations and the rectification of serious defects to occur well before the building is completed. Coupled with significant compliance powers, the obligations set out under this bill are necessary to drive the message home that poor building practices and non-compliant building work will not be tolerated by this Government.

These additional responsibilities will provide greater transparency over the role of developers and building practitioners in the construction phase and ensure that they are held accountable for the building work. These responsibilities will also mean that developers and design and building practitioners have to work cohesively together throughout the life of a project to ensure that both the design and build components comply with the Building Code of Australia. Developers can no longer turn a blind eye to the work done by practitioners contracted for a project.

Mr Temporary Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this bill. Occupants of buildings deserve to feel safe and secure within their walls; these reforms are a critical part of achieving this. Importantly, as the sole regulator for this bill and the Design and Building Practitioners Bill 2019, the secretary and the Building Commissioner will have the appropriate oversight across the design, construction and proposed completion of a building. This includes oversight across any plans and specifications used to design a building, the practitioners involved in construction and building work, and the level of compliance achieved by these practitioners for their work and the developer before the completion of the building.

Together with the Government's six-pillar work plan, these reforms will overhaul the building and construction industry and transform it into one that is focused on transparency, accountability and quality workmanship. The Government is taking a no-nonsense approach to regulation in the State. Now is the time for change. The bill reflects a new era in the industry and puts consumers first. Importantly, it sets New South Wales apart as the nation's leader in forward-thinking legislation that will ensure that well-constructed buildings are delivered now and in the future. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

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

Members

MEMBER FOR TWEED

MEMBER FOR MACQUARIE FIELDS

The SPEAKER: We do not have the pleasure today of the company of the member for Tweed, although I am sure he is looking on with great interest. I am pleased to advise, however, that the member for Tweed and his lovely partner, Kirstin, became husband and wife on Saturday. I understand that it is 110 per cent. I am sure that with this week's resumption of Parliament the member for Tweed is absolutely delighted to be spending his first days as a newlywed with us in this place.

I also congratulate someone who is in the Chamber with us today, the member for Macquarie Fields, and his wife, Anna, on recently becoming parents again following the birth of their second child, Christopher, who was born on 8 April and is a younger brother to Audrey. Congratulations.

Announcements

MEMBERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The SPEAKER: I recommend to members the new Professional Development Program and I encourage all members to read the launch email sent by my office, which describes the opportunities on offer to support members as elected representatives. Now is the time for members to express their interest in doing one of the courses using their skills development allowance, which will expire at the end of June. There are three courses that members can express interest in: the Australian Futures Project, which I know a number of people have already done; the Cranlana Centre for Ethical Leadership; and the McKinnon Institute for Political Leadership.

MCKINNON POLITICAL LEADER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The SPEAKER: In relation to the McKinnon Institute, I congratulate the Premier on receiving the 2019 McKinnon Political Leader of the Year award, which is a non-partisan award run by the Susan McKinnon Foundation and the Melbourne School of Government. Congratulations, Premier, on that award.

AVAILABILITY OF MINISTERS DURING QUESTION TIME

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: Due to physical distancing requirements in response to COVID-19, not all Ministers can be present in the Chamber at any one question time. That is why the Government sought to suspend standing and sessional orders to reduce the number of questions in question time to five for the next two sitting weeks. Government Ministers will not be asked questions in question time in that period. The Ministers present in question time will vary from day to day for the next two sitting weeks. With the consent of the Opposition, the following will apply for the next two sitting weeks:

- (1) By 12 noon on a sitting day the Government will notify the Opposition and crossbenches which 12 ministers will be present in question time that day.
- (2) Ministers present in question time will not answer questions on behalf of other ministers.

*Members***MINISTRY**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: On behalf of the Ms Gladys Berejiklian: I inform the House that on 15 April 2020 Her Excellency the Governor:

- (1) Accepted the resignation of the Hon. Donald Thomas Harwin, MLC, as a Minister and as a member of the Executive Council and as Special Minister of State, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts, and Vice-President of the Executive Council.
- (2) Appointed the Hon. Damien Francis Tudehope, MLC, as Vice-President of the Executive Council.

I further inform the House that on and from 8 May 2020 I was appointed Leader of the House.

*Announcements***DIRECTOR, TABLE AND CHAMBER SERVICES**

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that on 18 May 2020, John Young was appointed Director, Table and Chamber Services. Congratulations to John, who has come across from the Legislative Council and has vast experience. He will do very well.

*Bills***COVID-19 LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (EMERGENCY MEASURES—ATTORNEY GENERAL) BILL 2020****COVID-19 LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (EMERGENCY MEASURES—MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2020****COVID-19 LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (EMERGENCY MEASURES—TREASURER) BILL 2020****Assent**

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of messages from the Governor notifying Her Excellency's assent to the bills.

*Question Time***POWERHOUSE MUSEUM**

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:22:20): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Why is the Deputy Premier cutting \$780 million from the pay packets of workers in regional and rural New South Wales to finance the Powerhouse relocation in Sydney? Why is he doing that to rural and regional New South Wales?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:22:35): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question, unfortunately a question that disappoints the 221,000 people who lost their jobs in the month of April because of the COVID-19 crisis. Under my watch and with the fight in rural and regional New South Wales we have seen a decentralisation program with more jobs in the regions and we have seen job protection in the regions in the past, but now the reality is that we do not have the luxury of running surpluses in a strong budget because of the COVID-19 crisis and the impact that that has had on the economy with the 221,000 jobs that were lost in April.

Mr Ryan Park: They love the Powerhouse in the bush; they absolutely love it.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It is easy to sit in this Chamber and say that the Powerhouse—

Mr Ryan Park: They love it in Wollongong too; they love it. They love the Powerhouse.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: At the end of the day we have a responsibility for all citizens of this State. We are going through a crisis that has had an impact on the economy unseen before, a crisis that probably is in parallel with the years of the Depression. We saw queues of people who have lost their jobs out the front of Centrelink, and the 6 per cent unemployment rate in New South Wales has been disguised and masked by JobKeeper. In a way JobKeeper has been a fantastic support program of the Federal Government, but it masks the underemployment, the lack of jobs and the loss of jobs. The 6 per cent could easily be a double-digit figure of unemployment in this State after 221,000 people lost their jobs.

The 400,000 public servants in this State do a wonderful job; they serve this community and the Government and in many cases are on the front line. They are no different from the Rural Fire Service volunteers who spent weeks and months fighting the fires over the summer, not because of a pay packet but because they care and they want to support their community. We, as a community, need to come together. The 90 per cent of people in this State who are employed, who are the taxpayers who pay for the 400,000 public servants in this State, have given assurance to these public servants that if they were to agree to the terms of our deal—the wage freeze—their public service jobs will be guaranteed. Today the value of job security outstrips and outweighs—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. This is specifically—he mentioned the Powerhouse and then he pulled back. Why is the Government cutting wages to finance the Powerhouse Museum? These are people in rural and regional New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier is being relevant to the question. The Deputy Premier has the call.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I repeat: We are not cutting wages to fund the Powerhouse Museum. We are asking for a wage freeze on public sector workers who are being given a job guarantee. The Powerhouse will create 1,100 direct jobs and 2,400 indirect jobs. It is about boosting the economy and creating jobs in the private sector, which has been impacted and decimated by this crisis. Right now every investment, every dollar—the \$102 billion infrastructure pipeline of the New South Wales Government will be what leads us out of this recession, this depression, this crisis. It will take the infrastructure pipeline of this Government to reboot the economy and create jobs.

The announcement of eased restrictions alone will see tens of thousands of new jobs. Every million dollars we invest in a job, every million dollars we invest in infrastructure will create six to seven jobs. If the \$3 billion saving from the public sector wage freeze is put into jobs, that is 20,000 jobs at a time when we have lost 221,000 jobs in this State—masked by JobKeeper, as I said. We have a responsibility to every citizen. How can members opposite argue for a cohort of society, a cohort of the workforce, to get a pay rise when 221,000 people get no pay at all? Members opposite want to argue in this place on behalf of their unions. I wish there was a union for the unemployed. I wish there was a union that would fight for those who have lost their jobs because of the impact on the economy. We have a responsibility to every citizen of this State. That is why the forward estimates show \$20 billion in lost revenue. We no longer have surpluses. Every decision we make is now on the credit card, so every dollar is valuable.

We have been using the mantra: We are all in this together. Everyone needs to make some level of sacrifice. The public service of New South Wales has a job guarantee and a \$1,000 bonus. The only people in this House who are threatening the jobs of regional public servants are those opposite if they pursue the disallowance motion. The option here is to support the wage freeze, support the public servants in this State with job security and a \$1,000 bonus.

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

Mr JOHN BARILARO: That is what they should do instead of playing politics with the lives of real people. If they check their membership, I am sure many of those I have come across support the Government in its position.

CBD AND SOUTH EAST LIGHT RAIL

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:27:39): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the Premier proposes to cut 400,000 workers' pay, will she tell nurses, teachers, police and cleaners the final cost blowout on her CBD and South East Light Rail?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:27:57): I acknowledge the question from the Leader of the Opposition. I will outline for her again what New South Wales is facing at this present time. In April 221,000 people lost their jobs. In addition to the 221,000 people who have lost their jobs we know, according to the latest update we have received, 300,000 New South Wales citizens are on JobKeeper. When JobKeeper runs out we do not know how many of those 300,000 people will also join the unemployment queue. In a very

short time we are facing the prospect of hundreds and thousands of additional people looking for a job in this State.

I cannot overstate what a serious position our State is in. Our Government has robustly and fairly looked at all the options before it. We have looked at the opportunities we have to support our citizens during this extremely difficult time and we know that the best thing we can offer all our citizens is job security and the prospect of getting a job. That is why we have adopted the policies we have. No decision we take during this difficult time is an easy decision. Every decision we take during this time is a difficult decision but that is what happens when we face the challenges our State has faced: a deep, longstanding drought that has gone on for years; bushfires the likes of which our continent has not seen before; the sudden storms that followed those bushfires; and now a pandemic. Yes, our State has faced challenges in the past but never one on top of the other to the extent that we have experienced.

Our Government's policies to date, before we faced those extreme challenges, ensured that we had the resources to put into important services like health and education to keep the community going during this time, especially in our regions. I commend the Deputy Premier, the member for Bega and many others who have ensured that whilst we are dealing with the pandemic we have been able to accelerate our bushfire recovery. We have not done everything that we need to do but we have given ourselves the deadline of 30 June to clean up all those places that have been damaged and we are in the process of doing that. We know what that means for people's lives.

Let us be serious as a parliament and think about our citizens. I wish we had a magic wand that would make everything better, but we do not. We have the tools that any good government has to support our citizens during this difficult time. I appreciate that during March and April in particular, our community was living in fear of their loved ones or themselves getting the virus and of New South Wales heading down the path—which we were heading down—of other cities and States around the world where thousands of people lost their lives and where emergency departments were having to turn people back. We never wanted New South Wales to be in that position. We have invested around \$1 billion in extra personal protective equipment for our frontline health workers. We have invested an extra \$800 million to double—and we have nearly tripled—our ICU capacity.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We hope we do not need that.

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. I thank the Premier for her ministerial statement, which could have been given at the start of Parliament.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being relevant. The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat.

Ms Jodi McKay: The question relates specifically to the blowout on the CBD and South East Light Rail project. I respectfully ask the Premier to answer that question.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being relevant.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: In relation to the question of the Leader of the Opposition, she would know that the information is publicly available. She can look up the public records.

Ms Anna Watson: You are kidding!

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is publicly available. Our State faces enormous challenges and we very much appreciate what every public servant does for our State, no matter what job they have. We also want to ensure they have job security—something that 90 per cent of our citizens do not have. It is a sad fact that 90 per cent of workers do not have job security. We want to provide that to all our public servants. We also want to give a \$1,000 bonus to all public servants who are not on the high wages of those in the Senior Executive Service.

We appreciate these are difficult times and we wish we did not have to impose a wage freeze. However, as the Deputy Premier said, it is up to members opposite to support the Government's policy, as have the governments of Queensland and Western Australia—Labor governments have also put in a wage freeze for their public service citizens. I cannot outline in greater detail the severe circumstances of the economic disaster that is befalling our State. This Government is acting in the best interests of its citizens to keep jobs where it can, to create jobs where it can and protect jobs where it can.

PUBLIC SECTOR PAY FREEZE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:33:10): My question is directed to the Minister for Health and Medical Research. Last month he said of the Government's plan to cut workers' pay, "My personal view should probably

stay that way." Some 82 health workers have contracted COVID-19 in the line of duty. How can the Minister possibly support cutting their pay?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health and Medical Research) (14:33:38): I thank the member for Keira for his question. In what has been the biggest crisis that this State has faced in 100 years, the first question from the shadow Minister indicates a juvenile, irresponsible, base approach, which appears to be the approach of the Leader of the Opposition to this issue. He is not talking about a caring policy. What he is talking about is an "I don't care" policy for the unemployed. I would have thought that Labor members would have learned by now that life is pretty tough at the moment and that it needs to be a balanced policy.

Let me say—as I said when I stopped to talk to the union representatives outside the Chamber today—we are grateful. The whole community is grateful. We are grateful for the work they have done. We are grateful for what the police have done. We are grateful for all of the public servants. But I do not think that most of them are the slightest bit interested in this juvenile drivel political approach that the Labor Party in New South Wales is pursuing. Their colleagues in Queensland and Western Australia, who I deal with a lot, have a much more mature approach to an understanding of the entire community being looked after.

Let me say, I remember. I employed people in the 1980s and towards 1990, when Paul Keating came to power. When Australia had had a period of eight quarters of recession, Paul Keating knew that the government had to drive the growth of jobs. That is what they had to do to bring the entire community together and to make our country go forward. Those opposite should understand that this is not an easy decision that has been made by the Coalition. My personal view remains the same. The Government's decision is still right because we need to drive jobs. As the Premier just said, 220,000 people lost their jobs in one month. The equivalent of more than half of the entire public service lost their jobs.

I remember sitting down with my staff when I was part of a small legal practice when things were tough in that period around the Keating years. I said to them, "We are in deep trouble here. What do you want to do? Do you want me to work with you to make decisions about who will get put off or do you want to find some other way? Will we work part time? Will we take some job salary reductions?" When I sat down and talked to my staff, not one person had to be put off because a few decided that going part time was a good thing. The others decided they would take a wage drop for a little while. It was a sensible decision. All the Coalition Government is doing in New South Wales is having a sensible community discussion.

I understand that in some unions there are views that this has to be dealt with at a very simple level, which is the view that those opposite have. But there are other unions that are trying to take a far more constructive approach. I would encourage the Labor Party in New South Wales to realise that people are finding it tough in the private sector and that anything the Government can do to try to put some money into driving jobs and building new infrastructure—just for this period of tough times—is a reasonable prospect. I encourage those opposite to take a big-picture approach. What those opposite are talking about is old-style, juvenile Labor politics. I know some members on Labor's side who have a far bigger view because I have talked to them. Some Labor members who are talking about this—the shadow Minister for Health and the Leader of the Opposition—will not last in this job if they do not start talking in a much more expansive way. A lot of unemployed people will benefit from the Government's decision.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Having said that, again, I thank the health and frontline workers who have looked after us so well—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Mr Speaker, have we changed the rules of Parliament?

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Swansea takes a point of order. Has the health Minister finished?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I think I got the message across, yes.

THE HON. DON HARWIN

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (14:38:46): My question is directed to the Attorney General. Given that he holds the highest law office in New South Wales, how was it in any way appropriate for him to give legal advice to Don Harwin about his fine for breaching public health orders?

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (14:39:14): I thank the member for Newcastle for his question. My job as the First Law Officer is not to give—

[An Opposition member interjected.]

You asked the question. Would you like to hear the answer? My job as the First Law Officer is to maintain confidence in the justice system in New South Wales, primarily to make sure that our community has confidence in the system and that the stakeholders who participate in that system discharge their duties in a way deserving of that confidence. My role as Attorney General is not to give legal advice and I do not give formal legal advice. However, as a member of this Parliament, I am concerned from time to time about the welfare of my colleagues, whether they be Government members, Opposition members or crossbenchers. Of course after a Minister—now a former Minister—faces a tumultuous time, as a concerned colleague I will have conversations with that colleague and inquire after his welfare and wellbeing. That is what I will do and that is what I think any decent member of this House will do.

GOCUP ROAD SAFETY

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (14:40:40): I direct my question to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Given the tragic collision that recently claimed the life of a 10-year-old girl and her expectant mother at the notorious intersection of Gocup Road and Snowy Mountains Highway just outside Tumut, can the Minister reassure the Snowy Valleys community, which has for decades called for improvements, that the Government will get done the substantial extra work needed to fix this deathtrap and make it safe?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (14:41:12): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for his question and for his advocacy on behalf of his community on this important issue of road safety. I also thank the member for Wagga Wagga for raising the matter directly with my office, with the Deputy Premier and with me. Earlier today we had a meeting to discuss the steps that we are taking in addressing road safety in this area. For the benefit of the House, Gocup Road is the key arterial road for the communities of the Snowy Valleys area at Tumut. It is also growing in importance as a freight route, which is why the New South Wales Government invested \$70 million in upgrading Gocup Road from Tumut to Gundagai. That was completed in June 2019. Those upgrades focused on the safety of the corridor and included works like shoulder-widening, resealing and adding new intersections and guardrails.

But the work to make our roads safer never stops. Earlier this year we installed vehicle-activated signs on Gocup Road to alert drivers to slow down as they approach the intersection with the Snowy Mountains Highway. Last month work started on a further \$1.4 million upgrade to the intersection of Gocup Road and the Snowy Mountains Highway to improve visibility, safety and traffic flow. These upgrades, which have been carefully planned over a number of months, are designed to address these issues and make the intersection safer. I am pleased to advise the House that these works started last Monday and that they involve substantial realignment of the intersection. The work will really change the feel of this intersection. It will be loud, alerting motorists of the need to take extra care when entering. It will involve new line-marking, curb and gutter improvements, more vehicle-activated signage as you approach the intersection and stop signs instead of give-way signs.

These upgrades will be delivered over the next six to eight weeks and will help to improve road safety at this intersection as restrictions are easing and more people are travelling to our regions. As I understand from speaking to the member for Wagga Wagga, who met with me today, his community is supportive of some of these measures, but he has also raised concerns that they do not go far enough. I have also heard that concern being expressed by the community. That is why several weeks ago I asked Transport for NSW to review that intersection again to see whether there are additional measures that will improve safety there. That review will also involve the NSW Centre for Road Safety and that review is now underway. It will examine the intersection and the approaches and advise on what future treatments may be needed to address community concerns around road safety. I have made it very clear to my department that the review should be progressed as quickly as possible. We will work closely with the local member to find the best approach to keep his community safe. I note that some treatments are complex and some may require considerable change to the intersection that could take a longer time to implement, which is why it is important we are doing the immediate works right now.

We will never stand still on road safety. Road by road, we are investing in measures to make our roads safer to save lives on country roads. These upgrades—rumble strips, wire barriers, sealing roads and upgrading intersections—are small changes that have a huge impact on our regional communities. So far this year, 87 people have died on our roads in the bush. That is 21 down on the same period last year but it is still 87 too many—especially given there has been a lot less travel on roads during the COVID period. Every death creates a ripple effect in a regional community. My heart goes out to all those who have lost loved ones on our roads. I urge everyone getting in their cars or heading out to the regions this weekend to take their time and to drive safely. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for raising this important issue. I will keep the member and the House updated on developments regarding this intersection as they occur.

*Documents***INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION****Reports**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 78 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, I announce receipt of the report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Investigation into the over-payment of public funds by the University of Sydney for security services*, dated May 2020 and received on 26 May 2020. I order that the report be printed.

NSW STATE CORONER**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 37 of the Coroners Act 2009, I announce receipt of the report by the NSW State Coroner into deaths in custody/police operations for 2019, received out of session on 14 May 2020 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION****Government Response**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the Government response to report 1/57 of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption, entitled *Review of the 2017-2018 Annual Report of the ICAC and the Inspector of the ICAC*, received out of session on 14 May 2020 and authorised to be printed.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 10 of the Legislation Review Act 1987, I announce receipt of the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 14/57*, dated 12 May 2020, received out of session on 14 May 2020 and authorised to be printed.

I also announce receipt of the minutes of the committee meeting regarding Legislation Review Digest No. 13/57, received out of session on 14 May 2020.

*Documents***OFFICE OF TRANSPORT SAFETY INVESTIGATIONS****Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 46D of the Passenger Transport Act 1990, I announce receipt of reports of the Office of Transport Safety Investigations entitled:

- (1) *Bus Safety Investigation Report - Bus and Pedestrian Fatal Accident Brunker Road Adamstown, 5 November 2019*, received out of session on 15 May 2020 and authorised to be printed.
- (2) *Ferry Safety Investigation Report, Passenger Fatality - MV Lady Rose, Sydney Harbour, NSW, 2 February 2019*, received out of session on 27 May 2020 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE****Government Response**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of Government responses to report 3/57 of the Public Accounts Committee entitled *Examination of the Auditor-General's Performance Audit Reports May 2017 - December 2017*, from:

- (1) The Minister for Health and Medical Research, received out of session on 19 May 2020 and authorised to be printed.
- (2) The Minister for Transport and Roads, received out of session on 22 May 2020 and authorised to be printed.

*Documents***MULTICULTURAL NSW**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 14 of the Multicultural NSW Act 2000, I announce receipt of the report of Multicultural NSW entitled *Community Relations Report 2018-2019*, received out of session on 22 May 2020 and authorised to be printed.

AUDITOR-GENERAL**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Funding enhancements for police technology*, dated 2 June 2020, received this day.

*Committees***LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE****Reports**

Ms FELICITY WILSON: As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 15/57*, dated 2 June 2020. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I also table the minutes of the committee meeting regarding *Legislation Review Digest No. 14/57*, dated 12 May 2020.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Western Harbour Tunnel and Northern Beaches Link

Petition calling for a halt to construction of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Northern Beaches Link, and requesting that the Government undertake community consultation, release the project business case, move construction impacts from sensitive areas, avoid conservation areas, protect open space and bushland, stop the release of harmful contaminants and ensure the project includes substantive public transport options, received from **Dr Marjorie O'Neill**.

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

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

Maclean District Hospital

Petition requesting the Government to appropriately fund its electoral promise to increase nursing hours at Maclean District Hospital and to not reconfigure Maclean District Hospital so that the hospital continues to deliver the required health services to the community, received from **Mr Ryan Park**.

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

Coffs Harbour Local Government Cultural and Civic Space Project

Petition requesting the Minister for Local Government to direct Coffs Harbour City Council to pause the Coffs Harbour local government precinct project pending more and meaningful community consultation and an assessment of other options, received from **Mr Gurmeh Singh**.

Rocky Hill Coal Project

Petition calling on the Government to enact legislation to halt the approval of the Rocky Hill Coal Project, to revoke coal exploration licences 6523, 6524 and 6563 and to declare the area covered by those licences exempt from all future coal exploration and mining, received from **Ms Kate Washington**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

The CLERK: I announce that the following Ministers have lodged responses to petitions signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Andrew Constance—Route 400 Bus Services—lodged 26 February 2020 (Mr Michael Daley)

The Hon. Andrew Constance—Sydney Bus Services—lodged 26 February 2020 (Dr Marjorie O'Neill)

The Hon. Melinda Pavey—Tweed Shire Water Management—lodged 26 February 2020 (Mrs Melinda Pavey)

The Hon. Andrew Constance—Sydney Bus Services—lodged 6 February 2020 (Mr Chris Minns)

The Hon. Melinda Pavey—Murray-Darling Basin Plan—lodged 5 February 2020 (Mrs Helen Dalton)

The Hon. Rob Stokes—Woronora Dam Catchment Area—lodged 25 February 2020 (Mr Lee Evans)

Business of the House

BUSINESS LAPSED

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105 (3) general business notices of motions (for bills) No. 1 (Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Energy from Waste Development Moratorium) Bill 2019) and No. 2 (Right to Farm (Farming Families Protection) Bill 2019), general business orders of the day (for bills) No. 1 (Industrial Relations Amendment (Contracts of Carriage) Bill 2019), No. 2 (Water (Commonwealth Powers) Amendment (Termination of References) Bill 2019), No. 3. (Water Management Amendment (Water Rights Transparency) Bill 2020) and No. 4 (Civil Remedies for Serious Invasions of Privacy Bill 2020), and general business notices of motion (general notices) Nos 887 and 890 to 1009 have lapsed.

I order that a message be sent informing the Legislative Council that the Industrial Relations Amendment (Contracts of Carriage) Bill 2019 has lapsed.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ROUTINE OF BUSINESS

Mr RYAN PARK: I seek leave to move a motion to suspend standing and sessional orders to permit the consideration forthwith of the notice of motion for disallowance of a statutory instrument given by the member for Strathfield.

Leave not granted.

Bills

BETTER REGULATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2020**Second Reading Debate**

Debate resumed from 3 March 2020.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (14:51:40): As shadow Minister for Consumer Protection, it is my pleasure to lead for the Opposition in debate on the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. The bill was introduced and second read in the Legislative Assembly on 3 March, which seems an age ago, given all that has happened subsequently. It is wonderful to be back to a regular parliamentary sitting week. These are uncertain times and it is crucial that, as representatives, we gather here to do our jobs and advocate for our communities. Labor has been arguing for Parliament to return for some time; I am pleased that the Government has finally listened and that we are all here today.

I state at the outset that the Opposition will not be opposing the bill. I have spoken to many stakeholder groups and several colleagues, including the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, the shadow Minister for Finance and Small Business, who has carriage in the other place. They all agree that these are, for the most part, sensible changes. I thank the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation and his staff who have briefed us about the bill and have made themselves available to me and to my office. The Minister's efforts to consult with the Opposition have set him apart from many of his colleagues. Though the bill contains sound measures, Labor intends to move some small amendments in the Legislative Council to improve it, which we have flagged with the Minister. I will discuss those amendments later. It is my hope that the Government will support the changes as we feel they uphold the original intent of the bill.

The Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 brings together a number of miscellaneous amendments to 13 Acts across a number of areas, all falling under the umbrella of the Better Regulation and

Innovation portfolio. The amendments include changes to the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013, the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2017, the Home Building Act 1989, the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Act 2013, the Entertainment Industry Act 2013, the Community Gaming Act 2018, the Charitable Fundraising Amendment Act 2018, the Storage Liens Act 1935, the Retail Trading Act 2008, the Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers' Act 1996, the Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Scheme) Act 2010, the Residential Tenancies Act 2010, and the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002.

For the most part, Labor believes the proposed changes are sensible measures, some of which stakeholders have been asking for for some time. We feel that these measures make positive changes to the function of the Acts. I outline the key measures contained in the bill and the Opposition's position on them. The measures fall into three general categories: changes to improve consumer protections; changes to the way that legislation is administered in the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio; and alterations that simplify current regulatory arrangements.

This bill makes amendments to improve consumer protection, something Labor has always supported. These measures include changes to arrangements for motor dealers and repairers, including modifications to allow the secretary to cancel motor dealers' and repairers' licences if they have been issued due to misrepresentations or in error; changes so that non-minor repair work for transport service vehicles must be carried out by the holder of a motor vehicle repairer's licence; the allowance for regulations to specify the maximum amount of compensation payable from the Motor Dealers and Repairers Compensation Fund; and an expansion of the existing gas-related investigation powers of NSW Fair Trading to allow investigations into autogas installations. After consulting with relevant stakeholders, including the Motor Traders Association of New South Wales, the Opposition supports these measures and believes that the changes benefit both the motor dealer and repairers industry, and New South Wales consumers.

The bill also seeks to make adjustments to the administration of legislation in the Better Regulation portfolio. These measures include changes to remove the need always to have police presence for search warrants, consistent with other legislation administered by NSW Fair Trading; a requirement that unclaimed proceeds from the sale of goods under the Storage Liens Act 1935 be deposited with Revenue NSW, not the NSW Public Trustee and Guardian, as is consistent with the Unclaimed Money Act 1995; changes to the prescribed form for retail trading exemptions to a "secretary-approved form" and merges the public review of exemption clauses into the principal Act, allowing for the repeal of the regulation; changes to enable the secretary to exempt a person from the requirements of the Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act 1996 instead of prescribing exemptions; updates to the names of Long Service Leave Committee representatives; and changes to enable the secretary to exempt gas appliances, gas installations and autogas installations from certain standards not required to ensure consumer safety.

Once again, after consultation with stakeholders including the NSW Plumbing Trades Employees Union, the Electrical Trades Union, the United Workers Union, the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association, the Police Association of NSW and the Public Service Association, Labor is confident that these are sensible proposals and will support these measures. In particular, Labor believes that the changes to the Storage Liens Act, which make it easier for people to find unclaimed money, is a positive move, particularly given the current financial stress that many people are experiencing. We find ourselves in a time when people have felt the need to drawdown on their superannuation prematurely. If people can access their own unclaimed money perhaps they will not feel the need to drawdown on their retirement incomes decades in advance, depriving themselves of future income.

I wish to make one comment, however, in relation to the measure to amend the Retail Trading Act 2008 by removing the current exemption application form from the regulation and vesting that power in the secretary. The Opposition acknowledges that there is some benefit to this measure, but we want it noted that it leaves it open for the secretary to be free to determine the content of the form at any time without any constraint, direction or consultation with others. Stakeholders have told us that the current form has served the retail industry well. Given this, Labor wishes to stress to the Government that any changes to the form should not be done lightly and should only be done after careful consultation with stakeholders.

Finally, this bill seeks to make changes to help streamline regulatory requirements. These measures include that a person is not required to hold a motor dealers licence to sell a boat trailer in connection with the sale of a second-hand boat; a change that requires landlords to disclose in the Residential Tenancy Agreement the jurisdiction in which they ordinarily reside; a clarification of the definition of "electrical installation" to exclude transmission electricity meters; and a change that ensures that proceedings for indictable offences under the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002 are not subject to the time limit in that Act and are, instead, subject to time frames in the Criminal Procedure Act 1986.

Again, after speaking to stakeholders, the Opposition feels that these are sound measures. We do, however, believe that there are two areas that can be improved through amendments. First, Labor and the industry stakeholders hold concerns about the proposal to clarify the definition of "trailer" in the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013. The change is positive, but Labor feels that in the interests of protecting the consumer there is still a need for a current inspection report for the trailer to be given at the time of sale. This change would ensure that the trailer is roadworthy and fit for purpose, and that consumers are not left disadvantaged or left with a dangerous trailer. We are therefore proposing an amendment to the bill requiring such a report. This amendment will be moved by my colleagues in the Legislative Council, and I hope that the Government will support this improvement.

Secondly, in relation to the changes to the Residential Tenancies Act, Labor is very supportive of removing barriers to firm regulation of landlords and accommodation providers, and of the revisions to location disclosure for landlords. However, Labor feels there is a broader issue with regard to the landlord's existing obligation to disclose their contact details as well as the agents. While it is a breach of the tenancy agreement for a landlord to not comply, the cost to the tenant of enforcing the law is too high. Labor feels that a penalty provision should be added to the section to help resolve this. Again, we will move this amendment in the Legislative Council and hope that the Government will support it. These two proposed amendments will improve the bill and have been flagged with the Minister for introduction in the Legislative Council.

These are very sensible and, for the most part, minor housekeeping amendments across the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio. They can be further improved by the two suggestions I have made in relation to penalty provisions around the disclosure of contact details for landlords who are interstate, and also the clarification about boat trailers and the ongoing requirement for a trailer to have any current inspection report. These are important matters. I urge the Minister and the Government to take these on board and support them in the Legislative Council. Labor is not opposed to these important reforms for the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio, and I commend them.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (15:01:09): I speak in support of the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. I thank the Hon. Kevin Anderson, MP, Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, for bringing this bill to the House, with the purpose of amending various Acts and legislation in an effort to ensure the legislation remains appropriate for the purpose of the bill. Further, the proposed amendments seek to protect consumers, simplify and clarify legislation purpose, reduce uncertainty, streamline regulation requirements and remove any unnecessary procedures.

The proposed amendments in the bill fall under three categories: the increase to consumer protection, the insurance of proper and effective administration of legislation, and the clarification and streamlining of regulatory requirements. These proposed amendments will work to greatly improve the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio, so that it is consistent with the evolving changes the industry is experiencing. Last year's Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Act 2019 is testament to the expectations for this bill, as most of the amendments within the 2019 Act have started and are already improving the operation of the law.

Schedule 1 to the bill refers to the proposed amendments relating to motor dealers and repairers licences, repairs on transport service vehicles and the Motor Dealers and Repairers Compensation Fund. These amendments seek to clarify existing regulations and provide a more transparent process for consumers. The Home Building Act 1989 contains similar powers and has the capacity to immediately cancel a licence that never should have been issued, which directly allows for a more competent administrative process and, additionally, avoids unnecessary delays.

New section 22A enables the licence to be reinstated without the applicant having to reapply. However, this will be applicable only in situations where the error is resolved, the person acted lawfully or there are additional reasons that the licence should be reinstated. This will allow for better consumer protection, through providing a much simpler way of cancelling a licence that has been incorrectly issued and making sure that the licence holder will not need to submit to disciplinary processes.

The proposed amendments in schedule 1 also strive to address a regulatory gap by ensuring that non-minor repairs to all transport service vehicles are performed only by a licensed motor vehicle repairer. Currently this requirement applies only to point-to-point transport legislation for taxis, hire cars and Uber vehicles. However, this requirement is just as important for other small businesses that deliver services directly to consumers, and therefore require established safety protocols. This will also work to protect any businesses that may arise in the future. To ensure transparency, the bill includes a new definition of a "transport service vehicle", which works to remove any doubt as to what vehicles are subject to the requirements. The proposed amendments require owners of a transport service to use a licensed motor vehicle repairer. Minor repairs, such as replacing a flat tyre, are exempt. New South Wales is experiencing a dramatic increase in ridesharing and face-to-face services and

businesses. Therefore more consumers are subject to the risks associated with vehicles not having been repaired by qualified personnel. The amendments will ensure adequate protection of those consumers.

The bill seeks to lessen the regulatory burden for second-hand boat dealers in New South Wales. At present second-hand boat dealers must hold a motor dealer licence if trailers are sold with a boat. The proposed amendment seeks to rectify that issue by specifically providing that a person is not required to be licensed as a motor dealer to sell a trailer for a second-hand boat. That directly ensures that a person is not obliged to hold two separate licences, as second-hand boat sellers are already required to hold a licence under the Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act 1996.

At present it is understood that not all search warrants require the need for NSW Police Force presence. Proposed amendments in schedule 2 to the bill will allow searches under warrant to be performed without the company of a police officer where it is not necessary or is deemed inappropriate. Those changes will ensure that searches of premises and the gathering of information is done in a timely manner, allowing the investigative process to be carried out promptly and efficiently. The amendments are supported by the NSW Police Force, which has been consulted continually throughout the development of the bill. The proposed amendments will significantly reduce time demands on the NSW Police Force, enabling police to continue with their duties, and will allow NSW Fair Trading greater flexibility to take action quickly. The changes will directly allow for enhanced outcomes for consumers and greater protection for the entire community.

The Act currently requires that the surplus after the sale of stored goods be deposited with the NSW Trustee & Guardian. The amendments will ensure that the balance of proceeds will be transferred to Revenue NSW under the provisions of the Unclaimed Money Act 1995 as a replacement for the NSW Trustee & Guardian, which is no longer the suitable depository for legislation in the portfolio. Revenue NSW is the appropriate handler of surplus after the sale of stored goods because it already looks after unclaimed money. Furthermore, Revenue NSW has a fast, free and accessible online search tool that allows members of the public to search for any unclaimed money. Service NSW centres can also be visited for this purpose. The proposed amendments will provide greater regulation of reclaiming money from the sale of stored goods and ensure efficiency for the public by making Revenue NSW the sole agency through which people can search for their money.

Schedule 5 to the bill amends the Residential Tenancies Act 2010. Landlords are not presently required to disclose their place of residence in a residential tenancy agreement if they do not reside in New South Wales. Consequently a tenant living in New South Wales who applies to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal for remedies, unaware that their landlord lives in another jurisdiction, will be denied access to those remedies because the tribunal has no jurisdiction to determine the case. The proposed amendment resolves this issue by requiring landlords to disclose that information. The proposed changes do not impact the existing jurisdiction of the tribunal but rather make the process more transparent, simple and faster for tenants who seek redress. They will also ensure that, if necessary, matters are directed to the appropriate court in a timely fashion.

The proposed amendments seek to improve the renting experience for New South Wales tenants and better protect them. They evidence the Government's commitment to strengthening consumer protections. Furthermore, the bill is committed to reducing unnecessary administrative burden, especially for pawnbrokers and second-hand goods businesses. Currently those people are required to keep a detailed record of the origin and owner of second-hand goods in an effort to deter and identify trading of such goods. An exemption requires an amendment regulation with the approval of the Minister and Executive Council and the agreement of the Governor, which usually results in lengthy delays and increased cost for both the business and the Government. The proposed amendments will apply to all future exemption applications. The new exemptions process will allow the secretary to place conditions on, withdraw or vary an exemption at any time. That ensures that the agency can act fast in the event that the exemption is no longer deemed appropriate.

The bill includes an amendment to section 217 of the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2022 which clarifies that the limitation periods in the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 apply to certain charges under the Act. The amendment clarifies the law and decreases unnecessary legal procedure costs. The amendment does not change the objective of the Act but rather simplifies the process of bringing proceedings under the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act in culmination of the requirements of the Criminal Procedure Act. That ensures clarity and transparency. The bill is an integral part of the New South Wales Government's regular review of legislation. In particular, the proposed amendments will strengthen consumer protection, support businesses, reduce red tape, ensure greater clarity and transparency and close gaps in current legal processes. I thank the Minister and his staff. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (15:10:47): I speak in support of the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. I commend our great Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation for introducing the bill to the House. As the Minister stated in his second reading speech, the Government is working

hard to deliver practical reforms to ensure that NSW Fair Trading and other regulators can continue to administer laws effectively to provide greater transparency and protect consumers. That is very important, as was seen when the member for Lane Cove was the Minister for Fair Trading all those years ago in 2011. It is great to see that excellent work continuing.

I focus my contribution on the amendments relating to enforcement of search warrants, which I know former Minister Roberts was very passionate about during his time as fair trading Minister. Schedule 2 to the bill amends a number of Acts administered by NSW Fair Trading to permit, where appropriate, investigators or other authorised officers to execute search warrants without police presence. The amendments will enable swift compliance and enforcement action in circumstances that do not require police intervention. I touch briefly on the people, processes and systems in place for NSW Fair Trading to take on this task. NSW Fair Trading's team of investigators comprises highly qualified, well-trained professionals who are dedicated to protecting New South Wales consumers. As such, they have the skills and the experience to navigate complex situations and will be able to assess whether police presence is likely to be needed when executing a search warrant.

NSW Fair Trading has rigorous and robust planning and risk assessment processes in place to execute search warrants confidently. Operational orders, which are approved by senior management, are put in place before carrying out a search warrant. The risk matrix in those operational orders ensures that all elements are considered and discussed by team members prior to executing a warrant. This includes discussion around the need for police presence and the safety of the public, staff and those subject to the warrant. NSW Fair Trading investigators have undertaken many search warrants and are highly trained in the ability to assess and calm situations. In addition, a number of team members in NSW Fair Trading's investigation and enforcement division are former New South Wales police officers who bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and understanding of field operational needs, including the execution of warrants. The good member for Goulburn, being a former investigator and officer of the Australian Federal Police, should know what I am talking about.

A significant majority of search warrants can be safely executed without the presence of New South Wales police. Fewer than 10 per cent of the search warrants currently executed by the investigations and enforcement division involve the presence of police officers. NSW Fair Trading has an excellent working relationship with the NSW Police Force. If police assistance is required, the amendments proposed by the bill will enable investigators to make that request of the NSW Police Force. I understand that the amendments in schedule 2 to the bill will align the Acts with a number of other New South Wales fair trading legislation, such as the Fair Trading Act 1987; the Tow Truck Industry Act 1998, which is quite an interesting one if members would like to research it; the Tattoo Parlours Act 2012—I have a couple of tattoo parlours in my electorate, and they will start operating again from 30 June following the easing of COVID restrictions—and the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002.

None of these Acts require police to be present when a search warrant is being executed. I consider these amendments to be of great importance. They will achieve legislative consistency and make it easier for Fair Trading investigators to execute search warrants. Search warrants issued under the Acts being amended are currently only able to be executed when an authorised officer, as determined in each of the Acts, is accompanied by a police officer. Under these Acts warrants can be issued for a variety of matters, many of which are considered to be low-risk circumstances that do not necessitate police presence. Under these Acts the effectiveness of investigations and their resulting compliance and enforcement measures are heavily reliant on the availability of police officers.

The execution of search warrants can be delayed until a police officer is available to attend. This can provide time for evidence to be hidden or destroyed. Police officers may not be able to make themselves readily available for these matters due to other pressing issues. The fact that police officers are needlessly required for such low-risk matters prevents effective decision-making and action. These amendments will remove an unnecessary impost on the time of police officers. That being said, under the proposed amendments NSW Fair Trading investigators will still be able to call for the presence of a police officer when executing a search warrant if they believe the circumstances require police intervention. That is a sensible, middle ground approach.

By their nature, offences under these Acts often require urgent investigative action to protect consumers from harm. Search warrants need to be able to be executed swiftly in order to be effective. Impediments to the timing of their execution may result in greater danger to the public. The amendments provide NSW Fair Trading with greater flexibility to conduct investigations. The amendments will allow investigators to exercise their discretion with regard to whether or not police presence is needed when executing a search warrant. The ability to exercise discretion will assist investigators in avoiding unnecessary delays and excessive administrative processes.

These amendments make it clear that the New South Wales Government is committed to making changes that ensure our legislative framework operates as efficiently and effectively as possible. These amendments will

assist in alleviating the workload of the NSW Police Force and reduce the number of low-risk search warrants requiring their attention. They can then continue to concentrate on higher risk matters to protect the people of New South Wales. Again we thank our great NSW Police Force for the amazing work they are doing to protect our community and keep us safe, especially during this COVID-19 period. The proposed amendments will reduce the workload on New South Wales police officers. At the same time NSW Fair Trading will have adequate policies and procedures in place to ensure that any search warrants issued by a court are executed in a safe and appropriate manner. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (15:19:06): I speak in support of the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. I commend the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation for bringing this bill to the House. An important role of government is to ensure that legislation remains up to date and that provisions are fit for purpose and aligned with intended policy outcomes. The bill achieves that through amendments that increase consumer protection.

There are a number of motor dealers and repairers in my electorate, so I would like to speak particularly to the amendments relating to the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013. These amendments seek to increase customer protection by providing the secretary with the power to cancel licences when they have been issued in error or due to misrepresentations, ensuring that repair work for transport service vehicles is carried out by a licensed motor vehicle repairer and allowing the regulations to prescribe the maximum amount payable from the Motor Dealers and Repairers Compensation Fund. The regulation of the automotive industry is important because it affects almost everybody in the New South Wales community. The automotive industry includes employees, business operators, vehicle owners, drivers and passengers on both private and public transport.

The automotive industry in Australia is estimated to contribute \$37 billion to the Australian economy, employing over 356,000 people as at May 2018. New South Wales has the largest automotive industry in the nation, with almost 30 per cent of Australia's enterprises based here. For most people in New South Wales buying a car is often the second most significant purchase they make after their home. New South Wales residents are heavily reliant on motor vehicles in their daily lives. In our population of eight million people there are nearly seven million registered vehicles and more than six million who hold a driver licence. Vehicle ownership, particularly in regional areas where public transport is not as reliable as it is in metropolitan areas, is very important.

Providing additional powers for the secretary to cancel a licence if it is issued, renewed or restored in error or as a result of misrepresentation ensures that consumers, including owners and passengers of motor vehicles, are better protected. It also reduces red tape for the department and the applicant. As at 5 March 2020 there are over 6,100 individuals and over 8,600 organisations with motor dealer licences in New South Wales. The amendment brings the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act into line with other Acts within the portfolio of the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, such as the Home Building Act 1989. This provision is necessary for administrative purposes, otherwise the secretary is unable to cancel a licence due to administrative error. The amendment provides assurance that if a licence has been issued in error or as a result of misrepresentation it can be cancelled without going through a lengthy disciplinary process.

At present, in the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act there is no power to immediately cancel a licence if it has been issued in error or as a result of misrepresentation. A licence can only be cancelled after following the disciplinary action procedure under the Act and only if there were grounds for refusing to grant the licence when it was granted. This process takes time and is not the most effective way to resolve a licence cancellation resulting from an error or misrepresentation. An example of when this provision would apply is when an applicant provides the wrong information, such as an incorrect business address or name, in good faith. Under this proposal the licence can be cancelled without asking the licensee to respond to a show cause notice and undergo disciplinary action. This would also apply if the department issued a licence in error. The amendment also means that the Department of Customer Service can continue its work to streamline and digitise licence processes for motor dealers, motor vehicle repairers and motor vehicle recyclers with the knowledge that a licence can be cancelled in this new way.

The bill further safeguards consumer protection by ensuring that repair work for transport service vehicles is carried out by a licensed motor vehicle repairer. The amendment intends to close a regulatory gap. The existing regulations do not capture all situations in which a transport service business engages a person who supplies their own vehicle, for example, in freight services. This may result in non-minor repair work being conducted by unqualified persons. The bill amends the Act to ensure that all types of transport service vehicles used for transporting goods and passengers are captured. This includes freight and peer-to-peer car sharing vehicles. To ensure that all users of transport service vehicles are adequately protected, the bill creates a definition of "transport service vehicle". A transport service vehicle is defined as:

... a motor vehicle used for the carriage of passengers or goods in connection with a business.

This definition ensures the relevant vehicles are defined. It makes it clear that only a licensed motor vehicle repairer is able to carry out repair work on transport service vehicles. This amendment protects the safety of consumers, passengers and transport service vehicles alike. The amendments also apply the offence of permitting or carrying out non-minor repair work by an unlicensed motor vehicle repairer to transport service vehicles. This provides a deterrent to ensure compliance and consumer protection. Enabling the maximum amount in the Motor Dealers and Repairers Compensation Fund to be prescribed by the regulation provides for fit-for-purpose legislation to meet consumer protections now and in the future. This amendment means that the maximum amount, which is currently \$40,000, can be adjusted with ease to account for trends in the pricing of motor vehicles. I am confident that the outcome of these amendments will strengthen protection for consumers. I am also confident that this bill will deliver useful administrative amendments that will provide greater clarity and certainty in the law and reduce red tape. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:25:35): I speak in support of the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. I commend the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation for bringing the bill to the House. I enjoyed also his second reading speech on the Residential Apartment Buildings (Compliance and Enforcement) Bill this morning. It was very illuminating. This omnibus bill contains numerous miscellaneous amendments. I will focus on the two issues of storage liens and contract cleaning. As part of the bill, the way that unclaimed proceeds from the sale of goods are dealt with in storage liens situations will be modernised. Schedule 3 to the bill makes amendments to the Storage Liens Act 1935 that will require unclaimed money from the proceeds of sale to be dealt with under the Unclaimed Money Act 1995. This is consistent with other Acts that require compliance with the Unclaimed Money Act 1995 for any unclaimed sale proceeds.

The Storage Liens Act currently requires that the unclaimed proceeds of a sale must be provided to the NSW Trustee and Guardian. On the other hand, under the Unclaimed Money Act unclaimed proceeds are held by Revenue NSW. The system administrated and maintained by Revenue NSW allows customers to search for unclaimed money on an online database free of charge. These searches can also be carried out at any Service NSW centre—and what a fantastic product Service NSW is for the people of New South Wales. I know that the member for Lane Cove, who is present in the Chamber, has a Service NSW nearby and I am sure that the Deputy Speaker has a Service NSW in her electorate. Indeed, Erina has an excellent Service NSW. I congratulate Robyn and the team at Erina. The Service NSW centres at Woy Woy and Gosford also do a phenomenal job. They have been working particularly diligently throughout the COVID-19 crisis. In addition, the Service NSW 24/7 hotline number, 13 77 88—as members have become accustomed to informing constituents—is available for COVID-19 related inquiries.

The database provides a transparent, effective and efficient platform for consumers to easily search for unclaimed money. As a consequence, this amendment is a commonsense reform. Consumers will now be able to search for any unclaimed money in the one place. Bringing the process for dealing with unclaimed moneys under the Unclaimed Money Act 1995 will also reduce the existing duplicative processes and reduce administrative costs. As Minister Anderson said in his second reading speech, the NSW Trustee & Guardian is primarily concerned with public services such as the administration of deceased estates and the making of wills. It is no longer appropriate to require the NSW Trustee & Guardian to allocate resources towards keeping unclaimed proceeds when Revenue NSW has an established and incredibly effective system already in place.

I understand Revenue NSW currently looks after approximately 430,000 unclaimed items from a variety of sources. It makes sense to remove the burden of maintaining the care of unclaimed moneys from the NSW Trustee & Guardian—430,000 is a phenomenal number of unclaimed items. With these duties transferred to Revenue NSW, the NSW Trustee & Guardian will be able to allocate resources to areas of operation that might require more attention. Another aim of the Government is to ensure that legislation remains up to date and fit for purpose. The bill also makes amendments to tidy up outdated provisions in the Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Scheme) Act 2010. We are absolutely committed to supporting all frontline services such as contract cleaning because, as the Premier regularly says, we are the party of the workers.

I take this opportunity to thank those employed in the cleaning industry in New South Wales for their commitment, dedication and hard work. While many staff have had the opportunity to work from home, frontline staff like cleaners have stepped up to the plate to ensure that the crucial services we rely on day in, day out continue to be COVID-19 friendly—whether it be those who ensure that our buses and trains are wiped down and sanitised, our hospitals stay clean and hygienic, and those businesses that have kept their doors open and kept people in jobs throughout this pandemic are cleaned.

It may appear that these are minor administrative changes, but every bit does help. It is crucial that the Government is able to make commonsense changes to our laws and regulations to keep our State moving. The proposed amendments remove references to the Australian Cleaning Contractors' Association, which ceased operation in December 2018. Instead, the amendments grant the Minister powers to appoint two persons to the

committee who have knowledge of and experience in the contract cleaning industry. The amendments do not change the operation of the provision and will allow for nominations of representatives from the wider pool of industry employers. The bill also updates references to the United Voice (NSW Branch), which is now known as the United Workers Union (NSW Branch).

These amendments are examples of the relatively non-controversial amendments contained in the omnibus bill. They will contribute to the Government's aim to clarify and streamline regulatory requirements. I am confident the bill delivers practical reforms to support the good work across the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio. I congratulate Minister Anderson and his incredibly hard-working team on their drafting of these amendments. The Minister has done an excellent job. He is getting on with the job. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (15:33:21): I speak in support of the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. I commend the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation for introducing this important number of reforms to the bill. The purpose of the bill is to make amendments to various Acts within the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio, to address emerging issues, to support procedural improvements, to clarify a bit of uncertainty and to correct drafting errors in legislation. I am delighted to see that the Government is helping businesses to keep the doors open and to keep people employed in the extraordinary public health and economic crises brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. The reforms will ensure the effective operation of legislation by removing unnecessary red tape and administrative burden.

I express my specific support for the amendments to the Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act 1996. The primary aim of the Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act is to restrict the trade of stolen goods by requiring licensed pawnbrokers and second-hand dealers to observe minimum standards of conduct, including record-keeping. Under the Act licensees must keep detailed records of the origin and description of goods. Licensees must also require and record proof of identity from those who are pawning or selling second-hand items. The Act allows certain licensees to seek an exemption from those record-keeping requirements; however, exemptions can currently only be prescribed in the regulations. Existing exemptions in the regulations include second-hand dealers that receive and resell used mobile phones and tablets provided by telcos such as Optus and Telstra. These licensees are eligible for an exemption from the record-keeping requirements as the source and details of the original owner of a device has already been carefully recorded and the goods are not at high risk of theft.

The amendments in schedule 6 to the bill will simplify the process for which such exemptions may be granted. The process of granting exemptions in the regulations imposes unnecessary cost and it is also an extra administrative burden for the applicants as well as for the Government, which must then process each request for an exemption under the approval of the Minister and the Executive Council. The bill introduces a far more efficient and cost-effective process by giving the secretary the power to exempt persons from the operation of the Act or specified provisions of the Act by way of notice to the person. I am pleased to see that under the bill the existing exemptions prescribed by the regulation will continue to apply under the new regime; those businesses involved will not need to reapply, which is good.

The basis and assessment for granting an exemption will also remain unchanged. This means that the secretary will only provide an exemption where there are no real risks of dealing in stolen goods. The most significant change in the amendments is that future applications for an exemption will be dealt with via administrative means that require only the approval of the secretary. This will reduce regulatory burden for applicants and also for the Government. Importantly, the bill requires the secretary to publish details of exemptions on a publicly available website as soon as is practicable after an exemption has been granted. That way it is available to all. Having that information on the NSW Fair Trading website will give everyone public, quick, easy access to information relating to any exemption granted. The public will no longer have to look up the regulation to see whether an exemption applies, and that will help to improve transparency, accountability and public confidence in the Government's operation of the law.

It is important to note that while the bill seeks to remove legislative impediments and increase operational efficiency, this will not come at the cost of the ongoing protection of customers and their interests. On the contrary, the amendments contained in the bill provide specific provisions that are targeted to strengthen customer protection and also provide greater confidence in the law. Under the proposed amendments the secretary will have the power to prescribe conditions to any exemption granted. This includes the option of specifying a time limit for each exemption. The secretary may also revoke or vary an exemption at any time. These new powers for the secretary will help to ensure necessary regulatory oversight is maintained so that all exemptions granted are appropriate—again, an important measure.

Furthermore, the amendments contained in the bill streamline regulatory requirements by bringing the Act in alignment with other NSW Fair Trading legislation which makes provision for similar exemption powers.

A streamlined approach to granting exemptions will certainly benefit consumers and will also benefit operational staff by providing consistency and reducing the potential for misunderstandings and disputes. I am confident that the amendments contained in the bill will deliver useful administrative changes that will continue to achieve the original intent of the Act, which is about strengthening customer protection but also maintaining integrity in the market.

This Government is committed to supporting small businesses. We know that small business is the backbone of the State economy and through this COVID-19 pandemic many have been doing it particularly tough, given restrictions imposed due to the pandemic, and certainly across regional areas that has been felt as much as anywhere. The amendments in the bill are about ensuring that legislation remains up to date, the provisions are fit for purpose and that they are all in line with the original policy intent. Once again I commend the Minister. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (15:40:12): I speak in support of the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. I commend the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation for bringing this bill to the House. The bill makes amendments to various Acts within the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio to address emerging issues, support procedural improvements, clarify uncertainty and correct drafting errors in legislation. I would like to focus my contribution today to the debate on amendments in the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 relating to the Retail Trading Act 2008 and the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002.

The amendments to the Retail Trading Act are minor and inconsequential but are still administratively important. The amendments are set out in schedule 4 to the bill. Although minor, any support this Government can provide to New South Wales small businesses is an absolute priority as the amendments combat the unprecedented health crisis and associated economic impacts brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. New South Wales business conditions fell to -27 index points in April from -20 in March, which is lower than at any stage during the global financial crisis. Despite this, the New South Wales business confidence index rose to -41 in April from -62 in March.

The New South Wales Government has been on the front foot to support businesses to get through to the other side of the pandemic. The Government has launched a 24-hour hotline to enable businesses greater access to advice and support on non-health-related COVID-19 matters; provided grants of up to \$10,000 to businesses below the payroll tax threshold with between 0.5 and 19 full-time equivalent employees, with over \$286 million in grants already approved as at 29 May 2020, and a further \$122 million in process, with the closing date now extended to 30 June 2020; deferred payment of payroll tax for six months for all businesses to assist with cash flow; waived three months' worth of payroll tax for businesses whose small total grouped Australian wages for the 2019-20 financial year are no more than \$10 million; brought forward payroll tax cuts, with the payroll tax threshold going from \$900,000 to \$1 million from 1 July 2020, saving eligible businesses thousands of dollars per year; and waived a range of fees and charges, including \$50 million worth of licence fees for up to 200,000 tradies and \$19.5 million worth of fees for the entertainment and hospitality sectors.

In addition, the Government has given effect to the National Code of Conduct for commercial tenancies impacted by COVID-19 to provide a framework for landlords and tenants to get through this crisis; delivered a \$440 million land tax relief package for eligible landlords who support their residential and commercial tenants; boosted the NSW Small Business Commission with \$10 million to increase mediation services between commercial landlords and tenants; accelerated the payment of our suppliers, injecting more than \$2 billion into the economy; amended planning rules to allow food trucks and dark kitchens to operate on any land at any time with a landowner's consent; provided more flexibility to supermarkets and pharmacies to operate around the clock to meet the needs of customers; relaxed liquor licensing compliance—set out in the Liquor Act 2007 and the Liquor Regulation 2018—to allow licensed venues such as restaurants, cafes and small bars to sell alcohol for off-site consumption.

Further, the Government has injected more than \$14 million into Business Connect to engage 30 additional business advisers and to ensure the program continues for another 12 months to support businesses through these tough times; rolled out free webinars for small businesses doing it tough on topics that included "how to maximise cashflow", "turning your restaurant into a ghost kitchen" and "marketing to pivot your business". It has rolled out 21 fee-free TAFE NSW short online courses to assist anyone who wants to upskill during the COVID-19 pandemic, including e-marketing for small business, social media customer engagement, writing and presentation skills and team leader skills; and allowed construction sites to operate on weekends and public holidays to enable construction projects to progress while workers follow social distancing guidelines, which potentially limits the number of workers on a site at a given time.

The Government has introduced a \$12.6 million support package for the taxi industry to provide operators with financial relief during the COVID-19 shutdown. It has also provided a \$50 million rescue and restart package

for NSW arts and cultural organisations, including funding, available now, to enable NSW not-for-profit arts and cultural organisations to hibernate temporarily, with further funding available in the coming months to enable those organisations to restart operations after the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSW Small Business Commission's COVID-19 survey of 21 May 2020 notes that 97 per cent of businesses are aware of at least one type of government support package, with 78 per cent of businesses applying for, or already receiving, support.

The main amendment in the bill is to allow the secretary to approve forms that would ordinarily be prescribed by regulation. Towards the end of 2018 the Retail Trading Act 2008 came under the administration of the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. As a result of its late inclusion, the Retail Trading Act missed out on the opportunity to be part of the Better Business Reforms package that passed Parliament in 2018. The package included reforms relating to the removal of prescribed forms in regulations.

Currently the Act grants the secretary power to exempt shops from trading restrictions. Exemptions can be granted only if an application for an exemption has been filed. An application for an exemption under the current Act must be made in the manner and form prescribed by the Retail Trading Regulation. Should the prescribed form require amending, the regulation would also be required to be amended in the process. The benefit of using approved forms is that they can be updated and amended when required without the administrative burden of having also to amend the prescribing regulation, which requires approval by the Executive Council. As a result the process for amending prescribed forms is more expedient and efficient.

The various amendments contained in the bill also clarify legislation. In particular, schedule 7.3 to the bill amends section 217 of the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002 to clarify the time limit for bringing proceedings under that Act. The amendment clarifies that no statutory limitation period applies to indictable prosecutions for offences under the Act. The issue has arisen because in court proceedings the provision has been used as a loophole to argue that cases have been brought outside the statutory time frame. As the Minister mentioned in his second reading speech, those arguments prolong hearings and have major impacts on the efficiency of the court. The amendment is necessary to prevent valuable court time being wasted and to provide certainty as to the Parliament's intention that no statutory limitation period should apply for indictable offences.

I am running out of time to speak about this fantastic bill. This bill, in aligning the Retail Trading Act with other legislation in the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio, ensures the reduction of unnecessary red tape and administrative burden. The processes associated with secretary-approved forms are more efficient and effective than changing a form prescribed in a regulation. The amendment to the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act clarifies proper processes and time frames. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:49:38): I speak in support of the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. I commend the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, his team and department for their work in bringing the bill to the House. The purpose of the bill is to make amendments to various Acts within the Better Regulation and Innovation portfolio to address emerging issues, support procedural improvements, clarify uncertainty and correct drafting errors in legislation. The reforms ensure the effective operation of legislation by removing unnecessary red tape and administrative burden.

In particular, I express my support for the amendments to the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2017 in schedule 7 to the bill. They are essential amendments that will provide stronger consumer protections and clarify the legislation. The bill amends the definition of "electrical installation" to clarify that it excludes transmission electricity meters that are owned by an electricity supply authority and located at a place owned or occupied by the authority. As a result of opening up competition in metering services on a national basis, the Act was amended in 2016 to ensure that work on residential meters was subject to the safety testing and compliance standards applicable to other installations. However, the unintended effect of this 2016 amendment to the definition of "electrical installation" was to capture meters used by network operators as part of their network systems. That has inadvertently captured work conducted on transmission apparatus such as transmission electricity meters, a highly specialised activity with installations designed for the safe and secure operation of the transmission network. The bill therefore gives effect to the intention of Parliament to capture only residential meters.

The bill amends section 5 of the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act to ensure gas meters in the workplace are appropriately tested and examined. At the time the Act was developed it was planned that the Commonwealth would take over the responsibility for the regulation of gas meters. Due to delays in the review of the national measurement law, the requirements for the examination and testing of gas meters was included in the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Regulation 2018. To ensure that the existing State-based regulation of gas meters is maintained, the amendments will provide a permanent solution to capture the examination and testing of gas meters.

The bill will enable the secretary to grant exemptions for certain persons, classes of persons, gas appliances and gas installations from the provisions of the Act relating to the sale and connection of uncertified gas appliances. The gas-related exemption power in the superseded Gas Supply (Consumer Safety) Regulation 2012 was not carried over to the Act. The Act provides exemption powers for electrical articles but does not provide an equivalent for gas appliances. This amendment will rectify the imbalance. The removal of this clause has had unintended consequences for the industry, affording a commercial advantage to companies that were exempt prior to the current Act. It has also prevented new suppliers from competing in specific markets; in particular, where items do not comply with any existing standards, such as gas fire extinguisher systems. The bill will address that inequity.

The bill will also amend the definition of "trade certificate" in section 33 (3) of the Act. The amended definition will include a tradesperson's certificate to capture autogas installations that are designed for use with liquefied natural gas. Existing provisions in the Act capture only autogas installations that are designed for use with liquefied petroleum gas and compressed natural gas. The amendments to the definition of "trade certificate" in the Act will ensure that all types of autogas installation work are covered, thereby ensuring consumers are fully and adequately protected.

To further improve consumer protection, the bill expands the existing gas- and electrical-related investigation powers of NSW Fair Trading to allow investigations of autogas installations. This reform enables NSW Fair Trading investigators to investigate and prohibit the sale and use of unsafe autogas installations, protecting the public from unsafe work. Currently when unsafe autogas installations are being used, authorised officers do not have the authority to issue defect notices for unsafe autogas installations.

Authorised officers are restricted to issuing a defect notice to the person responsible for gasfitting work on a gas installation. The bill addresses this. It contains a range of enforcement provisions for the investigation and inspection of electrical and gas installations. These powers will be expanded to capture autogas installations, which will enable an authorised officer with written authority from the secretary to enter a place, inspect and take copies of documents to provide evidence of prohibited conduct. An authorised officer will also be able to prohibit the sale and use of an unsafe autogas installation. An autogas installation is defined as a vehicle, vessel or machine that an autogas installation is installed in or forms part of. It is vital that the powers contained in this bill are provided to the department so that the public can be sure that the New South Wales Government is able to effectively investigate and prohibit unsafe autogas installations.

Selling a prohibited autogas installation where a notice has been issued or label affixed can incur a maximum penalty of 5,000 to 7,500 penalty units for a body corporate and 500 in any other case for a first offence. This is necessary to act as a deterrent to those who may do the wrong thing and to encourage compliance. These powers are necessary when dealing with matters of public safety and will ensure that the department has the necessary tools to give effect to the objectives of the bill. The proposals presented in the bill will significantly assist with increasing the effectiveness of the gas and electricity legislation to ensure that autogas installations are compliant with essential standards. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (15:56:12): I support the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 and I commend the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation for bringing the bill to the House. He is a down-to-earth, sensible Minister who gets on with and does the job, just like the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections, who is in the Chamber. This bill, like many others that come before this House, is a collection of, in themselves, fairly minor amendments that cumulatively need to be undertaken to ensure that legislation remains fit for purpose and that the needs of the consumers in our community are protected as changes come to light and procedures are exposed that are not as good as they should be. It is an ongoing process of monitoring and improvement to make sure that legislation does the job in the best possible way for the people in our community.

The particular aspects of this amendment bill that I will examine are those that seek to strengthen consumer protection by making minor but important amendments to a number of pieces of legislation. I will speak firstly to the amendments relating to the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013. The bill amends the Act to strengthen protection for consumers by providing a power for the secretary to cancel licences in instances of error or misrepresentation; by creating an offence for permitting or carrying out non-minor repair work by an unlicensed repairer; and by allowing the regulations to prescribe the maximum amount payable from the Motor Dealers and Repairers Compensation Fund.

There is currently no power under the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013 to immediately cancel a licence if it is issued, renewed or restored in error or as a result of misrepresentation. A licence can be cancelled only if it has been improperly obtained and after following the process for disciplinary action under the Act. This process can take some time and any undue delay in the cancellation of a licence issued in error or by fraud may cause significant detriment to consumers. In addition to reducing red tape, the amendment contained in the bill

ensures that consumers are better protected by enabling the secretary to immediately cancel licences if they are issued, renewed or restored as a result of error or misrepresentation. This is a commonsense amendment. It would be expected by the community that if the licence should not have been issued in the first place or it was obtained by fraud, the secretary could act immediately to correct the error.

The bill further strengthens and safeguards consumer protection by clarifying that all non-minor repair work associated with transport service vehicles must be carried out by a licensed motor vehicle repairer. The Passenger Transport (General) Regulation 2017 and the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Regulation 2017 currently prohibit unqualified repairers from conducting any non-minor repair work to taxis, hire cars and Uber vehicles. However, these regulations do not cover all instances where a transport service business engages the person who supplies their own vehicle, such as freight services. This may result in repair works in those cases being undertaken by unqualified persons. This has the potential to put people at risk, including the driver, passengers, the person undertaking the work and the general public.

There is a public safety interest in ensuring that repairs to transport service vehicles—other than very basic or minor maintenance—are undertaken only by persons with appropriate qualifications. The bill achieves this by creating a strict liability offence if any person authorises or carries out non-minor repair work by an unlicensed repairer. Imposing strict liability for noncompliance reflects this Government's paramount commitment to public safety. It also reflects the seriousness of harm that may result if motor vehicle repairs are undertaken by unqualified persons. The proposed amendment helps mitigate those risks and complements safety standards already provided under the passenger transport and point-to-point regulations. The amendment is necessary to protect our citizens and improve safety on New South Wales roads. We are talking about vehicles that are on the road more often than the average passenger vehicle or privately owned vehicle. Because they are used for business, freight services or point-to-point transport, they are on the road much more often. The risk involved to the community is increased by the extra usage and mileage that is being incurred.

I note that the bill also makes amendments relating to the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2017. The bill amends this Act to expand the powers of NSW Fair Trading to investigate and prohibit the sale and use of unsafe autogas installations. Currently the investigative powers of Fair Trading are limited to gasfitting work and gas installation, which does not include autogas installations. Consultation with Fair Trading revealed that unsafe autogas installations are currently being used in the market. Providing authorised investigators with the power to inspect and take action against unsafe autogas installations is therefore necessary to protect consumers from foreseeable risks of harm. Data gathered from compliance action could also be applied for other useful purposes, including issuing product safety warnings to the public. I am confident that the outcome of these amendments to the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013 and the Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2017 will bring a significant and positive change for the citizens of New South Wales.

I observe that when consumers make complaints to Fair Trading it may sometimes seem that they do not get an immediate outcome and the law does not provide for the sort of response they expect. But it is by compiling and monitoring these trends of complaints and reports that Fair Trading can come back with legislation like this to close loopholes, improve safeguards and improve the way that regulatory processes work to protect consumers. By harvesting the information that consumer feedback provides we arrive at better outcomes. These reforms reflect the Government's commitment to customer service by ensuring that laws maintain high standards of consumer safety and provide appropriate enforcement measures against noncompliance. I commend the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation for bringing this bill to the House and for implementing these important consumer protection reforms.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (16:02:07):
In reply: I thank all members for their contributions to debate on the Better Regulation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, particularly the member for Holsworthy, the member for Wollondilly, the member for Coffs Harbour, the member for Terrigal, the member for Dubbo, the member for North Shore, the member for Heathcote and the member for Riverstone. I also thank the member for Granville, with whom it is a pleasure to work when it comes to looking at various pieces of legislation. We value her advice and her feedback. Ultimately we all want better legislation for the betterment of our communities right across New South Wales. I thank the member for Granville for her cooperation and input.

I also thank the member for Wollondilly for his comments, particularly in relation to providing flexibility for the execution of search warrants. It is an important amendment in the bill, and I appreciate his support and interest in it. NSW Fair Trading officers are highly experienced and well trained to administer warrants and police can be freed up to do more of the great work that they do day in, day out. NSW Fair Trading can still call upon police to have an officer present, which means that this amendment provides a sensible middle-ground approach. I thank the member for Wollondilly for his interest and support.

As previously stated, an important role of government is to ensure that legislation remains up to date and that its provisions are fit for purpose and in line with the original policy intent. The bill achieves this by ensuring strong customer and consumer protections by inserting specificity powers, clarifying legislative intent and reducing uncertainty, and clarifying and streamlining regulatory requirements and removing unnecessary red tape. Reforms such as the amendment to provide exemptions from record-keeping requirements for pawnbrokers and second-hand dealers will support small businesses and reduce red tape. The amendments relating to search warrants will allow NSW Fair Trading to take action swiftly and will reduce the pressure on New South Wales police. This reform will allow New South Wales police to divert their resources to matters where police intervention is necessary, and will provide NSW Fair Trading with greater flexibility when executing search warrants. The amendments to the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013 will improve the administration of the licensing regime. These amendments are an important step towards enhancing consumer protection in New South Wales.

Furthermore, the bill also makes a number of amendments that clarify and streamline regulatory requirements. One such amendment is the reform relating to the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 and the requirement for landlords outside of New South Wales to disclose the jurisdiction in which they reside in residential tenancy agreements. This reform will allow tenants to seek redress faster and will enable the tribunal to refer matters appropriately where required. I note that the member for Granville has flagged that two amendments will be moved in the other place—one is in relation to this and the other in relation to the inspection of trailers and boat trailers. I am confident that this bill will deliver meaningful administrative amendments for the citizens of New South Wales and small businesses. It demonstrates the Government's continued commitment to protecting the rights of citizens in New South Wales, reducing and removing unnecessary red tape, and providing greater clarity and certainty in the law. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Private Members' Statements

TERRIGAL ELECTORATE SPORTS CLUBS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:07:53): COVID-19 has created disruption and uncertainty in every section of our community. Unfortunately, our sporting clubs have been unable to operate for an extended amount of time, but there is light at the end of the tunnel. Today the Deputy Premier, the health Minister and the acting sports Minister announced that community sport can resume on 1 July. While there has been plenty of disruption and uncertainty for the sporting community, I congratulate the team at Central Coast Academy of Sport on continuing to have a positive impact on local sportspeople.

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant that no organised sports activities have been taking place face-to-face, but the Academy of Sport has been able to pivot to servicing their athletes and all sportspeople through online education and learning platforms. I am told that the topics covered so far have been extremely relevant, including mental health, strength and conditioning, nutrition, cyber safety and more. The athletes currently registered in the program have access to free online courses. There is a 12-week injury prevention, strength and conditioning program and participation rates have been truly phenomenal, with as many as 90 athletes participating per week.

Other courses include isolation challenges, volunteer profiles, academy ambassador communications, coach education sessions and regular catch-ups to keep an eye on wellbeing. These have been provided in collaboration between Clubs NSW, the Australian Institute of Sport, Sport NSW and State sporting organisations. The role played by the Central Coast Academy of Sport and all regional academies is invaluable. It provides athletes and the wider sports community on the Central Coast with support, knowledge and engagement. For example, the launch of the three winter programs—athletics, swimming and touch football—will lay a strong foundation for when normal sporting activities are allowed to resume in a COVID-19 safe way.

I thank Ian "Moose" Robilliard, the managing director of the Central Coast Academy of Sport. Ian has been working cooperatively with the New South Wales Government across a range of sports policy issues to ensure that we can continue delivering what regional academies of sport need and want. Just like me, Ian is a big basketball fan and a passionate supporter of the Central Coast Crusaders team. I am proud to count Ian "Moose" Robilliard as a good mate.

I congratulate each of the following clubs in my electorate on their successful funding applications through the Local Sport Grant Program: Macmasters Beach Surf Life Saving Club, \$13,906 for security cameras and new buoys; Central Coast Waves Basketball Association, \$11,256 for new basketball rings; Terrigal Rugby Club, \$3,500 for new training equipment; Saratoga Sailing Club, \$3,000 for a new outboard motor; the Kincumber Roos, \$2,000 for coach training; Central Coast Baseball Association, \$2,000 for outdoor storage cabinets; Terrigal BMX Club, \$2,000 for administration equipment; and the Terrigal Matcham Cricket Club, \$2,000 for portable score boards. Each club is incredibly deserving of funding from the New South Wales Government. They do an incredible job in providing opportunities to families in our community and they are almost entirely run and operated by a wonderful team of volunteers.

The Government's Local Sport Grant Program is an excellent way to encourage volunteer participation in sporting clubs across the Central Coast. I have had the pleasure of attending most of the clubs for various reasons, including presentation days and competition days. The strength and the camaraderie of these clubs during the COVID-19 crisis has been nothing short of truly amazing. They have pulled together and worked together. They realise that sharing experiences and knowledge is beneficial to all in the long term. I congratulate the Terrigal electorate-based sporting clubs on receiving these grants and I encourage them to continue their great work with young athletes and volunteers across the coast.

EASTLAKES SHOPPING CENTRE

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:12:52): I bring to the attention of the House my concerns about the Eastlakes Shopping Centre. The centre's redevelopment is being considered under the Planning System Acceleration Program, which was announced to determine significant development applications by 18 June to support the New South Wales economy's recovery. I state at the outset that this application is not being held up by any red tape. It is being delayed because the applicant has refused to accept or comply with any requirement of the consent authority, ranging back to when I was mayor of Botany Bay. The redevelopment of Eastlakes Shopping Centre, with residential development above it, was not just supported by the former Botany Bay City Council but also encouraged by it.

The applicant always thought using political influence was the way to achieve consent, rather than through proper planning. That political influence extended to the former Government and continued through this Government. It is not that the Government did not know about those concerns. When I was still mayor and had just been elected as the member for Heffron, I met with the member for Wakehurst—the then planning Minister—together with the council's general manager and planning director, and informed him of my concerns and suspicions. Instead, part 3A approval was given. That approval, and the little construction that had commenced, is what has landed the applicant with the transport and access issues it now has. It is clearly on a go-slow.

I have raised previously in the House my concerns about this site. The involvement of representatives of this applicant with members of the former Government who are currently on trial, and the donation of vehicles used by the Liberal Party were subject to evidence given to public hearings of ICAC a number of years ago. This pending modification application is another attempt to avoid meeting the requirements of consent authorities. The proponent has now submitted four applications to try to wear down the authorities. Getting the right planning outcome is what is needed and it can be achieved. It can be achieved by requiring the applicant to work with the council and not trying to use influence on everybody else to achieve an outcome.

The development has always been inappropriate because of its height, density, the zoning of the land and its location, having regard to the insufficient local infrastructure, particularly access roads and especially public transport. That view has been supported by exceptional reports prepared by Bayside Council. It opposes the project on merit planning grounds, which are that it is inconsistent with the strategic planning framework, with the B2 Local Centre zoning in both the current and draft local environmental plan, with the character of the area, with the local strategic planning statement, and with council's development control plan regarding building height, floor space ratio and car parking requirements. Further, the project is inappropriate with regard to height, scale, building bulk and visual impact. Public and active transport in the area is completely insufficient.

That opposition has been supported in the past by both the office of the Government Architect and the State Design Review Panel, although I understand that they have recently given in. The project is also inconsistent with objectives 12 and 22 of Planning Priority E6 of the Greater Sydney Commission's Eastern City District Plan and would be premature. What I find so frustrating is that this developer is capable of exceptional work. The council and the community have been willing to work with the Crown group to make that happen. Instead, the applicant has refused every opportunity to do so and is now holding out for ministerial approval in the middle of a crisis. It is intransigent.

On the recent passing of the late Jack Munday, I have had cause to think about the role he played in preventing the worst overdevelopment planned for East Lakes in the 1970s—and this site is right next door to that

parkland. The overdevelopment that did occur caused socio-economic difficulties that have lasted more than a generation. Poor planning decisions have impacts that span decades; they long outlast the political careers of the elected people who make them. I urge the Minister not to succumb to the pressure. A better outcome is possible and I am confident that this planning Minister is more than capable of achieving it. I am sure the planning Minister will understand that I have not raised the issues outlined in this private member's statement lightly, and neither are they an exaggeration nor are they inaccurate.

COVID-19 AND TWEED ELECTORATE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (16:17:33): I congratulate the residents of Tweed on their commitment to controlling the spread of COVID-19. As of 31 May, 509,227 people across the State of New South Wales had been tested for the virus, with 7,870 tests completed in the northern New South Wales area. This represents a test rate of 25 per 100,000 people. In the Northern NSW Local Health District we currently have no cases and no cases with an unknown source. The suppression of the virus in northern New South Wales was a huge accomplishment and in many ways is due to the response of the local communities who have adhered to social distancing and isolation restrictions. Residents of the Tweed have followed health advice and have stayed at home. During the height of the pandemic the Tweed-Byron police—whom I must congratulate on the way they enforce the law and make sure the community is safe—reported a pleasing level of compliance with public health orders, and I commend the people of Tweed for their commitment to containing this disease.

This is all in the face of significant economic impacts and restrictions on business and income in the area. Like most of New South Wales, we have seen a significant number of job losses in the Tweed with many, many businesses hit hard by enforcement closures. But the people of the Tweed are resilient and, as these restrictions ease, life is beginning to return to its new norm. Tweed residents are rebuilding, reforming and restoring. I also pay tribute to the hard work and dedication of the health workers, who work extremely hard in a fast-changing, high-pressure environment to stem the spread of COVID-19 in what is an extremely challenging time. I am very proud of the response of the people of Tweed to this pandemic, and I am pleased to be able to stand here today and formally thank the Tweed electorate for its commitment to containing COVID-19.

But it behoves me to talk about the sad state of affairs just north of the border. The Queensland Government has closed its border to all people from the south and from anywhere else in Australia. The police are manning several roadblocks. It takes people about 60 seconds to get a permit to cross the border, so the closure is most ineffectual. We have seen the effect of Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk's border closure: The crime rate on the Gold Coast and in Brisbane has risen significantly, whereas the crime rate in Tweed and in northern New South Wales has dropped to an all-time low. This is just a political stunt by the Queensland Government, which is facing the polls at the end of September or beginning of October. Over the weekend the Queensland police union said that the Queensland Government is now cannibalising the homicide squad, the child protection squad and many other specialised police units so that officers can sit at the border on motorbikes or stand on the kerb of a road and just wave people through time and again.

The border closure has killed tourism, particularly on the Gold Coast, and it has had a massive effect on businesses just south of the border, where a lot of people from Queensland holiday. I find it ludicrous that even the Australian Defence Force—for which all in this Chamber have a great deal of pride and respect—has been involved. Members of the Australian Army are sitting on the border also enforcing this strange rule. The Queensland Premier has even gone against the Federal Chief Medical Officer, Brendan Murphy, who says there are no medical grounds to close the border. The closure of the border continues to be a festering sore. Most people heading north have their travel time delayed by about an hour because they have to go through so-called checkpoints.

In the electorate of Tweed, which borders Coolangatta, apart from the road closures, people can just walk across the road anywhere they like without any encumbrance whatsoever. This border closure is absolutely ludicrous and it is hurting our tourism industry in northern New South Wales. Gold Coast Airport, which is the fifth busiest airport in Australia, straddles the border. The airport has around 4.5 million visitors a year and 30 per cent of them turn south and 70 per cent turn north. Those people are not arriving at Gold Coast Airport at the moment, which is having a severe impact. I do not think the tourism industry on the Gold Coast will survive. Even today there was a mass rally of Gold Coast tourism operators, supported by tourism operators in New South Wales, against the border closure. Anastacia, please open your borders and listen to common sense.

BAPS SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education) (16:22:28): The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting every aspect of human life around the world. The BAPS Swaminarayan centre has rapidly mobilised under the guidance of His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj. BAPS is providing much-needed support, services and spiritual care for individuals and families throughout the world. BAPS is

responding to this unprecedented crisis in many ways to help our community remain safe, healthy and strong. It is a privilege to bring to the attention of the House and recognise the exemplary work that BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Rosehill is doing for our community. BAPS Rosehill provides online spiritual assemblies, prayer ceremonies and counselling for individuals and families alike. It provides support for communities suffering from disadvantage and promotes awareness and preventative measures.

In Australia, BAPS and other charity partners joined the global call to provide services and support for diverse communities across the world in a spirit of selfless service. Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and partnering with local government and other groups, BAPS charities in Australia and New Zealand have offered significant relief to communities, including providing over 1,300 meals, distributing over 1,500 care packages to individuals and families, and taking over 10,000 phone calls for support. Volunteers gave over 1,200 hours of their time. They provide 300 hot meals daily and have distributed over 25 tonnes of fresh vegetables and other food directly to the community.

In Australia and New Zealand BAPS has been actively involved with other community organisations in providing aid to international students and families who have been affected by the current situation when people have lost their jobs, often their only source of income. Volunteers from the community regularly call people, ask after their wellbeing and provide counselling. Following the closures of the mandirs, BAPS has been able to continue the weekly assemblies for young children, youth and other people through its regular webcast on Sundays. This has helped families, kids and youth to be in constant contact with religious activities. BAPS has also conducted various religious ceremonies through webcast. Webcast viewership figures have grown daily. Approximately 5,000 people regularly log on for the Sunday webcast. BAPS has been working with various communities, such as the Hindu Council, in providing cooked food and groceries.

I congratulate BAPS on its efforts in bringing much-needed relief and support to our community. The statistics are outstanding. There is no doubt that these efforts have had a significant positive impact on many lives. I saw firsthand and was impressed by BAPS's rapid mobilisation when the pandemic first hit our communities. The preparation of food packages for individuals and families is organised by volunteers based on donations. Those care packages provide essential food to assist people who have lost their only source of income. BAPS' care packages and its dedication to those who need a hand is outstanding. In these unprecedented and challenging times it is wonderful to see so many organisations work together and lend a hand to those in need so that as a society we will come out of this pandemic stronger and more resilient. Jai Swaminarayan.

AUSTRALIAN SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (16:26:47): I speak in support of our serving and former special forces soldiers, some of whom live in or close to my electorate and a regiment of which is based at Holsworthy, not far from this place. Many of us saw the shocking footage on ABC's *Four Corners* of what appears on its face to be unlawful actions on the part of a small number of Special Air Service [SAS] soldiers in Afghanistan. Noting that those actions and allegations are yet to be tested in court and that those under suspicion are rightly entitled to the presumption of innocence, those actions, if proven, may constitute war crimes, which should be properly dealt with by the full force of the law. Our army and our special operations forces are better than that. They have done us proud in fighting for us in complex and ambiguous theatres of battle overseas and they stand ready to take on the threat of domestic terrorism.

The Tactical Assault Group-East is based in Sydney and is ready around the clock to fight terrorism on our own shores if the event arises. In saying that, I adopt the words of former special forces lawyer and resident of the Illawarra Glenn Kolomeitz in supporting the vast majority of our special operations soldiers who have done the right thing in a high operational tempo. These men are indeed highly trained and highly professional. Many have served on multiple deployments over a number of years. That tempo has, unfortunately, taken its toll on the mental health of many of those men.

A former commando sniper living in my neighbouring electorate of Keira had seven deployments in 10 years to Afghanistan and elsewhere, including the protection of Australian politicians visiting war zones. That soldier, as described to me by Glenn Kolomeitz, was in "more than 100 gunfights" during that time. That is an astounding figure, which probably means little to members in Macquarie Street or, indeed, to my constituents in the electorate of Shellharbour. But it means a lot to anybody who has seen active service in warlike conditions. It demonstrates an operational tempo that is virtually unheard of in the history of Australia's military operations.

I do not for a moment condone any illegal activities conducted in Afghanistan or elsewhere. Allegations of such activities must be investigated properly and dealt with according to law. That is our obligation under international law and, as stated by Glenn, our moral obligation. However, I ask that we do not condemn all special operations soldiers based on the alleged conduct of a few. While the cancellation of Anzac Day events this year—albeit for good reason—is disappointing, we have an opportunity to reflect individually rather than

collectively on the service and sacrifice of our Australian Defence Force members. That reflection should include the service of our special operations forces over many years, the sacrifice of our former special operations soldiers and their families and the fact that they are hurting now as a result of the stigma attached to their units due to the allegations. A number of serving and former soldiers have come forward to speak about what they witnessed in Afghanistan. That cannot have been an easy thing for them to do. To quote from Shakespeare's *Henry V*, these elite units are a "band of brothers":

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers:
For he today that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother...

To speak up about those potentially doing the wrong thing is courageous, morally strong, legally appropriate and reflects on the character and integrity of the speaker. However, that cannot make the decision any easier, which is why, as a community, we must reflect on and support the actions of all soldiers who have performed honourably and courageously in operations overseas and, especially at this time, the actions of those who have come forward. I think it appropriate to close with a few words from Glenn Kolomeitz. Glenn is a friend of many members in this place, including me, the member for Kiama and the member for Campbelltown, the shadow veterans Minister. Glenn stated on *Four Corners*:

The vast majority of our special operations soldiers are highly professional and, quite frankly, remarkable men. Highly trained, highly professional men of high integrity who have done a very, very demanding job for us in very arduous circumstances.

BUSHFIRES AND MONARO ELECTORATE

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (16:31:43): I speak about the bushfires in my capacity as disaster recovery Minister and touch on a couple of things that have happened in bushfire recovery in my electorate of Monaro. Monaro was surrounded by fires from the Clyde Mountain down to Bombala and the Victorian border, right up into Kosciuszko National Park, Adaminaby, Nerriga, and even on the edge of Queanbeyan when fires crossed over from Canberra. The impact across the area was real and the community will take a long time to recover from it. In my electorate of Monaro 100 homes were lost and another 300 properties were impacted. Our economy was hit in a way that will take time to recover from. My region relies heavily on agriculture, the timber industry and tourism. The ski season will open on 22 June but not the Selwyn ski resort in Adaminaby, which burnt down during the fires, decimating the tourism dollars and investment in that region. A place like Adaminaby relies on the 70,000-plus tourists who visit during winter. That will have an impact on the local economy.

The shutdown of the Clyde Mountain and the Kings Highway meant that places like Braidwood, where people from Canberra with the blue-and-white numberplates who travel on the Kings Highway stop to visit the pie shop, the bakery and local boutique businesses, missed out on the summer trade. Jindabyne relies heavily on tourism because of Mother Nature's beautiful natural environment of Kosciuszko. Kosciuszko National Park was closed during the summer due to the fires and the smoke. Clearly tourism in the region was significantly impacted, which is why we are excited about winter tourism, the ski season that is about to begin and, of course, the opening of the regions. During the Canberra Day holiday on the weekend many people travelled from Canberra to regional New South Wales on the way to see family and friends.

We saw trade pick up, especially in places like Braidwood. After the opening of the regions and the easing of restrictions on pubs, clubs, restaurants and cafes yesterday, I am looking forward to regional areas like Monaro starting to see some of the benefit. The clean-up, which cost about \$180 million, was a fantastic program in partnership with Laing O'Rourke. It used subcontractors. During the clean-up all the money was spent locally, with 98 per cent of subcontractors used being either local or regionally located. It is important to support our communities who have done it very tough, especially small businesses and the trades who are now benefiting from the clean-up. More importantly, it is about clearing people's blocks of land—their homes, their memories—so they have some level of hope that they can start again.

Stephen Littlehales from Bumbalong, who has a young family, has lived in the region for a long time. He lost his property in the Clear Range Fire, which spread from the Australian Capital Territory. Bumbalong is a little locality just outside Bredbo on the Monaro Highway. I thank the Minderoo Foundation and Twiggy Forest, which, in partnership with the New South Wales Government, announced a \$5 million program to secure temporary accommodation pods. The pods are refurbished containers that provide accommodation. They are either 20-foot or 40-foot containers, depending on the number of kids or the size of the family. We were able to get one of those pods delivered to Bumbalong so that the Littlehales could stay on their property and in the locality. For many reasons—family networks, the local school—it is very important to do this. Through the Minderoo Foundation we are hoping to roll out about 140 pods across the State, supporting people to stay on their blocks of land. With winter coming, we want to make sure that people are comfortable, warm and protected. Half a dozen more pods will be rolled out within the Monaro electorate.

Yesterday I popped in to Braidwood. As I said, we have lifted the restrictions on pubs. They can now serve a maximum of 50 people, as long as they follow the social distancing rules and the four square metres rule. I had an opportunity to thank a number of RFS volunteers. When we shut down the regions just before Easter I said that when we reopened the first shout was on me—and that is exactly what I did. I honoured my word with 30-plus RFS volunteers from Braidwood and Bombay brigades, organised by Danny King. It was the first time I had a real chance to sit down and talk about the summer fires. Some of the guys had protected my farm in Nerriga, where we lost some bush and fences but did not lose the house. It was an opportunity to say thank you to Rural Fire Service volunteers and a reminder about how important our volunteers were in protecting our community.

COVID-19 AND BANKSTOWN ELECTORATE

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (16:36:50): Since the start of the year communities around the world have been coping with the challenging outbreak of coronavirus, known as COVID-19, which was officially declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on 11 March. On 31 March the New South Wales Government invoked its powers under section 7 of the Public Health Act 2010 to enforce the Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order 2020. This was necessary to help slow the spread of the virus and to protect our community. Those restrictions, however, have required us to make significant adjustments to our normal, everyday lives. They have also taken a devastating economic and social toll on our local community, leaving many people struggling.

As the State member for Bankstown, I have been heartbroken by the devastating loss of so many jobs in my electorate, including over 600 positions at Bankstown Sports Club. I am pleased that many of those jobs are now coming back. I note that small and medium businesses across my electorate have also been forced to shut their doors. However, I have been inspired by the strong community spirit in my electorate, particularly amongst our local organisations and charities that have come together to support our electorate's most vulnerable residents. Many local organisations have been adapting and extending their services as the Bankstown community comes together to support one another so that no-one is left to face these difficult times alone.

I acknowledge Bankstown Meals on Wheels, our pharmacy home delivery initiative, the Bankstown Women's Health Centre and many other local community organisations that have been helping to deliver food and other essentials to our most vulnerable residents during this time of need. I also acknowledge clubs like the Bankstown Sports Club that, right from the get-go, donated much of their food to the local community. I acknowledge the many acts of charity, kindness and compassion from our local community. They are indeed a great inspiration and they help to ensure that the welfare of our most vulnerable residents is protected during this difficult time. I also take this opportunity to acknowledge our local school community. Like many other parents, I am relieved that my children are back at school. I acknowledge our teachers and our principals for their incredible efforts during this time. To the entire school community, I say: Congratulations on pulling through. Everybody is coping with the transition back and at this stage things are going quite well.

I thank the many religious organisations and places of worship in my electorate of Bankstown for their tremendous patience during this period. It is pleasing to see that restrictions have eased for places of worship, allowing for greater numbers at funerals, weddings and regular services. I know that is much welcomed in my electorate and in many other parts of the community. I thank those leaders, particularly, for their efforts during this difficult period. I am delighted to hear that restrictions have eased for pubs, cafes, clubs and restaurants, and that we can now reopen many cultural institutions in Bankstown, such as our libraries. It is a relief to hear that the further lifting of restrictions is being announced. I am pleased to see that local sports, particularly for those under 18, will resume from 1 July. I know the Bankstown District Amateur Football Association is pleased that children will be back playing soccer shortly. Hopefully those restrictions will ease for adults as well. We need to start working with many local community organisations and providing support to ensure that we ease restrictions for them as well.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge everybody who has worked hard in Bankstown, particularly those on the front line. I thank all our nurses, police and emergency personnel for their tremendous efforts during this period. I thank Bankstown hospital and the staff there. I know it has been a strain for them, as it has been for the staff of many other hospitals. It has been pleasing to see that our community is coming together, working together and understanding that we need to support each other and rebuild. We will rebuild in Bankstown as a community and pull through this.

COVID-19 AND RIVERSTONE ELECTORATE

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (16:41:47): I reflect on the COVID-19 experience in the Riverstone electorate. The first thing I put on record is the immensely high degree of community cooperation that I have observed in the Riverstone community. There was a high degree of preparedness to observe health advice and to avoid actions that might put anyone else at risk. I could see that on a daily basis on those occasions when

I was allowed out of the house to go to work. People really were taking care—and they were taking care for the sake of others. I respect and thank them for that.

In fact, as it happens, we have had a relatively small number of cases in our local community. In the local postcodes that cover the Riverstone electorate—2762, 2763, 2765, 2768, 2769 and 2155—there were only 56 cases in total. Some of those postcodes overlap with other electorates. I looked today and can report there are only six active cases within those postcode areas, which reflects the remarkable success that we have had in curbing this disease in New South Wales. Back in March we did not know that that was going to be the case. In March the first sign that something was strange and amiss was the sudden shortage of grocery and supermarket items. Toilet paper, hand sanitiser, tissues, rice, pasta and a host of other products suddenly flew off the shelves as people realised that something serious might be happening and they needed to stock up at home. I do not think it was all panic buying; I do not necessarily think it was people being foolish. Nevertheless, people were apprehensive and I can understand that.

Back in March legitimate questions were raised about schools. As time has passed and our collective experience and understanding of the disease has grown, it has become apparent that schools are genuinely low-risk settings for young people. But in March it was entirely reasonable for teachers and school staff to be apprehensive, to seek assurance, to look for protective measures and to ask for special provisions for older or immunocompromised staff. I do not think it is fair to judge people's views in March 2020 with the hindsight we have now in June 2020, particularly given there was a rapid rise in the number of cases in mid and late March and schools were naturally the focus of debate. We have all learned a vast amount about COVID-19 since then.

I would like to reflect on a few other things that have happened in the Riverstone electorate. A small not-for-profit organisation called RuffTrack helps young people to get their lives back on track through training working dogs that are placed with farmers who need them. These at-risk youths learn great skills through that exercise. Before COVID-19 this organisation was raising funds by staging dog performances at local shows but all its event bookings disappeared with the shutdowns in March. RuffTrack could not raise any income and looked likely to fold. Fortunately, I was able to obtain a \$10,000 grant from the Premier to cover the cost of feeding the dogs for a few months and enable RuffTrack to survive the period of hibernation. Given the positive trends in curbing COVID throughout Australia, I look forward to the next RuffTrack dog performance sooner rather than later.

The Riverstone Neighbourhood Centre has seen a surge in demand for emergency relief and, as they reported to me, it is often from people the centre has never had to support before. These are the ongoing impacts that we all know about. Jobs, working hours and income have been lost in the Riverstone electorate as people's hours have dried up and shifts have disappeared. Whether they are business owners, sole traders or employees, there are many who have been hit hard financially. While both levels of government moved as quickly as possible to put in place support schemes for those affected, inevitably no scheme could be designed to cater for all circumstances. Sadly, there are people who have missed out and the Government wants to restore economic activity as quickly as possible for the sake of those so affected.

Another area affecting my residents has been childcare. The Federal Government scheme to support childcare by putting in the no-fee system has rescued the childcare sector for the short term, but it has had some unintended consequences in locking people out because there is no incentive. In fact, there is a disincentive to some sectors operating at full capacity. I hope the Federal Government can move quickly to address those anomalies and put people back in the picture for childcare. We have all seen the other effects—the closures. Finally, I thank the people in my electorate and the broader community in the region for working so hard to look after each other.

WALLSEND ELECTORATE BANK BRANCH CLOSURES

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (16:47:02): Banks are retreating from the Wallsend electorate. Customers in the western suburbs are being abandoned as branch after branch is closed. I understand that some people prefer to use online banking services, but there are thousands of people in the Wallsend electorate who rely on brick and mortar banks. Mostly it is the elderly, the disabled, and the socially and economically disadvantaged—all of whom are proportionally more likely to lack steady internet access or to not have digital skills. Another barrier for them is the poor local public transport access. They rely on their local bank to do their transactions and to get money.

In the past few months more banks have closed branches in the western suburbs of Newcastle—Newcastle Permanent closed its branch in Cardiff and the Greater Bank closed its branch in Jesmond. The closure of the Jesmond branch was particularly problematic because Jesmond is a transport hub. Since Keolis Downer took over the private bus services, many of the buses stop at the interchange. People shop at the big Jesmond centre and do

their banking as well. They are no longer able to do that. The next branch is some distance away and inconvenient because it is not accessible on public transport.

The Greater Bank has done a great disservice to its loyal customers in the Jesmond area. The Commonwealth Bank was temporarily closed in the main shopping centre of Wallsend for six months—we know what that means. I understand that the COVID pandemic, associated closures and lockdown measures have been difficult for businesses, including banking institutions, but these closures are further blows to many in the Wallsend community. An elderly local resident who uses a walker told me, "It is no good. I cannot use the internet and I cannot get around easily at the best of times, especially with the virus going on. Now the bank is closed. The branch which is easiest for me to get to is no longer there. What am I meant to do?" This resident speaks for many Wallsend locals. She feels like she is being ignored by the banks. It is a fair question that she asks.

In areas without accessible banking services, people are forced to turn to unscrupulous services like cash loan machines and payday lenders in order to meet their financial needs. Cash loan machines and payday lenders are predatory. They trap desperate people into a cycle of debt, which we do not want to see. But wholesale bank closures are not limited to the Wallsend electorate. The Newcastle Permanent has also closed its branches at Nelson Bay, Mayfield and Maitland. The Commonwealth Bank has shut down its branches at The Junction and at Maitland for six months. I first raised this issue in Parliament more than two years ago when the Newcastle Permanent announced the closure of its Lambton branch. That came quickly on the heels of the closure of branches at the University of Newcastle and the John Hunter Hospital.

In 2017 I informed this House that the National Australia Bank was going to close its branch at Jesmond that July. I implored the Treasurer to meet with banks and building societies and urge them to put people ahead of their profits. Then, as now, people shifting their banking transactions to online was blamed. However, in pivoting to meet an increasing demand in online services, they have failed to account for all the needs of people who cannot use those services. Finally, I implore the banks to get back to Wallsend and to start looking after their customers. Building societies are also spending a lot of time advertising how wonderful they are with their charities, but they have closed their branches.

COVID-19 AND TEACHERS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:52:09): Today I pay tribute to our State's educators, an entire sector of unsung heroes whose *modus operandi* was tipped on its head by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although I have had the opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to our local schoolteachers through an article in the local *Fairfield Champion*, I take this opportunity to have the efforts of the broader teaching fraternity throughout New South Wales enshrined in the New South Wales Parliament *Hansard*. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, as communities throughout our nation were thrust into a time of great turmoil, teachers in our State rallied to provide continued support to students and parents as they shifted to an online platform, utilising a modified curriculum. They understood the value and comfort their cohort could bring to the lives of so many families as communities tried desperately to find a shred of normality in a tumultuous period the likes of which they had never witnessed before. Teachers throughout the State were thrust into the uncertainty of the crisis at full speed.

Term one appeared to be sailing along nicely before the entire academic year was thrown into the washing machine and spun around endlessly for weeks. Face-to-face teaching was cut short and remote learning was put in place without any hesitation by the thousands of dedicated teachers. For those who are not aware, preparing units of work can take months of preparation, consultation and research. The rulebook was well and truly tossed out the window when students were encouraged to stay at home to commence online learning, wherever possible, in response to the COVID-19 crisis. In a matter of days, teachers had to reprogram the curriculum in preparation for it to be delivered in an online format. Then, either through online meetings or email exchanges, they guided their students. This opened the floodgates and teachers received a wave of emails from students with genuine questions about the new way of completing their work. Teaching in an online format is completely different to face-to-face teaching.

Our teachers have well and truly risen to the challenge. Since the COVID-19 crisis began I am sure many of us in this Chamber have heard comments such as "I don't know how they do it", "I wouldn't do their job in a million years", "How do they cope with all those children in one room?" and "I now appreciate what they do." As families supported their children through online learning, they also learnt first-hand the difficulties teachers face on a daily basis in the classroom—online classrooms are no different.

In the COVID-19 education world parents became the stand-in classroom teacher, all whilst working from home themselves and caring for other children at the same time. This frustrated many parents as motivating their children at home became evermore difficult. As a former teacher myself, and as someone who is married to a teacher and has many friends who are teachers, I have no shame in saying that teachers are the top of the class.

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis our teachers remained front and centre, bringing quality education and support to our children and to us as parents. They have truly been a cornerstone of our communities and have helped us get through such a difficult time in all our lives.

Since the easing of restrictions, with students returning full-time to school, it has been heartwarming to see our local teachers welcoming back students with big, open arms, with decorations, fancy dress costumes and other celebrations to show their earnest joy and excitement at welcoming the school community back for another term after months apart due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On behalf of the greater Fairfield community I once again extend our sincere appreciation and admiration to the teachers throughout our region. Truly, our teachers deserve an A for the work they have done during the COVID-19 pandemic. I thank all the teachers for everything they have done and for everything they continue to do in supporting our children and our communities.

Business interrupted.

Public Interest Debate

COVID-19

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney)
(16:56:54): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges that people from all sectors have suffered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- (2) Acknowledges the importance of job creation to support economic recovery.

Over the past six months there is no doubt that New South Wales has been through some of the most extraordinary times. We have come off the back of one of the most fearsome droughts that our State and nation has ever seen. We then moved into the most extraordinary scenes of a once-in-a-century bushfire event that decimated parts of our State and destroyed communities and took lives. At that point the people of New South Wales were preparing themselves to help those drought and bushfire-affected communities to recover from the catastrophic impacts that those natural disasters had inflicted on communities, particularly in regional areas, but which no doubt had a profound impact on our entire State.

Little did we know that we were about to face the greatest health crisis that our State has faced since the Spanish flu, and the most significant economic crisis that our State has faced probably since the Great Depression. The numbers that we have seen over the past couple of months off the back of the COVID restrictions that have had an extraordinary impact on our economy have been nothing short of dire. Those in accommodation and food services have seen 33.4 per cent of their jobs lost and the arts and recreation sectors have lost 26.8 per cent. If we combine those we will start to see the full impact of what has happened to the tourism and visitor economy in New South Wales. A sector that currently employs one in 22 people has almost been wiped out by the COVID crisis. It does not matter whether it is employment in the Snowy Mountains, on the coast in the north or southern parts of the State, in regional New South Wales, a cafe operator in the eastern suburbs, a tourism operator in the western suburbs or a hotel operator in the Sydney CBD—the impacts of this COVID crisis have been significant.

We have seen massive drop-offs in construction, which has also had a huge impact on the ability to maintain jobs. We have seen strong leadership from the Commonwealth Government. Its establishment of the JobKeeper program has no doubt had a significant impact on reducing the number of people who have declared themselves as unemployed. The current rate of 6 per cent unemployment in New South Wales is the best of any State in the Commonwealth, but it does mask the fact that many people are being supported by taxpayers right around the country. We are now faced with a serious and significant economic challenge in how we recover our economy. We also know that the response will take time. There will be sectors that come back faster, but others will take longer to recover.

The JobKeeper program will soften the blow, but it will also mean that there will be more people unemployed as JobKeeper starts to wind-up. We need to make sure that jobs exist. That is why this Government has invested \$10 billion to ensure that we support businesses through this economic crisis—through the reduction of taxes and the reduction of fees. We need to push every possible dollar that we can out into the economy to keep people employed. We also know that as we go into the financial year ahead, and into the years following as we come out of this crisis, that our capacity to keep investing in infrastructure is going to be absolutely critical.

One of the things that will hold this State in good stead is the strong financial position that we took into this crisis. It will create a strong foundation. We also need to take with us not just the strong financial position but also those principles that gave us a strong financial position. If we do that we will then be in a position where we can reinvest every dollar available to the New South Wales Government, given to it by the taxpayers of this State,

in more job creation. In one month 220,000 people in this State lost their job—half the size of the entire New South Wales public sector workforce.

We need to make sure that everything we do in this House is geared towards making sure that every one of those people gets their job back and that, if they cannot get their old job back, they have an opportunity to find work in a new and emerging sector. That is why our strong infrastructure agenda—whether it is building hospitals such as Nepean and Liverpool hospitals or upgrades to Campbelltown and Westmead hospitals—not only supports our health efforts in fighting COVID and fighting future health challenges but also employs people every day.

The large-scale road projects across the State, in regional New South Wales and right here in Sydney, keep people employed. The small programs like sporting facilities across community groups, upgrading local community centres, PCYCs and the upgrading of public housing right across the State will all keep people employed. We know that sectors that have been hardest hit need the most support. That support will not just come from this Government; it will come from the way in which every citizen around New South Wales responds to this. That means people getting out into regional New South Wales and travelling in their own State. Last year \$16 billion was spent by New South Wales residents travelling overseas. We just need a small portion of that in New South Wales in this 12 months. If that happens we will go a long way towards making sure we have our own job creation scheme.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (17:03:59): I move:

That the motion be amended by adding the following paragraph:

- (3) Does not support a pay freeze for public sector workers in New South Wales, as reducing the money people have available to spend will cost jobs, not create them.

Is this some kind of joke? The member for Penrith has a hide. He is the same bloke who admitted in budget estimates earlier this year that he is the jobs Minister without a job to do. It must be some kind of joke because we know what the Liberal-Nationals Government thinks about jobs. We know this Government for the economic and social vandal that it is. Before I go further, I draw Minister Ayres's attention to the Public Service Commission data, which indicates he has some 5,500 public sector workers in his electorate. This is the member who has whittled away a 16.5 per cent majority down to less than 1.4 per cent in about a decade. In fact, in no election since 2010 has this Minister not lost votes. In fact, it is the only thing he is good at. He has more than 5,000 workers in Penrith, he is giving a pay cut and he has a margin of about 1,100 votes. I do not know what the Minister's aptitude is for basic arithmetic but I am reasonably good at doing the numbers—and you are gone, mate.

I digress. The Liberal-Nationals Government does not create jobs; it destroys them. If it cannot destroy them, it sends them overseas. If it does not send them overseas, it cuts their pay. If it does not cut their pay, it privatises them. There is not a job in this State that the Liberal-Nationals Government would not trade to some interest group. There is not a single worker whom the Liberal-Nationals Government would not denigrate or disrespect in pursuit of its obsession with privatisation and gutting our public services. Labor condemns the Liberal-Nationals Government's decision to attack workers in the midst of a health and economic crisis, which we have not seen for more than 100 years.

This was an act of simple, unforgivable bastardry. Our State has faced almost 12 months of rolling disasters. We have dealt with drought, fire, flood and now we are faced with COVID-19. Our economy is in turmoil. The people who have borne the brunt of the COVID-19 crisis are overwhelmingly women. That is either because they work on our front lines or because they work in industries that have been absolutely decimated by lockdown. The hospitality, retail and services sectors are all dominated by women. Women in all those sectors are out of work, facing months and months without income as those industries rebuild. With the Government's decision to cut public sector pay, the Government attacks women again. Some 65 per cent of public sector workers are women. Some 87 per cent of teachers are women. Some 77 per cent of nurses are women. A public sector pay cut is a cut for women.

The fact that after many months of disaster this Government decides to hit public sector workers with a wage cut reveals the miserable heart that sits at the core of the Liberal-Nationals Government. We know this pay cut will not solve the State's economic woes. We know, the experts know, the economic argument for a public sector worker pay cut does not stack up. In fact, we know that it will cost jobs. That is not simply advice from economists, think tanks and Treasury. It is the opinion of the Treasurer himself, who admitted that the best way to revive the economy is with direct cash stimulus, and yet he still persists in cutting people's pay.

Taking money out of the pockets of workers at a time when consumer confidence is at an all-time low is an act of economic vandalism. In fact, the best thing we can do is encourage people who still have steady employment to go out and spend. The only way to achieve this is to lift consumer confidence, to lift spending. Why would a government turn its back on the very people who keep this State rolling along in a time of crisis?

The truth is that the Government hates public sector workers, it hates public sector services and it hates the people who rely on them. It hates public sector services and it hates the people who deliver them. Shame on you.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (17:09:02): I thank the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney and member for Penrith for moving this motion, which I support. In the history of this Parliament there has never been a time when job creation was more important than it is today. The speed and extent of job losses in the past three months has never been matched in our history. With 500,000 people unemployed in New South Wales, job creation has to be our most important economic objective, alongside the health objective of continuing to control the transmission of COVID-19.

As the former Labor Prime Minister, Paul Keating, once said, the best form of social welfare is to give a person a job. In February 2018 I moved a motion in this Chamber about jobs growth. At that stage I had been in this Parliament for three years. I had never heard a single ALP member of Parliament speak about jobs or job creation. They speak about every other cause in the world but never about jobs. Channelling Oscar Wilde, I said that "jobs" was the word whose name Labor dared not speak. If Labor was clueless about jobs in the good times, it is certainly not the answer in these hard times. The Public Sector Union officials who have been protesting outside Parliament House today have no mandate to represent the unemployed. It is for the elected representatives of this Parliament to speak up for the unemployed and the disadvantaged and to work out ways to get them jobs.

Mr Clayton Barr: Have you ever met one?

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Yes, I have. In fact, I went to school when there was 26 per cent youth unemployment.

Mr Clayton Barr: Name one.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I went to school with them. If trade union officials are trying to advance the pay of their workers, that is their job. I ask why are the Labor members of this Parliament and the Leader of the Opposition not doing their job and standing up for the unemployed? Why will ALP members of this Parliament not say that public sector unions are wrong to seek a pay increase at this time, in these circumstances? For the past nine years the Public Sector Union has argued for a one-year pay increase from the Government. In March this year, in the middle of a pandemic, for the first time in the past decade they seek a three-year pay deal where they demand a 2.5 per cent increase per annum for each of the next three years. Why do the ALP members of this Parliament not say that is wrong, completely out of touch and inappropriate at the current time?

Why do they not agree with Paul Keating, their former illustrious great leader, that giving the 500,000 unemployed people in this State a job is far more important than a pay rise for public servants? Why has Labor so badly lost touch with reality? Why does it favour 10 per cent of the workforce who are public servants—and not one of them has lost a job—over the other 90 per cent of people employed in this State and the unemployed who have lost their jobs?

The economic stimulus will always be greater when giving an unemployed person a job over giving an employed person a pay rise. Why do the ALP members of this Parliament so misunderstand basic economics and the value of job security that was offered by the Government? During this pandemic I have visited many small businesses in my electorate. Whether they be restaurants, cafes, coaching colleges, travel agents, dance studios, mechanics, panel beaters, professional services, drycleaners or barbers, they have each spoken to me and told me that they have suffered between 30 per cent and 100 per cent reduction in their turnover in the past three months.

They are in the eye of an economic storm and they need our help. Small businesses make up 98 per cent of businesses in this State. They employ around 44 per cent of the 90 per cent of our State who are privately employed. Job creation is essential for everybody, but especially our young and especially people towards the end of their working life. The Coalition knows how to help create jobs and support business. Labor only knows how to help its union mates.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:14:08): I speak in this public interest debate in support of the amendment of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney is right: This is an important debate. Jobs are extremely important in New South Wales at the moment. Over 200,000 people have lost their jobs and once the safety net that the Federal Government has put in place disappears the number will probably be even greater. The unemployment figures will reach well beyond those during the Great Depression of the 1930s, and that is just not acceptable. We must do everything we possibly can in this Parliament and through government policy to make sure that there is job creation.

We have seen the Federal Government and the Federal Opposition working almost hand in hand on many different initiatives that support job creation. Sadly, however, this State Government's first act on job creation is to make promises to the public service. It says, "Look, you take a wage freeze; you have your wages cut but we

will guarantee your employment." What an absolute lie by this Government—we know that. Those who happened to read this morning's edition of the *Sydney Morning Herald* also know it. What was the first thing the Premier's department did last week? It sacked a heap of drivers who were on temporary contracts.

There is no guarantee for those on a temporary contract or in a part-time position with the public sector. Even if they agree to the wage freeze, what will happen? They will still lose their jobs when their contract finishes. How many public servants are we talking about? The figure given this morning was 69,605 public servants—full-time equivalent positions—who are casuals or on temporary contracts and who will not be renewed. The Government says, "We will guarantee your employment. Nothing to worry about; you'll be right." What is the first thing it does? It will not give guarantees to those 69,000 public servants. We know what this Government's ideological position is—and it is not to keep people in public sector jobs. It is not really to keep people in jobs at all. The Government wants to slash wages and conditions because that is what it has always done.

To those who claim, "That is not true; we are all in this together", I say: Look at some of the organisations that support this Government. I am talking about political donations and the contracts that the Government throws to private industry. Look at what the industry lobby groups, such as the Australian Industry Group, did yesterday before the Fair Work Commission when the minimum wage increase review started. They immediately attacked the wages and conditions of a number of people working in retail, cleaning, hospitality, early childhood education and delivery. Those people are paid the minimum wage. The Government wants to remove more wages and conditions and stop minimum wage rises. That is what this Government is about; it is not about job creation.

This week Minister Ayres, along with the Premier and the Prime Minister, announced that the Government is going to build a new metro. That is great. I am all for that metro; it is a great idea. But let us have the Government guarantee local jobs and local procurement of services and materials. Many of the 200,000-plus people who lost their jobs are from western Sydney. The Minister knows that the electorate of Prospect has the largest manufacturing base in the State, if not the Southern Hemisphere. Plenty of jobs have gone from my electorate. If we combine all other manufacturing areas in the State—in the Hunter and on the South Coast—we still have more in Prospect, and we are losing jobs. Let us have the Government guarantee that.

While the Government is at it, why not guarantee gas supply as well? There is plenty of it. We do not have to do any fracking to make that happen. There is plenty of gas out there—guarantee that supply. Policies like that will keep jobs, but we know the Government is not about that. We know it is all about slashing wages and conditions, and slashing the public sector in any way it can. Put up decent job proposals not just in infrastructure but also in manufacturing, retail and other sectors that are much needed. I thank the House.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:19:13): I commend the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney for bringing forward this motion today, and I support it wholeheartedly. COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the New South Wales economy. My electorate of Cootamundra has been affected in the same way as the rest of New South Wales. I have seen many great businesses come up with fantastic and innovative solutions and methods to overcome the challenges imposed by COVID-19 restrictions, such as introducing delivery options, online and phone consultations or manufacturing a new product. For example, aircraft manufacturer Brumby Aircraft turned its hand to designing and building perspex screens in the company's Cowra facility. Paint Place in Cowra, led by Letitia Hal, put together isolation colour kits for its customers. I commend those businesses for their efforts.

Many businesses from all sectors have suffered financial loss and this hardship flows on to families in our rural areas. Not only has regional New South Wales battled COVID-19; bushfires and drought have compounded the hardship, with an estimated 100,000 jobs in regional New South Wales to be affected by the end of 2020. Travel restrictions have meant that tourism has suffered. I know that wonderful local attraction the Cowra Japanese Garden has really felt the bite as it closed its gates for several weeks. As travel restrictions wind back from 1 June, I look forward to seeing those businesses get back on their feet.

I have spoken to businesses in my electorate that have accessed the New South Wales Government's \$10,000 small business COVID-19 support grant. They have indicated that support from the grants has helped to relieve some of the pressure when sales have been down or their doors have been closed. Jill Funnell, who owns House of Fashion in West Wyalong, indicated that the grant gave her peace of mind when the stock she ordered six months ago arrived just as sales dropped and the business moved to reduced hours. She was able to keep her staff employed. Sally Hunter from Ella Baché in Young suggested that, while times have been tough, New South Wales Government support helped her keep her beauty business ticking along so it could reopen its doors when restrictions lifted this week. Barbara Last, who owns Whats Cookin in West Wyalong, said that New South Wales Government funding through the small business COVID-19 support grant helped her keep her staff over the four-week period the business was closed. It was able to reopen at the end of April and continue providing tasty meals to the town of West Wyalong.

Retail and personal care services are among the sectors hardest hit by COVID-19, alongside cafes, restaurants and takeaway services, accommodation, arts and recreation, and professional services. The lifting of restrictions has helped to boost morale as small businesses get back to doing what they do best. We expect up to 2,000 new jobs to be created by the approval of Snowy 2.0, which will inject \$4.6 billion into regional New South Wales. The New South Wales Government is providing \$1 billion to invest in Special Activation Precincts under the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund, making it easier for businesses to set up in regional New South Wales. Five precincts have been announced for Williamstown, Parkes, Wagga Wagga, Moree and the Snowy Mountains. At a minimum we expect the precincts to create 15,000 jobs across regional new South Wales—most likely more. Market feedback for the Parkes and Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precincts indicates that up to \$1 billion in private investment could be made in each precinct.

Closer to home, the fast-tracking of the Wyangala Dam Wall Raising Project will also inject much-needed funds into the local economy as local businesses are given the opportunity to contract for the project and workers stay in local accommodation and do their shopping locally in nearby Cowra. The New South Wales Government is committed to making sure that, despite the difficulties that local communities and businesses have faced, much-needed support is provided to keep our economy moving forward and our businesses and employees in work.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (17:24:12): The COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented. Certainly in my lifetime, our community has never faced such a public health crisis leading to an equally enormous economic one. Millions have been affected globally and many hundreds of thousands have died. Fortunately, we have fared much better than the rest the world but, sadly, a number of our citizens have lost their lives also. I offer my sincerest condolences to their families. In confronting this pandemic we in this Parliament, and in the wider community, owe a huge debt of gratitude to those who have supported our communities at their most vulnerable.

It is impossible to name all the people who have contributed during this crisis—namely, the workers who stack the supermarket shelves; those who distribute meals to the homeless and the needy; those who clean our trains and offices; those who make phone calls to the vulnerable and the lonely; those who have kept our transport system moving; those who have been reporting on the pandemic, keeping the public informed around the clock; the teachers and early childhood educators who care for our kids while essential workers carry out their duties; and those who work in our public health system, placing themselves in direct contact with the virus. The efforts of our doctors, nurses, pathologists, wards people, pharmacists and allied health professionals have been truly heroic and will not be forgotten.

Let us be clear: This motion is nothing more than an attempt to justify the Government's decision to dock the pay of public sector workers. These are the very same workers that have kept the State running during the pandemic. The same public sector workers who this Liberal-National Government continually mention in its press releases. The same workers the Government uses as background props at its press conferences and, no doubt, the same ones it will use in its public advertising. The irony, or rather the hypocrisy, of the situation is not lost on our community. The Government's thanks to those workers for keeping the State running through the crisis is to dock their pay. That is just appalling. The Government argues that it will save approximately \$3 billion by cutting the pay of the public sector, which will add to the economic recovery of the State.

Think about that argument for a minute. It suggests the public sector does nothing for the economy and adds nothing to our economic recovery. Somehow public sector workers and their families live on a different planet and are a part of a different economic system. It is pitting one section of the workforce against another, bringing the community together during a crisis Liberal-Nationals Coalition style. According to the Coalition, when a public sector worker spends their wages at the local shops or at their local Bunnings store it does nothing for jobs or the supply chain. As a basic example, public sector families are spending money supporting a local cafe or restaurant—part of an industry that has been the hardest hit during the crisis.

According to the Government's argument to dock public sector pay, there are no jobs or economic activities involved in the farmer who is growing the food, the person who makes the deliveries, the wait staff or those involved in the manufacturing or sale of items in that local cafe or food business. Liberal Party voodoo economics says that there is no economic stimulus or job creation when a public sector worker spends their wages in our local economy. That is lazy thinking. I would encourage everyone to socially distance themselves from this sort of baseless economic argument. In fact, people should self-isolate and quarantine from the Government's nonsensical economic ideas before this silly economic virus infects the rest of its policies.

I have a novel idea. If the Government wants to speed up the economic recovery, what about cutting its extravagance before it attacks the wages of workers? What about abandoning the \$1 billion Powerhouse folly? What about the reckless and breathtaking sum spent on consultants? What about requiring all chairs of committees in this place to forgo their allowances? What about taking away the outrageous pay increases for secretaries? What

about better management of government projects and stopping budget blowouts—WestConnex, \$6.8 billion; Metro West, \$3 billion; and CBD and South East Light Rail, \$1.3 billion and rising. The Government cannot manage its own money so it is coming after the wages of the workers who help to keep the State running.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:29:30): On behalf the Greens I contribute to this debate on job creation. I acknowledge the impact on working people in all sectors as a result of the pandemic. While all have suffered, not all have been provided with the same level of support or assistance to ease the impact of the pandemic. This must be rectified in how we look to recover. The COVID-19 crisis has shown that the loss of livelihoods for some is less of a problem than for others, because some have access to safety nets and supports while others do not. The grave situation international students and non-citizens face, when it comes to those who have lost significant income or lost their jobs and now face even more uncertain futures, cannot be ignored and underestimated. Temporary visa holders, international students, people seeking asylum and those left without visa status have been left stranded without adequate support.

Any talk of job creation in this State needs to include anyone who considers New South Wales to be their home. It needs to include support for those who do not have work. This includes making sure that these people can access government services and supports, that they know they can access Medicare, that there are increased communications in multiple languages about the latest restrictions, and inclusion in the existing measures providing for citizens that need financial support who cannot get jobs. Any talk of job creation also needs to include the arts and creative industries. Jobs for artists, creatives, producers, makers, musos and those workings in the event and entertainment industry need as much priority and investment as the areas of construction and manufacturing. We need a radical and compassion-driven overhaul of our existing system.

This crisis has shown us that there is enough food for everybody. There is enough shelter and government money for everybody, if we choose to use it to prioritise people and their care in a crisis. We must start talking seriously about the idea of a guaranteed adequate income or, as my Greens colleague in the other place, the Hon. Abigail Boyd, is specifically advocating for, a universal wellbeing payment. Nationally, The Greens are setting out a recovery plan that seeks to provide access to employment or free education and livable income for young people as a way to move us through this crisis into a more equitable society. We need a green new deal to tackle the existing inequality crisis and the climate emergency that, while it is no longer on the front page of the paper, is still a crisis that we are all facing.

We know that by building new social and affordable housing the economy can be stimulated and that crucial jobs in the housing and construction industry can be maintained. The NSW Council of Social Service, Community Housing Industry Association NSW, the NSW Tenants Union, Shelter NSW and Homelessness NSW have launched a report by Access Economics calling on the New South Wales Government to invest in social and affordable housing by building 5,000 new homes per year. This would support 18,000 construction jobs and address the backlog of the public housing waiting list and demand for affordable housing. The Government could implement that plan today; that would be true job creation. At a local, State and Federal level, The Greens are absolutely committed to a massive investment in building and purchasing of more housing—housing that is publicly owned, affordable, sustainable and contributes to addressing the needs of job creation, and that provides everyone with a place to call home.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to mention that nurses, paramedics, teachers, bus drivers, frontline emergency service workers and public servants have been rallying at a safe physical distance from each other outside Parliament today. They were rallying with their unions against this Government's attempts to cut their pay. Public service workers are the ones who keep our public institution strong. They have exhibited the compassion and the care that we need in this time of crisis. What thanks for this extraordinary effort are these workers getting from this Liberal-Nationals Government? A pay cut. Talk about a slap in the face, when people should be getting a pat on the back. We should not only talk about job creation; we should also talk about the people who already have their jobs being protected with adequate wages and conditions. The Greens absolutely oppose these pay cuts to public servants. We will continue to work in the New South Wales Parliament and in the community to make sure that we are part of the campaign to stop them.

We will support the amendment moved by Labor in this Chamber. Recovering from this pandemic gives us the opportunity to address inequality that was present before this crisis hit—inequality that is present now. We can do this by working together to make sure that everybody is looked after and that jobs are not the determinant of whether people have access to basic services in this State.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney) (17:34:49): In reply: I thank all members who contributed to the debate. There is no doubt that the people of New South Wales have suffered dramatically over the past few months, particularly in the sectors that have been most impacted by the COVID crisis. I will make a remark about the comments of The Greens member who just spoke in the debate. The member spoke about artists, creatives and the cultural sector. I mentioned in my opening

remarks that it was one of the hardest hit sectors. The important thing to recognise is that it is not a question of whether the Government supports artists, creatives and the cultural sector or construction—it should do both. The invidious challenge that exists is the restrictions that have kept us safe and alive in this State have taken jobs away and we must be cautious when we open up opportunities in the sector.

We have to pump prime sections of the economy that can create jobs while those restrictions stay in place to keep us safe. We will slowly wind them back and allow those jobs, particularly in the creative enterprises, to come back on line. There is one thing we have all learnt from this exercise and that is how important the visitor economy is, how important artists and cultural activities are to our economy and how many people are employed in those sectors. In fact, they are disproportionately represented in this State. There is no doubt that those sectors will require our support.

I respond also to the comments of the member for Swansea, who led for the Opposition in this debate. We are facing the most significant economic crisis since the Great Depression. The member for Swansea spent the bulk of her time talking about my electoral margin and whether we can count. I thought it described well the psyche and culture that exists today in the modern New South Wales Labor Party, which is, "I am good at doing the numbers." That is what the member said. At a time when people are losing their jobs, at a time when families are trying to figure out how they are going to pay for their next meal, and at a time when our public sector workers are doing everything they possibly can to support our State, the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party turned this debate into one about doing the numbers.

I do not think I could have come up with a better argument for who is better prepared to help and lead the people of New South Wales through this crisis, to create jobs. This side of the House is focused on job creation and those opposite are still focused on doing the numbers.

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

The House divided.

Ayes41
Noes44
Majority.....3

AYES

Aitchison, J	Atalla, E	Bali, S
Barr, C	Butler, R	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
Hoenig, R	Hornery, S	Kamper, S
Lalich, N	Leong, J	Lynch, P
McDermott, H	McGirr, J	McKay, J
Mehan, D (teller)	Mihailuk, T	O'Neill, M
Park, R	Parker, J	Piper, G
Scully, P	Smith, T	Tesch, L
Voltz, L	Warren, G	Washington, K
Watson, A (teller)	Zangari, G	

NOES

Anderson, K	Ayres, S	Barilaro, J
Berejiklian, G	Bromhead, S	Clancy, J
Conolly, K	Constance, A	Cooke, S (teller)
Crouch, A (teller)	Davies, T	Dominello, V
Elliott, D	Evans, L	Gibbons, M
Griffin, J	Gulaptis, C	Hazzard, B
Henskens, A	Johnsen, 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

NOES

Stokes, R
Tuckerman, W
Williams, L

Taylor, M
Upton, G
Wilson, F

Toole, P
Ward, G

PAIRS

Car, P
Haylen, J
Saffin, J

Kean, M
Hancock, S
Williams, R

Amendment negatived.

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

Motion agreed to.

Private Members' Statements

INVERELL HOSPITAL

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (17:48:20): It is with a great sense of irony that I report to the House in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic that the largest health infrastructure development underway in the Northern Tablelands has opened its doors and admitted its first patients. On Monday 25 May the new Inverell Hospital building officially went online. After more than 50 years of community campaigning, it took less than two years to construct and deliver to the Inverell community a modern, exceptional, state-of-the-art healthcare facility. The new building, which represents the completion of stage one of an overall \$60 million health precinct redevelopment, boasts a brand-new emergency department; a 38-bed inpatient unit, including specialist paediatric facilities, maternity and birthing facilities; general adult services, including palliative care and medical imaging—for the first time we will have a CT scanner in our public hospital in Inverell—an expanded day surgery unit; and a renal unit. Servicing the Inverell, Glen Innes Severn and Gwydir shire local government areas, this facility cements Inverell as a leader for rural and remote health in New South Wales.

I take this opportunity to congratulate and thank a number of people, including Mayor Paul Harman, Deputy Mayor Anthony Michael and Inverell Shire Council. The leadership the council has shown working with its local member to ensure this development has been exceptional. It is a community effort. I also thank Bob Bensley, who has been a lifetime campaigner for the redevelopment of this hospital and the betterment of health facilities in general; and Di Baker and her team from "Operation: Operating Room", who have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars and campaigned for many years with Bob and others in the community to make this possible. Richard Crookes Constructions delivered the project. It did a great job of working hand-in-glove with health infrastructure, Hunter New England Local Health District and the many local medical staff and community representatives who have pulled together to make the community's dream come true.

To put into context the demand on Inverell Hospital we need look only at admissions in the first week since it opened. There have already been 142 presentations to the new emergency department, 21 new inpatient admissions as well as eight patients transferred from the old hospital to the new, 28 dialysis sessions in the new and expanded renal unit which has extra chairs, eight general surgeries and one C-section performed in the operating theatre. Four babies were born in the new maternity ward in the first week. While those figures tell one story, it is the testimonials from patients that I take the greatest heart from and that show what this new facility means to people in the local community. The new renal unit has eight chairs, which is up from six in the old unit, and is much more comfortable with space for visitors. That is a lifeline for residents who regularly need this life-saving treatment but live in isolated areas. Long-time renal patient Scott Michel was among the hospital's first patients and commented on how welcoming, spacious and accessible the new facility is.

Baby Demi was the first baby to be born in the new maternity unit and arrived in the early hours of Wednesday 27 May. Her mother, Amy, said it was great to have the privacy of her own room and her own ensuite and that the views overlooking the beautiful Inverell community were very calming. Amy also thanked the midwives, the doctors and the staff, stating the experience at the hospital was "wonderful". Another story to come out of the first week is baby Mackinley, the last baby to be born in the maternity unit of the old hospital and the first inpatient, along with her mum, Savannah, in the new hospital. Mackinley's dad, Tim, has a special connection with the new hospital. As a Richard Crookes Constructions engineer he was involved in the project since it started the build in mid-2018. Tim said he was proud to be part of a team that delivered the new hospital and it was surreal to be there, not as the engineer but as a patient, visitor and dad.

Now mothers have a specialised birthing suite, operating theatre and private recovery room only metres apart. How times have changed from the seventies and eighties, when mothers who needed a caesarean had to be wheeled from a maternity ward, down an uneven concrete path outside into the operating theatre. The path had no roof so nurses had to carry an umbrella to protect patients from the weather. No more. While stage one is complete with the new hospital, it is only halfway done. We now progress into stage two, which is the gutting, refurbishment and repurposing of the old hospital building into all of the community health facilities. Richard Crookes Constructions is doing that as well. I congratulate the community and the council and thank everyone for a great job. I look forward to the second stage being completed in May next year.

COVID-19 AND PENRITH ELECTORATE

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney) (17:53:33): I use this moment to congratulate my community in Penrith on how it has responded to the COVID-19 crisis. There is no doubt that the response of my community has been nothing short of extraordinary. There are so many stories to tell. Firstly, I recognise the fantastic work that has been done by our frontline workers across the community, particularly those who work in health, the police and teachers. Their ability to be the utmost professionals in the way in which they approach their jobs has inspired many people across the community. I say a very big thank you to those parents who have schooled their children at home. I say a very big thank you to businesses that have innovated, that have been able to work as best they can to support many employees across the community. I express my deepest sympathies to the family members of those in Newmarch House who lost their lives to COVID-19. I have close friends among that group of people who have lost their lives. I will not name people here but, Lloyd, there are so many people standing with you.

When Anglicare was not able to support everyone in Newmarch House, the work that was done by the New South Wales health department, particularly the team from the Nepean Blue Mountains local health area was nothing short of exceptional. I express my deepest gratitude to Dr James Branley for his exceptional work in the most trying of circumstances. The team he led did an absolutely outstanding job and while many people will talk about the loss of life in Newmarch, I have no doubt that James and his team saved many people.

The Nepean Hospital and the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District have done an extraordinary job in ensuring we have driven a high testing regime across the Penrith community. Over 11,000 tests have taken place at Nepean Hospital and over 18,200 tests have taken place across the local health district. The community should not be complacent: Continue to get tested. That information is critical as we open up new parts of our economy. We all watched as Brother Jeff Regan, a former principal of St Dominic's, battled COVID-19 in the intensive care unit. Brother Regan, it is fantastic to see you up and about. I have no doubt we will see you down at the basketball stadium soon, offering guidance and direction.

I also recognise so many little stories by businesses across the community—Bespoke Realty with its virtual tours for rentals and PRD Real Estate and other real estate agents doing the same thing. Barclay Judge Accountants did webinars to help clients for free. HR Success put on webinars and personal videos for staff adapting to working from home to help people. Pinot & Picasso, a fantastic business that allows people to have a drink and paint, set up packages for virtual classes in homes. MINT IT, whose staff worked from home, helped lots of locals connect to their own information technology. Beautiful Blooms gave free flowers at their door to those not selling them as a business. Our Penrith RSL sub-branch did pre-recorded videos for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) Day services. The Duck Inn closed its shop, but changed to buy online, completely changing the way it did its business and making sure many people got their small gifts in time. The Penrith RSL donated all of its raffle prizes from Easter to the Nepean Hospital.

The Very Bazaar, a vintage pre-loved clothing store, moved online to sales by Facebook. There was so much innovation across the community. Thanks to Vince and his team at Lakeside Restaurant, Mr Watkins Bar, Emu Hall Bar and Kitchen, Natural Choice, along with many other cafes, bars and restaurants that changed to take away, buying correct packaging, labelling and takeaway menus, giving work to local printers and designers and ensuring many could still get a coffee in the morning. To Gai and her team at the Penrith CBD Corporation who launched the Thumbs Up campaign and the social media advertising for over 55 businesses who took up the offer for free video training, thank you very much. There is no doubt Penrith, like the rest of New South Wales, has faced a significant challenge battling COVID-19 in recent months, but with typical Penrith spirit, we have rolled up our sleeves, helped each other out and worked our way through the crisis. We have built a strong foundation that will see Penrith go from strength to strength.

COVID-19 AND AUSTRALIAN EXCEPTIONALISM

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (17:58:42): All of us know that our electorates and our communities are exceptional. The current pandemic demonstrates the truth of the exceptionalism not only of our individual communities but also of our nation as a whole. Exceptionalism is a

political theory commonly associated with the United States. Ever since the writings of Alexis du Tocqueville in the mid-nineteenth century, the unique blend of Republican ideas and new world conditions singled out the United States as an example of how nations could stand out from the pack, pointing to a better, more utopian future that others might emulate. Today global responses to, and experiences of, COVID-19, make the case for Australian exceptionalism.

While the rest of the West is struggling to deal with the fallout from the pandemic, Australia is working well, emblematic of our country's exceptionalism. Whereas elsewhere around the world we see conflict, we see violence, we see fear, we see confusion, in Australia levels of government are working well together regardless of partisan politics. There are inevitably some missteps along the way. I cannot see, for example, why my otherwise sensible local council would seek to spend hundreds of thousands of ratepayer dollars on a statue commemorating COVID-19 when that money could be better invested in public infrastructure—and I would urge the council to reconsider its decision. But in other respects it is doing a great job.

Local and State governments are doing a great job around the country, and the Federal Government is also doing a great job. We certainly have headwinds to navigate and the economic and social travails internationally whenever to bleed impact upon us. But when we look globally, there is no place we would rather be during this time than right here. This is an exceptional country with incredible opportunities right now. There is an opportunity for us to challenge some of the neoliberal economics that have influenced our economic development over recent years.

Take our manufacturing sector. Our old industrial complexes have largely disappeared in the face of deregulation and globalisation. An opportunity now exists, with a highly skilled workforce and a strong inheritance of infrastructure to support an industrial base, to invest in a new highly diversified advanced manufacturing sector. We can simply miss the difficult and cumbersome transformation of old large-scale heavy industries and their antiquated industrial relations systems that currently stymie the agility of established industrial powers to deal with technological disruption.

We can reinvest in an industrial development that makes sense in a post-COVID world—industries based on circular economy principles and industries that address the clear vulnerability to lengthy supply chains to Chinese manufacturers for example. COVID has exposed what we do exceptionally well. Agricultural commodities are selling strongly. We are coming out of drought and we stand to re-emerge as the food basket of Asia. Our mining sector is equally resilient. While thermal coalmining will ultimately decline, other mineral resources will become increasingly important as global energy systems transition to renewables, which require Australian rare earths among other emerging markets.

There is also a profound opportunity for our exceptional universities. While it is clear that they risk becoming administrative behemoths fattened on the fees of international students, there is an opportunity for our great universities to rediscover their roots in teaching young Australians and a balanced number of students from around the world the skills they need to make a difference globally. There is an opportunity now for general decentralisation. Patterns of settlement are inevitably going to change. One can see it walking around my community in the towns and villages of the northern beaches. One can see a huge focus of economic activity coming out into suburban centres that one does not see in Sydney's CBD right now.

The old orthodoxies around economic agglomeration are being sorely tested. There are opportunities for jobs and investment closer to where people live. That is why we have changed the rules around trading hours for supermarkets and rules around home-based businesses. Groups like Pittwater Business Limited that are always focused on those micro-businesses that are such a strong part of Pittwater's economic firmament, show that they will be a big part of our jobs focus in future. There are also opportunities in how we engage and help one another during this period to strengthen our communities. For example, Jason Manning from the Pittwater RSL has been using the RSL's kitchens to cook meals being distributed through the Link Church in Narrabeen to those who need them most. It is heartwarming to see our community in action during this hard time and working together. I thank and commend Jason and Glen Wysman of the Link Church for their collaborative work.

A whole lot of trends that have been happening that were happening anyway have been accelerated because of the pandemic. Some of the big retailers and big commercial businesses are being disrupted and challenged in a way that provides all sorts of opportunities to democratise our retail and commercial sectors, providing opportunities for a budding new class of capitalists to displace traditional wage labourers as well. These are all examples as to why COVID-19 has pointed out Australian exceptionalism—its exceptional people, exceptional places and an exceptional country.

PUBLIC SECTOR PAY FREEZE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (18:03:56): The Premier's announcement last week that public service wages would be frozen blindsided the more than 400,000 hardworking public servants across New South Wales. The term "wage freeze" is political misdirection on the part of this Government. It is, in real terms, a wage cut. That is 5,421 of my constituents in the Charlestown electorate. It is 1,884 educators, 2,270 health workers, 645 emergency service workers, police officers and community support workers.

These are people we rely on every day—especially in these extraordinary times. Across Newcastle and Lake Macquarie, 16,552 jobs have been slapped with a wage cut in real terms. That means the people employed in those roles will earn over \$109 million less than they would have otherwise. That is \$109 million that will not be pumped into the local economy. That is \$109 million that will not be spent in local businesses. That is \$109 million that will not be helping our economy to recover as we emerge from COVID-19 lockdowns. This real wage cut is nothing less than an act of rank economic vandalism on the part of this Government. At a time when the Government should be encouraging spending it is directly cutting real wages.

This is a Government that trumpets its economic credentials, but in the nine years that the Liberal-Nationals Government has held power in New South Wales what have we seen? Privatisation has broken services that most vulnerable members of society relied on. Buses in my area have been privatised. Bone-deep cuts to public spending in areas like health have put more pressure on frontline workers. TAFE has been undermined, its world-class status mortgaged to dodgy private training providers. Ageing social housing properties have been left to rot, with tenants ignored as their homes decay. Countless flashy infrastructure projects have gone over budget while bread-and-butter infrastructure improvements like the much-needed upgrades to Hillsborough Road have been neglected.

These past months of crisis have been rightly spent praising frontline service workers as heroes. While members of Parliament and senior bureaucrats have been safely able to conduct their work over Zoom, nurses were at the barricades against COVID-19. Teachers were forced to adapt quickly to online learning. Police, paramedics and fireys kept showing up and saving lives. Service NSW employees kept doing the quiet work that keeps this State running. When it comes time to acknowledge the importance of this work, what does this Government do? It slaps public servants with a real wage cut. The damage done by nine years of cuts, nine years of budget blowouts and nine years of ideologically driven policy have now been cemented by this decision. The havoc wrought on the State's economy by COVID-19 will be made worse by this real wage cut to our frontline service workers.

The Treasurer's promise of a one-off \$1,000 to frontline workers adds insult to very real economic injury. I met with some nurses earlier this week who expressed frustration at their treatment by this Government. So far Australia seems to have dodged the worst of COVID-19. We have so far avoided the horrors experienced by countries like the United States of America, Great Britain and Italy. But in the early days there was no guarantee that this would be the case. Those nurses still fronted up to work without being provided with adequate personal protective equipment. They took the temperatures of people visiting local hospitals. Hand sanitiser was strictly rationed, and there was not enough to go around. Nurses were understandably concerned. Some nurses were in high-risk categories for COVID-19 but they came to work anyway.

Nurses deserve better than a pay cut. Ambos deserve better. Teachers and police deserve better than a pay cut. The thousands of public sector employees across the Charlestown electorate deserve better than a pay cut. The local businesses that rely on their spending capacity deserve better. This is a slap in the face for Charlestown workers. It is a kick in the guts for Charlestown businesses. It is simply not good enough.

OATLEY LIONS CLUB

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (18:08:54): Oatley, the electorate that I represent, is built on community spirit. So today I commend the outstanding result achieved by Oatley Lions Club in its fundraising efforts through the Farmers Christmas Bush Bash Project. Oatley Lions Club, of which I am a member, is a group of enthusiastic volunteers who contribute to the Oatley community through a wide variety of local and national community projects. They consistently act to deliver resources and funds to the most vulnerable and at risk in our society. As everyone in the House will know, New South Wales has been devastated by one of the worst droughts in living history, which has left our farmers and their families unable to maintain their herds and crops. For many families in western New South Wales affected by the drought, the joy that only Christmas can bring was as remote to them as the rain.

It was incredibly hard to listen to the stories of our farmers and not feel one's heart lurch with the need to help them. The Oatley Lions Club felt particularly drawn to the cause, as many of us were, and came together to rally the St George community with an exciting project. The Lions Farmers Christmas Bush Bash Project aimed

to restore some Christmas joy and hope to the drought-stricken town of Geurie, New South Wales. Geurie is a small village located near Dubbo in Central West New South Wales and has faced strict water restrictions for the past two years. Farming families in the area have reported empty dams and tanks, forcing them to truck in water to maintain their crops and herds.

As we know, not only has the drought had an economic impact on farms but also farmers have been reporting higher levels of mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. This sad reality is no different in Geurie and the surrounding areas, further emphasising the importance of the work of the Lions Club in bringing the community together to socialise and lean on each other for support in these extremely tough times. Lions succeeded in raising more than \$30,000, which allowed the club to hold a fantastic Christmas Bush Bash on 15 December 2019.

Included in the celebration was a barbecue hosted by Oatley Lions volunteers, \$11,000 in food and fuel vouchers, \$5,000 worth of water, a jumping castle, a 20-piece choir, clothing and hampers as well as a special appearance from Santa, who distributed hundreds of toys to the delight of the kids present. With more than 75 families attending the event, which had over 400 attendees in total, the project was a massive success. When I spoke to some of the Lions volunteers afterwards, they recounted fond memories of the genuine smiles and laughter of both the parents and children while receiving their sausage sandwiches and presents from Santa.

For many of the attendees the barbecue was the first time in months they were able to reconnect with neighbours and friends. Importantly, this initiative led by the Oatley Lions Club sent a message to the people of Geurie, New South Wales, that the people of St George are thinking of them and understand their current plight and the importance of food production to this country and this State. I am proud to represent an electorate that donates so generously to those in need and refuses to sit by while another community struggles. This project is a true testament to the Australian spirit of mateship within the electorate of Oatley. I take this opportunity to thank once again every member of the Oatley Lions Club and our local Oatley community for getting behind this important project. I look forward to updating the House about future initiatives led by the Oatley Lions Club in the future.

BATHURST ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (18:13:08): It gives me great pleasure to speak in this House after such a long time and to talk about what is happening in my community. In the past few months it has certainly changed. We are living in a very different time and the lives of people have changed significantly. It is more important than ever for governments to provide support on the ground with infrastructure projects that will create jobs and make a difference to the lives of people in their local communities. I will refer to a couple of projects that not only support local people to work in their local area but also support local contractors. It is critical at this time to see a flow of money through our local economies.

At the start of the year some bushfires went through the Blue Mountains in the Lithgow area. A 25-kilometre line from Lithgow to Mount Victoria was burnt out. That meant that burnt trees and powerlines had to be replaced. Some of the communication signal boxes were completely destroyed. It was all wiped out; we had to start from scratch. That was an enormous task. On top of that, some heavy rainfall and mudslides caused significant damage to the track. But I am pleased to say that after six months of hard work and 150,000 man-hours the team from Transport for NSW was able to restore rail services a week ago. That is critical to the local community because it is good for not only electric passenger train services but also the movement of freight to and from the central west.

Due to the extent of the damage, around 200 employees had to work on that line every day over those months. About 540 burnt trees had to be removed, 50 kilometres of fibre-optic cables had to be replaced, 37 kilometres of damaged high-voltage powerlines needed to be replaced, as were 75 power poles. The extent of the damage was enormous, but the team undertook the work. Now the services have resumed just in time for the long weekend but, importantly, just in time as restrictions are being eased for regional travel. The Jenolan Caves Road suffered significant damage when the bushfires went through there. Trees fell on the roads, the slopes came down and the guardrails were damaged. The area also got heavy rainfall. The team from Transport for NSW has been doing an incredible job in stabilising the banks. The road will be reopened this Thursday and people will be able to travel to Jenolan Caves. Whilst the caves will not be open, the hospitality area and Caves House will be open for visitors or people who may go there over the long weekend for bushwalking.

I mention a couple of other projects. The right-turn intersection on the Range Road is a significant project on the Great Western Highway. The New South Wales Government has invested \$2.1 million on the busy road between Lithgow and Bathurst. A truck or car travelling behind one at 100 kilometres per hour is quite concerning. We have now put in a right-turn bay, which has made it safer for motorists using that section of road. Only a couple of kilometres from there, the Government will invest about \$8 million around the Meadow Flat Public

School to extend the road and install wire barriers to ensure that it is a smoother and safer section. A 2.5-kilometre section of Sofala Road is being improved with funding of \$2.4 million. Another \$650,000 is being invested to replace the Evans Bridge with a new 30 metre by eight metre bridge, which will allow heavier produce to travel across the bridge to support our farmers. Ultimately, the Government is improving infrastructure in our electorate and providing jobs, which are important to our local community and to the economy. The Government will keep delivering.

SEVEN HILLS ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:18:22): I speak of the important progress taking place in the City of Parramatta and Hills Shire local government areas covered by the electorate of Seven Hills. Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, the New South Wales Government achieved significant milestones and made announcements worth celebrating in those areas. Almost against all odds, a number of positive outcomes have occurred in the electorate throughout the height of the pandemic. The Parramatta and Hills communities have kept on keeping on, but I will speak more about that later.

The headline update in the communities is the completion of the major construction of the new 14-storey Central Acute Services Building as the centrepiece of a more than \$1 billion redevelopment of Westmead Hospital. Major construction was completed three months ahead of schedule, with the new building including two new emergency departments; over 300 new patient rooms; a digital operating theatre; more imaging, logistics and pharmacy facilities; and education, training and research facilities on each floor. In more good news for local families, plans are currently underway to provide an additional \$619 million stage two redevelopment of The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

I am also pleased to announce that the Toongabbie West Public School P&C, the Pendle Hill Football Club and the Winston Hills Football Club were successful in receiving grants from the Premier. Toongabbie West received \$15,000 for the new works at the school, which include the construction of awnings, covers, seating and walkways. The Pendle Hill Tigers secured \$12,500 to aid construction of new fencing, lighting, seating and signage at the club's home ground at Binalong Park, Old Toongabbie. The Winston Hills Bears received \$12,500 for the completion of concrete surface works and the construction of fencing and a barbecue area at the club's home ground at Max Ruddock Reserve, Winston Hills. In great news for M2 bus commuters, a heads of agreement was signed by the City of Parramatta Council, the Hills Shire Council, the Hills Motorway Trust Limited and Transport for NSW for the delivery of commuter parking along Junction Road in Winston Hills. I have been—and still remain—a strong advocate of the significant project.

In 2019 the Government committed \$2.5 million for the important project while the most recent State budget unlocked \$212,000 to kickstart the planning for it. Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, with the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services, Gareth Ward, I was pleased to host a foster carers' forum at the Toongabbie Sports and Bowling Club, open a new women's social housing project in Pendle Hill, meet with staff at the New South Wales Department of Communities and Justice social housing office in Blacktown, visit the Lalor Park Community Garden and Common Groundz cafe and studio at Lalor Park and visit the William Rose School at Seven Hills. I am pleased to announce that the Northmead Bowling Club Sports Club has been successful in a recent New South Wales Government Local Sport Grant worth \$5,000 for the purchase of lawn bowls and accessories to aid the development of the Northmead Bowling Club's junior bowling academy.

Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, we were fortunate to have a Coffee with a Cop session hosted by the Parramatta Police Area Command at the Caroline Chisholm shops at Winston Hills. It was an opportunity for police to speak with locals about crime matters in the area. Finally, in more great news for locals, the Wentworthville Police Station rebuild is now complete. The new station will be manned by Parramatta Police Area Command throughout the week. I have maintained regular contact with the Parramatta and The Hills police area commands throughout the pandemic, discussing matters of community safety that are important to local residents. I thank the local police and all the frontline service personnel working throughout the pandemic period for their tireless efforts and for adapting to the different operating procedures they were faced with. Despite the headwinds of the global pandemic, I am pleased to say that it is full steam ahead in the City of Parramatta and Hills Shire local government areas covered by the Seven Hills electorate.

NEWCASTLE CONTAINER TERMINAL

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (18:22:45): Last month our Treasurer declared to *The Sydney Morning Herald*:

There is no place for pre-pandemic thinking in a post-pandemic world.

Minister Perrottet went on to say that a five-part economic recovery plan would include a focus on improved productivity, trade and investment—and I have just the venture. The Port of Newcastle has a \$1.8 billion private

investment, shovel-ready project ripe for the picking in the development of a high-volume container terminal. All it needs is the New South Wales Government to get behind it. The benefits are countless: huge employment opportunities during its construction and operation, reduced freight and export costs for regional and northern New South Wales producers and consumers, and fewer trucks trekking the M1 and clogging Sydney roads. Importantly, it would feed what should be the cornerstone of a first-world economy: fair competition. And there is the rub.

In complete contradiction to its own conservative free-market ideology, the Government placed initially secret restrictions on the Port of Newcastle when it was sold in 2013, effectively quashing any chance of its container capacity being expanded, so that the Government could achieve a higher price for Port Botany and Port Kembla. This was to ensure that those ports had a monopoly on the container trade in New South Wales for the next 50 years. And how? By placing a financial penalty on every container received by the Port of Newcastle over its imposed cap to the tune of roughly \$1 million per ship. This financial penalty is paid straight to the State, which then passes it on to NSW Ports which operates Botany and Kembla. This was a blatant port rort and once the deal was made public through the media the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission agreed. The commission even went so far as to label the deal "anti-competitive" and "illegal". In fact, it is now being challenged in the Federal Court.

This is the kind of pre-pandemic thinking we do not need from this Government in a post-pandemic world. But it is more than that. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to turbocharge regional New South Wales and cement the Port of Newcastle's place as a powerhouse of the Australian economy. Right now the Port of Newcastle handles 4,600 ship movements and 171 million tonnes of cargo each year. Its annual trade is worth around \$25 billion of the State's economy. It has a deepwater shipping channel that is operating at only 50 per cent of its capacity, significant land holdings and access to transport infrastructure to support its growth.

Pandemic or not, the long and the short of it is that Newcastle's port needs to diversify. It may be the world's largest coal port but, like it or loathe it, coal will not be around forever. We need to prepare for our future and right now, as unemployment skyrockets, we need to take advantage of this opportunity to put workers on the ground and make it happen. Newcastle is built on its port. The maritime industry lies at the heart and soul of the city. For this Government to hobble the port, one of the State's major economic drivers, is incredibly short-sighted. There is some cause for hope because as we start to see a glimmer of movement from conservative sectors on climate change and plastics policies, so we see movement on Newcastle's container policy.

With The Nationals, including the Deputy Premier, throwing their support behind an expanded terminal, this is clearly not a partisan issue. This is a handful of powerbrokers refusing to admit to a mistake and placing a handbrake on the State's regional economy. Now is the time to fix it. The Nationals agree; we agree. The Government has done an incredibly dodgy deal and now is the time to fix it. We are not asking for favours. All we are asking for is a level playing field. Remove the cap and initiate a fair, equitable and competitive deal for all three ports. Allow the Port of Newcastle to proceed with \$1.8 billion of private investment. Scrap the pre-pandemic cap and diversify the Port of Newcastle for a post-pandemic world.

INLAND WATERWAYS

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (18:28:05): Tonight I address the Government's shocking neglect of our inland waterways and how this is threatening both marine life and human life. The media recently revealed that Chinese state-owned corporations are buying our river water. The irony here is that the Chinese state government shows more interest in our most valuable natural resource than does the State government. While foreign investors make billions from the trade of our water, New South Wales Ministers, agencies and mayors are allowing our lakes, creeks and rivers to turn into filthy, toxic cesspools.

Last weekend I visited Lake Wyangan in Griffith, scene of the latest in a long line of native fish kills across rural New South Wales. I picked up metre-long, century-old dead Murray cod on the shore of the lake. Murray cod used to survive decades of droughts, floods and irregular water events but our rivers have reached a point of such neglect that even the most resilient of marine life can no longer survive. While the Government is investigating the immediate cause of this latest fish kill, this event surprised no-one. Over the past few years the lake has been plagued by frequent outbreaks of toxic blue green algae—a lake that was once the heartbeat of the town. Where once it was a scene of waterskiing, aquatic sports, family picnics, barbeques and kids frolicking, the lake is now a dangerous, deserted eyesore. Griffith swelters through 45 degree summer days with no place for respite.

The lake may in fact be a health hazard as well as an eyesore. Griffith has seven times the rate of motor neurone disease [MND] compared to the national average. Overseas research suggests blue green algae in waterways is likely to be a triggering factor for MND. In 2012 Macquarie University commenced a research project to find out if this was happening in Griffith but this study has since collapsed because the New South

Wales Government refuses to fund it. Governments do not care about the health risks. In 2017 Griffith's mayor and general manager actually sourced the town's drinking water from the lake during an amber alert for toxic blue green algae. He did not bother to give residents prior warning.

Since being elected in early 2019, I have written to several government authorities raising my concerns about the lake. I wrote to the Minister for Health, the Minister for Sport, the Minister for Local Government, the NSW Ombudsman and the Environment Protection Authority. Collectively they did absolutely nothing. We now have 28 different government departments meddling in the Murray Darling Basin Plan but the water quality in our rivers and lakes has never been worse. Another irony is that Griffith is the home to one of the world's leading wetlands specialists. In 2017 Geoff Sainty, an Order of Australia medal recipient, devised a plan to fix the lake. Mr Sainty said, "We have all the equipment and know how to fix the problems in Griffith. I can't for the life of me understand why they won't fix it." He estimated it would cost \$500,000. Sadly, Griffith's mayor John Dal Broi was not convinced. The mayor said, "When you're talking these sort of things, it costs a lot of money." A few months later he supported spending \$600,000 on a rose garden.

The health of our inland waterways should not be determined by the whims of a misguided mayor. The Government should take more of an interest in our waterways than the Chinese government. New South Wales government departments should monitor water quality before fish kills occur, not after. They should invest in the health of our water, rather than just inviting foreigners to buy it. I call on the New South Wales Government to start putting water quality ahead of water profiteering.

VAUCLUSE ELECTORATE VOLUNTEERS

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (18:32:29): We celebrated National Volunteer Week a couple of weeks ago to acknowledge the dedicated commitment of volunteers across Australia and in our local communities. Now more than ever we should recognise and acknowledge our generous volunteers and the selfless work they do. This year's National Volunteer Week theme was "Changing Communities. Changing Lives", which recognises the impact that volunteers make. In the past six months we have seen community spirit at its best. That is despite the challenges of bushfires, drought and now COVID-19.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge in the House some of my local volunteers and organisations and warmly thank them for their efforts. Since my electorate has the most famous beach in the world, I must start with our surf life saving clubs. Their amazing work all year round keeps our swimmers, surfers and beachgoers at Bondi Beach safe. Bondi Surf Bathing Life Saving Club and President Brent Jackson did a wonderful job during the bushfire season, rallying over 700 volunteers with 24 truckloads of donated emergency items for bushfire-affected communities. I know members of North Bondi Surf Life Saving Club, led by President Andrew Christopher, also contributed to the efforts. Bondi Surf Bathing Life Saving Club also billeted over a weekend a group of young surf lifesavers from Moruya, who had the opportunity for a break from their bushfire-ravaged communities. Coming from a quieter part of the South Coast, they could not believe how many people would visit Bondi Beach each day.

There is also the Holdsworth Community in Woollahra, which provides support to children and adults living with intellectual disabilities, families with young children and vulnerable older people. It expanded many of its at-home services, including grocery deliveries, door-to-door medical transport, home care packages and home visits for those living alone. Its virtual playgroups for parents on Facebook have been very successful. I thank Holdsworth Community CEO, Ruth Kestermann, and her team for their enormous efforts. Of course, there is also Our Big Kitchen [OBK] in Bondi, led by the wonderful Rabbi Dr Dovid Slavin and his wife, Laya Slavin. Cooking meals for those in need, including many shelters across New South Wales, Our Big Kitchen delivered meals to over 80,000 disadvantaged Australians last year alone. Volunteers are at the heart of their organisation and they are always working with other local groups and businesses on the ground. With COVID-19, OBK increased its large deliveries of fruits and vegetables to families doing it tough and delivered to frontline workers at the Sydney Children's Hospital in Randwick and Prince of Wales Hospital.

Rachel Tanny is CEO of COA Sydney. With over 150 volunteers, COA provides care, meals and hosts social gatherings for local Jewish seniors. With COVID-19 affecting its usual services, it ramped up its Meals on Wheels deliveries and the delivery of fruits and vegetables to the vulnerable. As well as our amazing community-building volunteer groups, we also have our brave emergency services volunteers to thank. In particular, I single out NSW SES Waverley Woollahra Unit, headed by Commander Kim Edwards, who has been involved as a volunteer for no less than 16 years. Last year alone our local fleet received 252 requests for assistance. In March I was pleased to award members of that unit for their incredible volunteer work.

It is challenging in five minutes to name all of the exceptional volunteer groups, but I acknowledge JewishCare President Jason Sandler; Jewish House President Roger Clifford, OAM; Sydney Friendship Circle Executive Director Rabbi Sender Kavka and his wife, Chana; Rose Bay Rotary Club President Lucy Robson;

Bondi Lions Club President Gus Milner; 3rd Rose Bay Judean Scouts group leader Leon Waxman; my local sailing clubs, including the Cruising Yacht Club Australia, Double Bay Sailing Club, Vacluse Amateur 12Ft Sailing Club, Woollahra Sailing Club and Vacluse Yacht Club at Watsons Bay; Kids Giving Back co-founders Carole Schlessinger and Ruth Tofler-Riesel, and Director Roxanne Dunkel; and Mum for Mum Executive Director Nadine Alhadeff and chair of the board, Diane Schaffer. Across New South Wales and to my local community during volunteer week, I say a big thank you. I commend my private member's statement to the House.

WORK IN INGLEBURN STRATEGY

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (18:37:23): Undoubtedly the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic will be felt by all of us for many decades ahead in every aspect of our lives, be it personal or professional. Life as we knew it before COVID-19 has gone to the history books. Social distancing is now the norm. Handshakes and hugs, at least for the moment, are gone. Hand sanitiser is now an essential everyday item to be accessible at all times or, as the marketing jingo goes, "Don't leave home without it". Working from home—WFH—is now an everyday acronym. Tap and go has replaced cash for many, and contactless trade exchanges or deliveries are now expected terms on goods purchases on the internet. The list is endless. The tragic loss of loved ones as a result of the pandemic will mean some Australians' lives can never be the same again. The terms "challenging" and "unprecedented" have consistently been used to describe life during the pandemic. Both terms are very apt. But just as applicable are the words "innovative", "resourceful", "flexible" and "adaptable".

One of the most startling and obvious examples of the innovation that has emerged from the pandemic has been the requirement for many to work from home. The speed at which Australians and businesses across the nation took up working from home was simply quite astonishing. Almost overnight hundreds of thousands of Australians transitioned from working in an office block to working from the living room. Almost overnight Australians discovered the ease of technologies such as Zoom meetings, Microsoft teams or Google meets. Of course not everyone could work from home and we owe a debt of gratitude to those frontline workers who, by necessity, had to go to work each and every day—treating the sick at our hospitals, delivering our food and taking care of our young and old. Many frontline workers' jobs required constant interaction and closer physical proximity. The importance of the emergence of working from home during the pandemic cannot be overemphasised. Thankfully, restrictions imposed during the pandemic are gradually easing and, as a result, more businesses and offices are opening up.

But the challenges of getting to work safely on public transport still remain, especially for many in my local area and surrounding suburbs, where commuting has been a repeated daily grind. For workers who are often required to work in major CBDs such as Sydney, or Parramatta or North Sydney, this can be especially problematic. One innovative solution is the one for which I have to commend my good friend the member for Wollongong—working from a regional location. My "Work in Ingleburn Strategy" would require—and request—the New South Wales State Government to lease vacant office space in Ingleburn, enabling public sector workers who live in the local area to work in a closer location and avoid having to increase the public health risk through commuting on public transport. An Ingleburn Satellite Office—or ISO—could be an ideal base for public sector workers. Now is the time to support people as they transition out of "iso" or "self-isolation", to a new ISO—the Ingleburn Satellite Office. By working from Ingleburn, public sector workers could avoid the long commute to work and avoid the social distancing requirements on our public transport system.

Ingleburn is ideally suited for this purpose: office space exists, the Ingleburn CBD is already home to many government services, the suburb is well placed between both Campbelltown and Liverpool and the CBD is easily accessible. And, of course, the Ingleburn community is a welcoming and warm one. The Work in Ingleburn Strategy provides a win-win. It is a win for workers, a win for public health, a win for the local economy and a win for easing congestion on our packed roads and public transport. The transport Minister telling people to drive to work is not a solution. It is a bit of a cop-out. Walking or cycling to work are viable options if one lives close enough to work, but for many in my electorate and those surrounding areas they can only dream of such options.

A post-pandemic environment requires us all to think differently. It requires all of us to do things differently. If we are truly all in this together it is about time that this Liberal Government gave our community its fair share. Unprecedented times require innovative and unprecedented responses. In recent times our nation and State have proved to be world leaders in responding to the crisis. I commend the Work in Ingleburn Strategy to the Government and look forward to the Premier's positive response to my letter.

REGIONAL NSW TASKFORCE

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (18:42:04): It is just over 12 months since I delivered my inaugural speech in this House. Little did I realise that in all the hopes and ambitions I raised in that speech, we in Wollondilly would be severely impacted by the ongoing drought, bushfires, floods and, now, COVID-19. After

just recovering from the bushfires there was a glimmer of hope in my local community, especially in tourism. Then COVID-19 struck. I realised that the community needed more than just government action. As a regional New South Wales member of Parliament whose electorate has been devastated so much, I realised that a swift response was needed to the issues that were now developing. It was then that I established the Regional NSW Taskforce, comprising industry representatives and all three levels of government.

The task force was set up with the assistance of my parliamentary colleagues the member for Camden, Peter Sidgreaves, and the member for Goulburn, Wendy Tuckerman, and the Federal member for Hume, the Hon. Angus Taylor. The mayors and their six representatives of six regional local government areas—Camden, Wollondilly, Wingecarribee, Goulburn Mulwaree, the Upper Lachlan and Yass Valley—are also members. This has enabled a broad regional focus to be implemented and maintained. Government agencies such as the local NSW Police Force, Service NSW and other representatives on the task force are leaders in their field across the region who are able to act in the broader community interest. They have great local knowledge and connections to enable solutions and projects that are practical and deliverable.

They have given freely of their time and expertise. Regional New South Wales is different in many ways from the city and, as a result, many of the issues that need to be addressed require a strong local input. They have population densities, infrastructure and business arrangements that differ significantly from the major cities. The one-size-fits-all approach that is often applied to major problems is not necessarily the best solution for the regions. The task force, which meets weekly via Zoom, is focused on identifying and raising awareness of regional issues, and making practical and achievable recommendations to support regional economic recovery. Actions implemented will benefit our regional communities now, during the recovery phase and in the future. The vision of the task force is to support regional economic recovery through jobs maintenance and jobs creation.

The task force identified three clear objectives: first, to identify the immediate disruptive impacts and associated issues that have structurally altered the regional New South Wales economy; secondly, to gain an understanding of the likely marketplace and economic conditions post-COVID-19; and, thirdly, to make recommendations for actions that can support economic recovery in regional New South Wales immediately and in the mid-term to long-term future. This model could be rolled out as a template in other regional areas across the State. Just one example illustrates this. Early in the crisis local businesses identified that they needed more clarity on regulations concerning landlord and tenant matters for both commercial and residential tenancies.

Jim Marsden and Adriana Cork—both task force members and widely respected local legal practitioners—provided a summary and interpretation of the current position. This was made widely available and has proven most useful to both landlords and tenants in the region. Last month our Premier joined the weekly meeting and was able to hear firsthand about the work the task force is doing and the projects being put forward. The Premier was also able to update the task force on the actions of the Government to date and some of the challenges we are all facing in the future. The Regional New South Wales Task Force has been instrumental in advising all levels of government on strategies for the immediate and long-term economic stability of local communities and on moving on shovel- and screwdriver-ready projects to create employment.

Regional areas are resilient, as they have proven throughout the recent drought and bushfires, but they need to have some control over their own destiny. Government can provide a framework for certainty but in the end the community needs to embrace and implement that framework. That is what the task force is putting in place. Let us break the shackles for regional New South Wales and set it free, enabling it to survive, achieve and prosper. The regions can then set their own course to recovery and prosperity.

TRIBUTE TO COUNCILLOR VICKY KING

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (18:46:35): On the last sitting day before the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted regular sittings of this Parliament I represented my colleague the member for Keira, who is in the Chamber, and the member for Shellharbour at the funeral of friend and former Deputy Lord Mayor of Wollongong Councillor Vicky King. Vicky passed away on 25 February after attending a neighbourhood forum meeting. The fact that her untimely passing occurred in the course of her duties as a councillor—spending a Tuesday evening with a group of southern suburbs residents trying to work out how to get a better deal—was typical of how Vicky served her community.

I first got to know Vicky in the 1990s through her stepdaughter, Sylvia. I was relatively new to the Labor Party at the time and Vicky was deputy lord mayor, a position she had held from 1995. She served on the council in two stints, serving 19 years. That is a sizable commitment of time, energy and effort. But Vicky was not content during that time just to have been elected. She wanted to get things done. She was incredibly well-respected throughout Wollongong. People who knew Vicky as a councillor knew what she stood for and what she wanted to achieve. People who knew Vicky as a mother of six children knew that she would go out of her way to advocate for, defend, promote and support each of them—virtues she extended to her grandchildren later on.

People who knew Vicky as a business owner, accountant and financial planner knew that they could rely on her advice and professionalism. The funeral service at St Luke's Anglican Church in Brownsville was packed. Representatives from all levels of government, all parties across the political spectrum and all parts of the community turned up to recognise Vicky's contribution and to pay their respects to her for giving so much of herself to promote Wollongong, to advance things for its residents, to promote more women in local government and to bring a greater degree of fairness as far as she could. Her husband, Charlie, was moved by the turnout, noting:

Unbelievable. I never realised just how much my wife has touched people.

He told us about "his Vicky", how they met while he was doing his tax return and that going to lunch after he received a sizable tax return started their relationship. My Labor colleagues and I describe Vicky as a "trailblazer", which she certainly was. Long before anyone fought to change the rules to allow mothers to care for their kids during parliamentary sittings or council meetings, Vicky had already done it on the floor of Wollongong City Council—not once but twice. In cleaning out some old files recently I came across a flyer from the 1999 Wollongong local government elections for which Vicky had asked me to run her ward campaign.

She was standing with Mark Yates in what was then ward five, which covered Dapto and surrounding areas. For the record the result was a good one with both Vicky and Mark being elected to the council. Hear, hear! During that campaign she wanted heating for the Dapto pool; it was done. She wanted to build a new Dapto Community Centre; it was done. She wanted to continue to extend the cycleway network in Wollongong; it was done. She wanted to take further steps to protect the environment and heritage of the region, and she progressed that too. But the one big thing she wanted in infrastructure was flood-free access to the growing west Dapto.

This was to be achieved with the Fowlers Road Bridge. On 28 April this year that bridge was opened. Sadly, it was two months too late for Vicky to see it open to traffic. Many people tried to claim credit for their part in building that bridge, but the one, consistent voice for getting that project done—whether it was in her capacity as a councillor, a business owner, a mother or a concerned citizen—was Vicky's. But her achievements do not stop there. Vicky was a life member of the Australian Labor Party and the Local Government Women's Association.

Vicky also served on the Aboriginal Reference Group, the Illawarra Bushfire Management Committee, the Illawarra Regional Information Service, the Lake Illawarra Estuary Management Committee, the Illawarra Zone Liaison Committee of the Rural Fire Service and had previously served on the Illawarra Housing Trust, the Lake Illawarra Authority, the Illawarra Regional Organisation of Councils, the Illawarra County Council and the Planning and Development Committee. Vicky was also on the board of the Illawarra Showground Trust, now WIN Stadium and the Entertainment Centre, the Illawarra Sports Stadium at Berkeley and was a finalist in the Telstra Businesswoman of the Year awards. Her long-time friend and former alderman—as they were known when she was elected—Norma Wilson said it best:

Vicky will be long remembered as a woman of vision, boundless energy who loved and respected her friends and served her community with skill and commitment.

I have stood shoulder to shoulder with Vicky and have been on the other side of the table when she has taken up advocacy for individuals, groups, principles and causes. We did not always agree but we shared the enduring values of fairness, justice and a desire to see a better deal for those who might not have the same opportunities we had. I thank Vicky for her support of Labor and for the support she gave her community, but I especially thank her for the support she showed me and the advice that she provided. I also thank her husband, Charlie, and her children Peter, Sylvia, David, Clare, Hanna and Matika for sharing her with us all. At times that would have been incredibly tough but Wollongong benefited from it.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I thank the member for Wollongong. Councillor Vicky King will be sadly missed.

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (18:51:47): I wish to highlight a challenge that our community is facing, and that is the University of Wollongong [UOW] and the financial challenges it is currently facing. The university is a key economic driver for our community as are other universities in regional communities in this State and around this country. The University of Wollongong is my alma mater. I know it is the alma mater of the member for Wollongong and a number of other members as well. I know three Labor MPs—and I would like to think all MPs across the divide—are very proud of it. But it is now facing some very real challenges. The extent to which we can assist the University of Wollongong will go a long way towards cushioning the blow to the regional community that I am fortunate to represent.

The university has around 36,000 students, 365 degrees are on offer and 179 nationalities are represented. Some 28 per cent of UOW graduates reside in the Illawarra region, 34 per cent live internationally, and 34 per cent living in the rest of New South Wales and Australia make an ongoing contribution to income productivity and innovation. We have around 1,094 academic staff, 1,356 professional staff and 10 distinguished professors. One of the key statistics is that for every 1,000 full-time equivalents [FTEs] created, UOW-related expenditure supports another 800 FTEs elsewhere in the economy.

UOW's direct, indirect and induced economic contribution to gross domestic product in 2018 was around \$1.4 billion. This is broken down by student spending of around \$646 million while their operations added \$743 million worth of value. Last week, the member for Wollongong, the member for Shellharbour and I had an open and direct discussion with the Treasurer of New South Wales, Dominic Perrottet, MP, and the university.

From the outset I thank the Treasurer. I requested this because we are in a difficult situation. The University of Wollongong will experience forecast reductions in income—approximately \$300 million over the next three years—which will have a marked impact on the economy of which all of us from the Illawarra are proud and which we represent. We have entered into discussions with the Government concerning assistance, including the waiving of payroll tax, the fast-tracking of capital expenditure and assistance with capital expenditure designed to create jobs in our local community. No-one is asking the Government to do it alone. The university has already made significant progress. None of the decisions that it has taken have been easy and those decisions are not easy for the community or for individuals.

I acknowledge that all the executives have agreed to substantial pay cuts—a marked signal of the type of men and women that we are dealing with. They understand the role of the university as an economic driver and they understand the important role it plays in providing jobs and opportunities for people across the region and beyond. They are implementing operating expenditure controls; they are reducing capital expenditure; they are developing and implementing a number of strategies to further reduce expenditure; and they are increasing borrowings. They are doing everything they can but they need government assistance. Governments of all political persuasions have been friends of the university.

Labor governments in particular have been friends of the University of Wollongong. They have made big impacts and big investments in medical research, the Innovation Campus, the SMART Infrastructure Facility, and the list goes on. This is the time for the New South Wales Government to assist. It will assist not only the university but also the large and significant regional economy. I thank the Treasurer for his efforts today and I look forward to working with the Government to secure the long-term future of the University of Wollongong.

Community Recognition Statements

FAIRFIELD AND CUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COMMANDS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (18:57:06): On behalf of the Fairfield electorate I convey my heartfelt thanks to the Fairfield City Police Area Command and the Cumberland Police Area Command for their service during the recent COVID-19 quarantine period, and for the work they continue to do to keep the Fairfield electorate safe. Like so many other communities across the nation, our community was faced with an unprecedented challenge during this time. Thanks to the diligence of both these area commands in limiting unnecessary exposure and making sure all social distancing regulations were followed we were able to come through this period in as safe a manner as possible. Working to reduce the spread of COVID-19 was not an easy task for the Fairfield and Cumberland police local area commands and indeed the NSW Police Force, but they did this as well as maintaining their commitment to their regular duties and service to the public. I commend them and thank them once again for the high level of commitment and dedication to our community and to their duties during this difficult time.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Members should bear in mind that we are in a pandemic and that they should practise social distancing. They also should bear in mind that it is distracting to speak while a member is making a community recognition statement.

HAWKESBURY ELECTORATE COMMUNITY BUILDING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM GRANTS

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:58:26): I congratulate the worthy recipients of the New South Wales Government's 2019 Community Building Partnership program, announced earlier this year. A total of 13 projects received funding in Hawkesbury, which will deliver much-needed improvements to local facilities including new public toilets in Bona Vista Park, Pitt Town, the erection of new safety barriers at Glenorie Memorial Cenotaph, a new outdoor gazebo for the Australian Foundation for Disability, a storage facility at Hawkesbury Little Athletics Club and a new shade sail for Pitt Town Public School. This is fantastic news for the people of Hawkesbury. This grassroots funding will create a more vibrant and inclusive local community with positive social, environmental and recreational outcomes. Other successful organisations that received support

included The Friends of the Australiana Pioneer Village Society, Maroota P & C Association, The Scouts Association of Australia NSW, and St Matthew's Catholic Parish Windsor. I congratulate all the organisations that were successful in their application and look forward to seeing how these projects make a real difference to the community.

CHARLESTOWN ELECTORATE EDUCATORS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (18:59:38): As it became clear that New South Wales would need to go into strict lockdown if it were to avoid a severe COVID-19 outbreak, educators in the Charlestown electorate swung into action to help keep themselves, their students, their families and our community safe. Switching from classroom teaching to online class delivery was no mean feat, and I am very proud of and thankful for the work done by local educators to facilitate that. They had to keep kids engaged, keep them on task, and make sure their learning was not disrupted too badly during these extraordinary times. There was no road map for this change. There was some confusion in the early days, some teething problems and tech issues, but students and teachers adapted very well. Many teachers had to take on extra work, often unpaid, to make sure this happened. Now that schools have reopened, and many teachers and students are back in the classroom, I thank all the educators in the Charlestown electorate for their hard work during the lockdown. Our community is full of gratitude.

COMMANDER PETER WILLARD

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (19:00:40): I congratulate Peter Willard from Blackhead who this year celebrates 40 years as a firefighter. Peter, who currently holds the position as commander of the Taree Fire Station, joined the service in 1980. At the age of 20 during his role as a Gyprock apprentice, a family friend who was a firefighter needed a hand with a renovation job. During that job a conversation was sparked about the work of a firefighter. This prompted Peter to make a career change and on 18 April 1980 he was accepted to the NSW Fire Brigade, now known as Fire and Rescue NSW. Following a stint in Sydney, Peter worked as a station officer in Bathurst before taking up the commander role in Taree in September 2016. Peter has said that he would not have lasted four decades in the job without the support of his family including wife, Lisa, and his children Christine, Katrina and Peter junior. I congratulate Peter on his fortieth anniversary and thank him for his commitment to the job, and the safety he and his team provide to our community.

COAST SHELTER

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:01:42): I thank and congratulate all at Coast Shelter for the amazing adjustments and the agility with which they have responded to the rapid changes required to support some of the Central Coast's most vulnerable people during the past three months. Coast Shelter in Gosford is a community hub for hundreds of people each week—a very important community connector for both volunteers and recipients. Despite plans made in the morning being changed by the afternoon, with nimbleness and dignity, our homeless were fed. The amazing team at Coast Shelter has successfully managed six healthy refugees with rapid, poignant, creative solutions. Smart televisions have assisted in the delivery of independent living and parenting programs. Community champion and chief executive officer Rachel Willis sees COVID-19 times as a profound moment in our community, and we are all so grateful that our community's response has been delivered with a happy heart. As jobs diminish on the Central Coast, and Sydney stimulus money is not trickling north, we look forward to this Government recognising that Coast Shelter will be supporting so many more, with dignity and a happy heart.

BONVILLE SAWTELL DISTRICT LIONS CLUB

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (19:02:46): The Bonville Sawtell District Lions Club is one of many organisations in my electorate working hard to make our community an even better place in which to live. As well as the many ways it lends a hand to strengthen our community, it also host the Lions Youth of the Year Quest, which encourages and develops leadership and other citizenship qualities in our young people. The Bonville Sawtell District Lions Club Youth of the Year local final involved Toormina High School students Ryan Gilchrist, Amy Newcombe and Kapenga Ngongo. At the regional final, Ryan was up against students from Urunga, Macksville and Nambucca. Ryan won the public speaking prize and was judged overall winner. The respective winners of their regional finals were then eligible to go on to district, which has since been postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis. Congratulations to the Bonville Sawtell District Lions Club, led by president Warren Sydenham, treasurer Dave Campbell, secretary Helen Lawrence and bulletin editor Vicki Sowter.

TRIBUTE TO SHEILA WOODCOCK

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (19:03:44): I pay tribute to the late Novocastrian Sheila Woodcock, who bequeathed \$14 million to 15 community organisations on her passing. Miss Woodcock passed away at 87 years of age on 12 May 2018, but her amazing gift was revealed only this year. The beneficiaries represent some of Miss Woodcock's great loves and her values, including animals, community and friendship.

Amongst many others, the bequest will fund the training of 25 guide dog puppies, three graduate scholarships in diabetes research or treatment, and training facilities for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. It follows a life of philanthropy, which included long-term support of Vision Australia, the RSPCA and breast cancer trials. Ms Woodcock has left an astounding legacy; the number of people it will touch cannot be counted. Vale, Sheila Woodcock, and thank you.

THE WEEKLY TIMES COLES CROPPING FARMER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (19:04:54): I congratulate Peter and Renee Burke, who were announced as winners of *The Weekly Times* Coles 2019 Cropping Farmer of the Year award in a ceremony held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Friday 21 February. The award recognises their innovative approach to farming, employing data, technology and agribusiness strategies to help farm successfully despite challenging seasons. For the past 22 years the Burkes have run a 1,200-hectare irrigation farm at Jerilderie in the New South Wales Riverina. Over the past 12 months they have managed to produce 6,000 tonnes of grain and 8,000 bales of hay and straw, helped substantially by their water strategies, collection of crop performance data and the use of GPS technology. I express my belated congratulations to Peter and Renee.

COVID-19 AND RUBY PRINCESS

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (19:05:46): When the *Ruby Princess* was directed to dock in Port Kembla there were mixed views to say the least, but a group of Wollongong residents and businesses stepped up and formed their own crew to support the ship's crew. Among them were Nicole Dillon; John and Leah Kewa and their children; Paul Loekmer; Jill Crossley; David Bosanquet; the Mission to Seafarers Port Kembla; Peter Ernst from the Port Authority; Alison Covington and Susan Wallis from Good360; Mark Sleigh; Councillor Leigh Colacino; the Kollaras Group; the Maritime Union of Australia and Australian Mariners Welfare Society as well as many individuals. All of them contributed to providing items for more than 1,200 care packages. Over the Easter weekend it was a huge effort when the small group got together at the Mission to Seafarers to pack the items. The core group were also joined by Alison Byrnes and me, along with Sharon Bird and Ryan Park, and locals Kiley Martin and Lewwy Hinder. A lot has been—and will be—said about the *Ruby Princess* but through this group, 80 years after the Dalfram dispute in Port Kembla, Wollongong showed once again that it supports workers when they need it. That explains why the *Ruby Princess* left with a huge sign on its stern thanking the Illawarra.

DRIFTA

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (19:06:49): I congratulate Luke Sutton, business owner of Drifta in Gloucester, on his initiative to turn half of his canvas bag factory floor into a cloth face mask making centre to supply face masks during the COVID-19 pandemic. Innovation and creativity is what drives a small business to success. Luke does this fantastically. He should also be congratulated on offering his junior staff to help run errands for elderly residents in the Gloucester community free of charge during these challenging times. I praise Luke for the ingenuity and compassion that he has demonstrated within the Gloucester community.

PROSPECT ELECTORATE EDUCATORS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (19:07:31): The past few months have been challenging for our entire community and have required rapid adaptation to new measures. The changes have been difficult on all of us, but have been especially disconcerting for our children. I thank all the teachers who educate our children in the Prospect electorate. The school environment has been in constant flux. Our children have had periods of being unable to attend school and instead have had to learn remotely. The rapid changes in teaching style required flexibility and patience from our teachers. Our schools throughout the Prospect electorate have worked hard to adapt to the changes to ensure that every student still receives an education regardless of whether they are learning in the classroom or remotely. Teachers have continued to support not just their students' learning but also their welfare during the COVID-19 pandemic. I thank all teachers and educators in public, independent and Catholic schools who care for our children. They have love and respect from us parents.

JOYCE AND ROY MUSGROVE

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (19:08:34): Joyce Bower and Roy Musgrove were married in South Bathurst Anglican Church on 12 May 1945, the week after World War II ended in Europe. Roy was in the Australian Army and stationed at the Bathurst Army Camp but luckily was never sent overseas. Joyce, a dressmaker, was born in Bathurst. However, when the war arrived she went to work in the munitions factory. Roy came from Sydney originally and met Joyce on a train in the days when trains were pulled by steam engines and travelled up and down the Zig Zag Railway. After they were married, Joyce and Roy moved to Sydney, purchased some land in the new subdivision of Padstow Heights and built the first house in Roma Avenue. They had two children, Darryl and Janine. They lived in Roma Avenue until 2015 when they decided to move to Beechwood

Aged Care at Revesby, where they were still residing on their recent seventy-fifth wedding anniversary. I have spoken about several wedding anniversaries during my time in this place, but the milestone of 75 years of marriage is my first. I congratulate Joyce and Roy Musgrove on loving each other for 75 years.

COLIN MARKHAM, FORMER MEMBER FOR KEIRA AND FOR WOLLONGONG

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (19:09:39): It gives me pleasure to talk about Colin Markham, one of my predecessors and someone whom the member for Wollongong, the member for Shellharbour and I know very well. Colin was born on 4 June 1940, which means that this Thursday he will be 80 years of age. A very happy birthday from all of us, Col. He was the member for Keira from 1988 to 1999, the member for Wollongong from 1999 to 2003 and the Parliamentary Secretary for Aboriginal Affairs from 1995 to 2003. He has been a committed member of the Labor Party and continues to give all of us some great advice. We respect his input enormously. To Colin, happy birthday, and to Melissa, well done for putting up with him.

HARRY CLEVERDON

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:10:43): I congratulate Young local Harry Cleverdon on winning the International Songwriting Competition People's Voice for his song, *Hit Me When I'm Down*. There were over 18,000 entries from 140 countries in the Nashville-based competition, so it is a huge achievement for Harry, who received the exciting news on his eighteenth birthday. Harry, a former Australian National Busking champion, began performing at age 12. His winning song raises the issue of how youth cope after being rejected by peers through social media and text messages, which is an important issue to shine a light on. Well done to Harry on the incredible win and representing not only Young in the Cootamundra electorate but also New South Wales and Australia. I am sure he will continue to go from strength to strength in the future.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (19:12:24): I commend religious groups of many faiths who have campaigned for restrictions to ease as of 1 June 2020. Until recently it appeared as though places of worship would have to remain shut while pubs, clubs and restaurants could open up to patrons under new COVID-19 restrictions. I acknowledge the Australian Christian Lobby, Archbishop Anthony Fisher and the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, Bishop Siluan and the Serbian Orthodox Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, Archbishop Glenn Davies of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney and many other organisations for their campaigns to see restrictions on places of worship lifted to allow more people at gatherings. I also acknowledge their unwavering leadership during this difficult time. I thank all people of faith for their patience during this period, with all of us having to adjust our usual traditions in order to practise our faith safely, to avoid the spread of coronavirus and to preserve life. I pray that coronavirus will continue to wither and that our traditional practices can resume.

TARRYN ESHMAN

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (19:13:02): I congratulate Tarryn Eshman and her family on raising over \$14,000 in their World's Greatest Shave event. It is an amazing achievement. I note that the funding will go towards the Leukaemia Foundation's vital cancer research as well as providing services for affected families to access treatment and support. I acknowledge the amazing local support from businesses and residents within both the Camden area and the Macarthur region for such a fantastic cause.

MARITIME UNION OF AUSTRALIA, NEWCASTLE BRANCH

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (19:13:42): The sum of \$16,500 is a lot of money to collect when one passes around the hat, but that is just what the Newcastle branch of the Maritime Union of Australia [MUA] achieved last month. The union was seeking to help people who had fallen through the cracks of COVID-19 assistance and asked its members whether they could spare a few dollars. The collection was divided between three charities that had experienced a surge in demand as a result of the pandemic: Eastlakes Family Support Service, Soul Cafe and the Development and Relief Agency. At the Development and Relief Agency alone, the donation enabled 1,000 meals to be provided for those in need. Well done to the MUA for standing in solidarity and truly embodying the mantra of COVID-19: We're all in this together.

YOUNG ARCHIES COMPETITION

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (19:14:32): I recognise and congratulate the prize winners of the Bank Art Museum Moree's Young Archies competition 2020, which were announced virtually in April due to COVID-19 restrictions. I particularly congratulate the under-fives winner, Leo Preston; the five to eight years winner, Amelia Eulenstein; and highly commended winners Niklas McGregor and Paris Barnes. The nine to 12 years winner was Joseph Vickerman and highly commended were Tallara Newman and Ryama Honour. The winner of the 13 to 15 years category was

Chloe Kribs. We are so fortunate in the Moree region to have such a vast array of young, talented, budding artists who are supported by Bank Art Museum Moree and many local adult artists who are keen to nurture the next generation of stars. I congratulate all the winners and look forward to seeing them in person winning more prizes at next year's Young Archies.

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (19:15:44): On Monday 25 May 2020 students who had been learning remotely during the COVID-19 lockdown period were welcomed back onto school premises for a return to face-to-face learning. Fairfield Public School welcomed students with a colourful balloon archway and signs that read, "We are so glad you are back." No doubt our local primary school echoes the sentiments of all schools in New South Wales, which are delighted to have their students return to the regular curriculum with regular contact with their teachers and friends. Schools are much more than just buildings and about much more than just learning. Teachers and students develop a close relationship over the span of the educational journey and this time of unprecedented separation has led to many teachers missing their students, and vice versa. I commend all the students of Fairfield Public School for stepping up to the challenge set for them by their devoted teachers. I am delighted they are back together.

WORLD HAEMOCHROMATOSIS WEEK

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (19:16:41): I recognise that World Haemochromatosis Week commenced on Monday. It seeks to raise awareness for the inherited iron overload disorder. This year World Haemochromatosis Week is specifically focusing on highlighting the importance of screening to increase early detection and testing. Haemochromatosis is the most common genetic disorder in Australia and is often underdiagnosed due its non-specific symptoms such as fatigue, depression and joint pain. I take this opportunity to thank my constituent Dr Diane Prince, President of Haemochromatosis Australia, for the important work she does in raising awareness of the condition.

AMITY COLLEGE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (19:17:32): I acknowledge the staff members and students from Amity College in Prestons who visited Liverpool Hospital on 20 May to show their appreciation to our healthcare workers. Amity College's principal, community engagement staff and student representatives visited Liverpool Hospital with gift hampers as a way of offering thanks and recognising the very deserving hospital staff. Liverpool Hospital General Manager Ms Karen McMenamin received the gift hampers, which consisted of various goodies and snack items, on behalf of the staff. The staff and students visited many different wards, gifting the hampers to various different hospital staff. I commend the Amity College community for showing their appreciation of our local healthcare workers. They have been working tirelessly on the front line and I am glad their hard work was recognised. Once again, I thank Amity College for its community spirit in expressing gratitude to Liverpool Hospital's hardworking staff.

EID-AL-FITR

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (19:18:34): I congratulate our Muslim community on the celebration of Eid-al-Fitr on 23 May 2020 to mark the conclusion of the holy month of Ramadan. For the Islamic community in my electorate of Bankstown, Ramadan is one of the most special occasions in the year. This year Ramadan was a different experience because we could not hold our usual iftar dinners. Ordinarily my community holds thousands of iftar dinners in schools, businesses, community groups and homes. It has been a trying time for religious organisations. I thank all the community religious groups, but in particular I pay tribute to the Australian National Imams Council Chair and Grand Mufti of Australia Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohamad for his leadership. I commend the leadership of all the mosques and the Muslim community. Ramadan went very well. I am pleased to wish everybody an Eid Mubarak.

NORTHERN DISTRICT CRICKET CLUB

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (19:19:36): Caps off to the Northern District Cricket Club based at Mark Taylor Oval, Waitara, which has come a long way since it began in 1925. Before the current pandemic the club, along with Cricket NSW, announced a Women's Social Cricket Competition to start in 2020. The program aims to encourage all women over 16 years of age to play the sport in a safe and welcoming environment. I saw myself the positive impacts that this program has had on the club and broader community, with a large emphasis on giving it a go and having fun. Women participating in cricket are the sports fastest growing playing group and hopefully this program will influence a new wave of young girls and women to participate in the sport. I congratulate club president Jeremy Hooke and Cricket NSW's Daniel Anderson on driving this concept and bringing it to our local area. I look forward to seeing the program reignite as soon as possible.

REPUBLIC OF ITALY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (19:20:52): Today, 2 June, marks the seventy-fourth anniversary since the citizens of Italy voted to abolish the monarchy, the House of Savoy, and establish the Republic of Italy. The Italy we all know and love today was created through its people experiencing many years of enduring hardship. Italy is now an incredibly important component of the European Union, with a strong interest in import and export trade. Although our community is unable to celebrate this year with the traditional festa, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the enormous contributions made by the numerous Italo-Australians who have done so much for this nation and created a lasting legacy in their new home, Australia.

LIONEL WATTS RESERVE

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (19:21:37): I recognise Northern Beaches Council on the launch last weekend of the upgraded amenities at the western end of Lionel Watts Reserve in Davidson. These include two new change rooms, upgraded accessible toilet facilities, an upper-level covered viewing platform, additional storage space and a new canteen. In recent years both the State Government and the council have contributed considerable finances to vastly improve the facilities at the reserve, which caters for the northern beaches side of my Davidson electorate. The overall upgrade is an excellent example of positive collaboration between council, the Government and numerous sporting groups.

On Saturday Mayor Michael Regan and I chatted with representatives of the local football, cricket and AFL clubs, who are ably led by their respective presidents Greg Dick, Kevin Wesson and Jonathon Hall. They were all understandably delighted with the improvements as well as the prospect of a large number of children and adults returning to healthy sporting activities after the coronavirus-induced absence. I look forward to seeing the local community continue to enjoy the gender-inclusive modern facilities for sport and play across many activities.

BANKSTOWN ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (19:22:47): Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic the traditional Anzac Day commemorations held at our local RSL memorials and clubs were not able to proceed as usual. Over the years I have had the great privilege of joining local veterans and members of the wider Bankstown community to honour those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. I congratulate the Bass Hill RSL Sub-Branch on emailing MP3 files of the *Last Post* and *Advance Australia Fair* to assist members of the community in hosting driveway vigils. This year Anzac Day dawn services were live streamed over the internet from 5.30 a.m. I congratulate all who joined in the live streams to show their deep appreciation to former and current service men and women who fought for our nation and to pay their respects to those who died for our freedom. Lest we forget.

ERNIE SMITH RESERVE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (19:23:52): I congratulate Turbans 4 Australia and the Lions Club of the City of Liverpool on their great work in cleaning up Ernie Smith Reserve in Moorebank on Clean Up Australia Day. I was fortunate to join those groups on the day and assist in cleaning up the reserve. I was once again amazed at what people choose to dump instead of disposing of correctly. It is terribly annoying. It always gives me joy to see people helping our community and Clean Up Australia Day is a great initiative that supports that spirit. It brings the community together, improves our environmental awareness and preserves our wonderful area. I especially thank Mr Amar Singh for taking the time to organise the day with the two organisations and to invite me along. Once again, I recognise the work of Turbans 4 Australia and the Lions Club of the City of Liverpool in cleaning up Ernie Smith Reserve in Moorebank on Clean Up Australia Day.

BOOMERANG BAGS

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (19:24:48): I congratulate the team at Boomerang Bags of Dungog on their creativity in making free masks for the Dungog community during the COVID-19 crisis. The masks are made to a medical- and hospital-recommended style and quality. Members of the Boomerang Bags are to be commended for their initiative during these challenging times in providing masks for the community, particularly the sick and elderly in Dungog.

BANKSTOWN WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I was delighted to join the team at Bankstown Women's Health Centre on 21 May 2020 to help package valuable food supplies for distribution to local organisations and families in Bankstown. I was pleased to help support such a great initiative as the Food Share Program by the Bankstown Women's Health Centre, which redirects food that might otherwise go to waste, allowing the community to have access to fruit, vegetables and other healthy and nutritious food, with a small donation in return being optional to

ensure availability to all. I acknowledge the generosity of Foodbank NSW & ACT and SecondBite NSW in donating the much-needed food and I congratulate Bankstown Women's Health Centre CEO Ms Mariam Mourad and the centre's dedicated and hard-working staff Ms Jenny Ashwood, Ms Rema Jaber and Ms Greta Cheira, who work tirelessly every week to provide vital services for our local community. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous contribution of the Bankstown Women's Health Centre in providing essential help and support in the our local area, particularly for women affected by domestic violence. I look forward to continuing to support and work with the centre in the future.

WARRINGAH ROAD MILESTONE

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—Another major milestone has been reached along Warringah Road at Frenchs Forest in my electorate of Davidson and that of Wakehurst, with the recent completion and opening of the new underpass. The project involved upgrading the roads around Northern Beaches Hospital, in order to increase capacity on the road network, improving access through and around the area. It will provide the local community and other commuters with a better travel experience. The rest of the road network upgrade in the area is expected to be completed by mid-2020. Thanks to everyone involved in the development of this project, including residents living in and around Frenchs Forest, for their ongoing patience, the project team and workers for their tireless effort, and the New South Wales Government for its backing. Many residents share my excitement with the ongoing progress, and I acknowledge the positive community feedback.

ORANGE HEALTH SERVICE AWARD

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Western NSW Local Health District annually awards one of their nursing teams the nursing team of the year, from across their 38 hospitals and multi-purpose services, 50 primary and community health centres, and 23 community mental health facilities. On 12th May 2020, International Nurses Day, Medical Ward of the Orange Health Service was announced the 2020 Nursing Team of the Year. Being awarded this coveted title is no mean feat; a vast number of nursing teams throughout the health district vie for this award, all of which comprise dedicated, professional, passionate and caring nurses who put their patients ahead of all else, day in and day out, all year long. Medical Ward was recognised for its commitment to improving patient safety, including its project on falls. This project significantly reduced the amount of patient falls and fall-related injuries, enhancing improved patient outcomes. The team was also recognised for its preparedness of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the efficient facilitating and upskilling of the staff on the respiratory ward. From an appreciative community, congratulations to the team of Medical Ward at the Orange Health Service on being recognised for its commitment, kindness, passion and bravery in the face of COVID-19.

NSW GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge Peter Rozea of Taren Point who is the deserving recipient of a NSW Government Community Service Award. As the Cronulla SES Unit Commander, Peter has demonstrated his selfless and steadfast dedication to our community, leading a team that is on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to assist those in need following extreme weather events. Peter coordinates weekly meetings and training opportunities to ensure that the volunteers he leads are skilled to assist in a variety of situations. Peter has held various roles in the NSW SES since he joined in 2009, and has been awarded the NSW SES 5 and 10 Year Long Service Awards as well as a NSW SES Commissioner's Certificate of Appreciation. For 10 years he has been instrumental in recovery efforts following many natural disasters, most recently in bushfire affected areas and in our very own community following the January supercell storm. Peter's ongoing dedication to giving back to our community also extends to his service with the Sutherland Communications Rural Fire Brigade, of which he is president. On behalf of our community, I thank Peter for his years of dedication and service.

ST PATRICK'S DAY 2020

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—I recognise St Patrick's Day celebrated on 17 March. I particularly want to recognise the St Patrick's Day Business Lunch organised in the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Sydney on Thursday 12 March by Enterprise Ireland. The function featured among others the Irish Ambassador to Australia, Brendan O'Caollai and the Irish Consul-General in Australia, Owen Feeney. Enterprise Ireland is the Irish Government organisation responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets. I recognise the Enterprise Ireland event particularly because it was one of the few St Patrick's Day events that was actually able to proceed granted the realities of the coronavirus or COVID-19. Sydney's St Patrick's Day parade scheduled for 15 March was cancelled as were the 17 March events at the Gaelic Club, together with numerous other events including the Irish Consulate celebration to have been held on 14 March. The St Patrick's Day parades in Ireland were also cancelled. I understand that the pubs were also asked to close. The Enterprise Ireland event has the distinction of being one of the few events to proceed.

MARTIN AND NATALIE VELLA

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—I congratulate Luddenham residents Martin and Natalie Vella for their years as shop owners of Martin's Fruit World at Mulgoa. Unfortunately, due to increasing operating and rental costs, the family-run business closed its shop doors after 23 years, but reopened earlier this year as an online store offering home delivery of fresh produce. As online shopping becomes increasingly popular amongst busy families, Martin and Natalie are positive and excited that the business will flourish in its new era and look forward to providing the same quality service to their customers. Together they have created deep connections with their local community who were all saddened by the news, but have made efforts to support them in this new venture. Congratulations Martin and Natalie for your hard work over these past 23 years and I wish you all the best for this next season of business.

MANNING RIVER AERO CLUB

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)—I inform the House that Taree local Galen Wiseman has recently shared the Manning River Aero Club's Pilot of the Year title. The presentation was held at the aero club's annual Wings Presentation Awards. The clubs awards this year were delayed as their clubhouse was occupied for over three months by the on-call bushfire fighting pilots. I am also pleased to inform the house that Gary Tonkin was named the Club Person of the Year at the awards. Gary has devoted countless hours to the club in reconstructing and painting the clubhouse after a destructive storm last year. I congratulate both Galen and Gary on their much deserved awards.

NEWCASTLE HUNTERS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—The Newcastle Hunters put together 50 grocery kits to support people who are struggling during the COVID-19 lockdowns. The Hunters represent people from the Malayalee group who originate in the Indian state of Kerala. With more than 500 active members, 80 per cent of whom work in the health sector, it has successfully organised major sporting events and quickly understood the impact that COVID-19 could have on the public. They initially wanted to support international university students who were financially struggling, but then came across local residents facing hardship due to lockdown restrictions. Club representatives contacted my office, and we joined forces to help distribute grocery kits to the community. The club also recently raised about \$5,000 for bushfire relief, which was donated to Red Cross Australia. My thanks to Juby Jacob, who helped coordinate with my office, and to all the members of the Newcastle Hunters for demonstrating the community spirit of the Wallsend electorate. Sharing is caring, and the Newcastle Hunters deserve a huge thanks for the very kind gesture they have made.

HILLS RELAY FROM HOME

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—I take this opportunity to recognise the outstanding fundraising efforts of all involved with the recent Hills Relay for Life. The Hills Relay for Life is a Cancer Council initiative, which aims to raise as much money for prevention, research, treatment and support as possible. Whilst the event this year carried some unique challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic, the organisers adapted well, hosting their first "Relay from Home". The event consisted of a walk at home, as well as a myriad of exercise and information sessions. Despite these challenges, the Hills Relay for Life raised almost \$70,000 for the cause, and my thanks and congratulations go to those who organised and participated in the event.

TEACHERS OF THE COOGEE ELECTORATE

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—I say thank you, on behalf of everyone in the Coogee electorate, to our remarkable educators. Thank you for the way you have all performed your roles during some of the most testing times that our education system has faced. In the past few months, our teachers have had to navigate the closing of schools, the rapid switch to online learning, a thorough preparation for reopening classrooms and finally the welcoming back of students, all in the midst of a health pandemic and economic crisis. They have conquered all of this and have done so with a no-fuss, get on with the job attitude that should be truly admired. So to all of the principals, teachers, administrators, teachers aids, cleaners, groundskeepers, IT staff and everyone who has kept our education system running, I say thank you on behalf of the people of Coogee. What I hope this crisis has taught us is exactly how valuable our teachers and educators are. They are absolutely essential and so I thank them again for the amazing job they have done throughout the most difficult of circumstances.

ARDLETHAN COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL & TALENT QUEST

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I am excited to announce that the Ardlethan Country Music Festival and Talent Quest will now be held from the 25 to 27 September 2020. The event usually held on the first weekend of April was cancelled due to COVID-19. I am very pleased that the organisers and volunteers have worked so hard to secure another date for this year for the festival and talent quest to take place. There were many

disappointed locals when it became apparent that this event would not go ahead in April, so this is fantastic news for everyone involved. All the hard work that had already taken place will now make an easy transition into the September timeslot. I encourage people throughout the region to put on their dancing shoes and support Ardlethan with its Country Music Festival and Talent Quest.

DANNY SINGH, THE COVE BALLINA

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I acknowledge and commend Danny Singh, owner of the Cove restaurant in Ballina. Danny and his team provided free meals to those in our community doing it tough throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Danny offered locals the opportunity to "pay it forward" and donate money to cover the cost of meals. As a result of these donations and his own donation of time, money and ingredients the Cove team were able to assist the many people who contacted them for assistance. Despite his own business struggling Danny and his team made giving back to the community in a time of need their priority. I commend this generosity and community spirit during what has been a very difficult time.

ADRIENNE WILSON

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—It is my privilege to recognise Adrienne Wilson, nee McKern, who turned 100 on 26 December 2019. Adrienne was born in Griffith and attended Hanwood Public and Griffith High schools. She developed a passionate interest and desire to travel the world. Adrienne completed a secretarial course at a Sydney college then returned to Griffith and worked at the Rural Bank. During World War II Adrienne enlisted in the navy serving as driver for navy personnel. After leaving the navy, Adrienne spent many years travelling the world, living and working in England before returning to Sydney to work at Sydney University. In the late 1960s Adrienne returned to Griffith to care for her parents as well as beginning work as secretary to the CEO of Griffith Base Hospital until her retirement. Later she married Ed Wilson and became stepmother to his four children. Adrienne has been a very active member of the Griffith community, establishing Meals on Wheels which she managed for 45 years. She was also involved in the establishment of Pioneer Park and Griffith War Memorial museums.

MARGARET WEIR MOUNT DRUITT LOCAL WOMEN OF THE YEAR

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt)—I congratulate Mrs Margaret Weir on being awarded the Mount Druitt Local Women of the Year for 2020. Margaret was nominated for the award in recognition of her commitment to improving the fitness and health of local youth. Margaret is a long-term resident of Shalvey and for some 45 years has voluntarily dedicated her time and efforts to the Mount Druitt Netball Association. Margaret is known in the area for her dedication, care and compassion and has always gone above and beyond to assist those in need. She is an exceptional woman and I was delighted to present her with this much-deserved award.

VOLUNTEERS ARE BACKBONE OF SOCIETY

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation)—I acknowledge the efforts of the Tamworth regional volunteers who were recently recognised for their selfless work during National Volunteer Week 2020. Sally Cronberger was recognised as the volunteer aged between 25 and 64 years, as well as being awarded the overall 2020 Community Volunteer of the Year Award. Ms Cronberger has been organising and working in kitchens for many fundraisers, including the VIEW Club's International Women's Day Luncheon and the Soup and Damper Day at the Duri Hall for the Hospital Auxiliary. Emily Madirazza was the winner of the Youth Category, for people aged 24 years or younger. She was commended for her dedication to the Tamworth Regional Youth Council and the Festival Community Volunteer Ambassador Program. The winner of the Senior Category for volunteers 65 years and older was Peter Scorgie, recognised for his dedication to Tamworth Meals on Wheels. This year there were two winners in the Team Category, with the Visitor Information Centre team and the Australian Country Music Foundations volunteers. Thank you for your service to our community; our volunteers are priceless.

MR KERRY WHITE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales)—I congratulate and recognise volunteer and advocate Kerry White on being awarded the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia's prestigious Max Gardner Award for Distinguished Service for his tireless service to the community and the Inverell Prostate Cancer Support Group. Kerry was instrumental in the establishment of the group in 2009 and has gone above and beyond to support other men affected by the disease for over 10 years. Kerry has worked as a Support Group Leader and as an Ambassador and Community Speaker. Having experienced prostate cancer himself, Kerry has played a valuable role in providing men and their families with the information, support and encouragement they need on their journeys. Kerry is incredibly deserving of this award and recognition for the vital contribution he has made to the lives of so many. Congratulations, and thank you Kerry.

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA FAR NORTH COAST (NSW) SUB-BRANCH

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I draw attention to the excellent work done by the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Far North Coast (NSW) Sub-Branch [VVAA] which operates to serve veterans of the Vietnam War and their families. I am proud to be associated with this organisation as their patron. I recognise the sub-branch's stalwart President and Welfare/Senior Advocate Sheldon Maher OAM and his executive—Vice-President Ray Collyer, AFSM; Secretary Cathy Maher; Treasurer Murray Cooper; and committee members Brian Griffin, Tony Evans and John Remynse. While COVID-19 restrictions have limited some of their functions in recent months, they are still operating in Lismore, providing important information, assistance, advocacy and support, including enhanced online and telephone support. The VVAA works closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs and provides an essential service, helping veterans to access services that they are entitled to. It also plays an advocacy role, drawing attention to issues which affect its members. This organisation also offers confidential counselling through Open Arms, which is a service originally started by Vietnam Veterans but which now is available to all Australian Defence Force veterans. I commend the wonderful work being done by this organisation.

MR MARTIN OATES

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I offer my best wishes to Mr Martin Oates who has recently retired from his role as Principal of Clarence Valley Anglican School, known locally as CVAS, in Grafton. Martin has had a long and illustrious career which spans 36 years, starting in Armidale, then Grafton, Gippsland, Bundaberg and finally the CVAS principal for the past four years. I wish Martin a long and fulfilling retirement, whatever he decides to do in it.

SURF LIFE SAVING SYDNEY BRANCH AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE, WANDA SLSC

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)—On 30 May Surf Life Saving Sydney Branch held its Awards of Excellence presentation, virtually through video presentations. Wanda SLSC members received many awards. I congratulate Michael Bonnici who received the Support Operations Member of the Year award. Michael's ongoing commitment to supporting Wanda SLSC through various training exercises and programs displays his exceptional leadership ability and selfless attitude. I congratulate Nathan Smith on being awarded Coach of the Year award. Nathan is a valued member of Wanda SLSC, and evidently a well-respected coach who continues to provide coaching and training ensuring the safety of swimmers and surfers at Wanda Beach. I congratulate Jeff "Charlie" Brown who received the Surf Sports Tony Hughes Official of the Year award. Jeff's strong efforts and contributions to Wanda SLSC make him a deserving recipient of this award. I congratulate Noah Steiner who is the Youth Athlete of the Year and Keira Vincent who is the JD Athlete of the Year for 13-14 years females. These achievements display dedication and strong discipline.

GARY JAMES

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney electorate I acknowledge Gary James for his lifetime contribution to local government and thank him for his work with Woollahra Municipal Council. I understand that Gary's retirement at the end of this month is the culmination of a 50-year career in local government. His work with Woollahra began in 1987, including periods as Director of Corporate Services and Manager Administrative Services, followed of course by over 20 years as General Manager—a significant achievement. Glowing tributes at council meetings earlier this year reported on Gary's calm and professional leadership during times of major challenge and reform within local government. In my time as member for Sydney, Woollahra Council has continued to manage constant pressure from government to do more with less, tackle major planning reforms and weather amalgamation storms, surviving these challenges—all during Gary's tenure leading the organisation. Gary's guidance, consistency and corporate history have contributed to Woollahra's continued success despite these constraints and contests. On behalf of the Sydney electorate and my constituents who live in the Woollahra LGA, I thank Gary for his commitment and contribution.

MINTO HAMPERS

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields)—When community groups work together to support others, remarkable things happen. The South West Multicultural and Community Centre [SWMACC] in Minto partners with Foodbank and other community groups to prepare food hampers for those in need in the local community. Every Tuesday a team of volunteers help pack fresh produce into boxes for people to collect from the Minto centre for a \$10 donation. I recently joined volunteers in Minto and was impressed with the variety of fresh produce on offer—everything from whole pumpkins, bananas, carrots, corn on the cob and bread. The hampers are available for families, seniors, international students and anyone in need. Since the onset of the COVID-19

pandemic and the subsequent economic devastation, demand for hampers has almost doubled—from around 40 hampers each week to around 80. I commend the fabulous work of the South West Multicultural and Community Centre, led by passionate community advocate Mal Fruean. Together with Foodbank and other organisations, they are providing a valuable service to the community and ensuring people have access to fresh food during these difficult times. Remarkable indeed.

WARREN TURNER

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise Port Macquarie cancer survivor Warren Turner who will be competing in his twentieth City2Surf marathon in Sydney to raise money for the Cure Cancer Australia Foundation. It has been a difficult 12 months for the former small business owner and local sportsman Warren Turner, who received the devastating diagnosis from his specialist in May 2019 that he had stage 4 metastatic melanoma. A year on, Warren has defied the odds and after kicking cancer he is ready to take on his next challenge to finish the 14 kilometre City2Surf event in October, in the hope that he will inspire others facing a difficult health prognosis. Cheering on Warren right to the finishing line is his daughter, Laura, who has set up an Everyday Hero page on social media for people to donate to her father's campaign. The Cure Cancer Australia Foundation is an organisation established to fund early career cancer researchers who work across all types of cancer research development in the hope one day of finding a cure. Warren is respected and admired throughout the community and a person I class as a loyal friend. I wish him all the best.

LOVE THE DILLY PROMOTION

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—I recognise the outstanding initiative by Wollondilly Shire Council and the mayor, Councillor Matthew Deeth, in initiating the Love the Dilly Promotion. The promotion, which is in direct response to the current COVID-19 crisis, encourages those in the shire to shop locally either in store, online, purchasing a gift voucher or hiring a local trade provider for new projects, home renovations or repair jobs. The aim is to assist local Wollondilly businesses to survive and thrive and support the many local families who own those businesses. The council has developed a Love the Dilly logo and has distributed stickers to all local shops and businesses. The promotion has encouraged business to be part of the promotion and to look to their local suppliers first. A Love the Dilly website has been established to keep residents and businesses informed about events and activities. Congratulations Wollondilly Council.

MRS JENNY CAMPBELL

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—After 18 years of managing the Narrabri shire library branches, Jenny Campbell is stepping back to allow for a new generation to step in and take the lead on the provision of library services in Narrabri shire. Jenny is a familiar face among many in the Narrabri shire and her experience in the library space is enormous. She has been involved in the evolution of the library provision and her knowledge is extremely valued. Jenny will now take on the role of mentor to ensure the library services will be well maintained going forward. I thank Jenny for her service to the Narrabri shire.

ANZAC DAY

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta)—I acknowledge the 2020 Anzac Day commemorations in which many Australians participated at their homes. This year has been one of the most challenging years for many of us in New South Wales and abroad. But not even the coronavirus was able to diminish our values and identity as a nation. Across New South Wales and abroad, many Australian's participated in the Dawn Service, lighting up a candle and standing in front of their yards in support of the Light It Up campaign. So today I take the opportunity to acknowledge Anzac Day in *Hansard* and note that the call to commemorate Anzac Day has never been stronger in trying times like this year. It has not only strengthened our nation; it has also reminded us to not give up in the face of adversity. I thank all active serving members of our defence forces as well, many of whom were deployed during the COVID-19 pandemic. I thank you all for your service and hope that you will be able to march our streets again on Anzac Day next year.

KATERINA KIMMORLEY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Katerina Kimmorley is a successful entrepreneur, environmental economist, international speaker, and former Loreto Kirribilli student. Having developed a passion for science and physics, Katerina went on to university to study physics and solar energy engineering which led her to become co-founder and director of Pollinate Energy. Katerina's grounding in science and social justice at Loreto Kirribilli has been the catalyst for Pollinate Energy, and was enlivened by problems surrounding poverty and climate change. Pollinate Energy is now the largest provider of solar lighting to city slum communities across India and Nepal. It has reached more than 613,000 people across the two countries, offered access to products, and empowered more than 650 women to bring positive change in their communities. These solar panel lights are replacing kerosene lamps which along with kerosene stoves cause indoor air pollution, which is the second largest

cause of death in India. Katerina also continues to be an inspiration to the students of Loreto, often visiting the school and speaking to the students.

FIRST RESPONDERS DAY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—In six short months the people of New South Wales have endured extreme drought, deadly bushfires, damaging floods and the frightening and disruptive COVID-19 pandemic. For our first responders, these crises have come on top of the everyday business of house fires, car crashes, crime, life-threatening illnesses and traumatic injuries. In recognition of this incredible work, I thank our emergency services personnel—those brave people who protect, defend and care for us every day. In every instance, our first responders put our needs before their needs and the needs of their families—whether it is facing raging flames on a fireground, arriving to a single-vehicle accident or saving lives and dealing with the trauma and tragedy at the scene, or braving torrents of floodwater to bring others to safety. Many of these everyday heroes have devoted their careers to caring for and protecting others, and there are thousands of volunteers who choose to give of their own time to support our communities during their darkest hours. You are all vital to our community. Our first responders rightly deserve this inaugural day of thanks, but our gratitude runs real and deep every day of the year.

DAVID WOODS, WANGI BAKEHOUSE

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—The idea of wasting perfectly good beer is a bridge too far for many, especially for David Woods and the Wangi Bakehouse he co-owns. With the doors closing on all of the local pubs and clubs during the COVID-19 pandemic, and thousands of dollars worth of beer left to waste in tapped kegs and lines, David decided to create and bake "beer bread" and use the proceeds to support local charities. The beer bread impressed the locals so much that 30 loaves a day were being snapped up every morning. Wangi RSL and Wangi Hotel both donated thousands of dollars worth of beer which could no longer be poured from the tapped kegs. Later Toronto Workers Club and Toronto Country Club also stepped in to help with donations. In the end David raised more than \$2,700 from selling the loaves which was distributed to Wangi Foodbank, Toronto Meals on Wheels, Wangi Scouts, Toronto Girl Guides, Awaba and Wangi RFS brigades. It was not only an ingenious idea; I am told that the bread tasted superb. I congratulate and acknowledge David and all concerned with the effort.

FOOD ANGEL HAMPERS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—I acknowledge the efforts of Food Angel Wakeley during the COVID-19 pandemic who provided household essentials to families in need throughout the Fairfield local government area. Operating from Christ the Good Shepherd Church, Wakeley Joe Kakos and his team of volunteers at Wakeley who provide year-round assistance to struggling families with the opportunity to buy hampers of fresh grocery items at heavily discounted prices. While the organisation normally packs on average 60 hampers per week throughout its normal run of operations, Food Angel is now working extra time to pack hampers for families who have been affected by COVID-19 through the loss of wages from one or more incomes from a family. With the help of extra volunteers, Food Angel is now providing on average 200 hampers to the families in need throughout our community. Thank you once again to Food Angel which has risen to the challenge to provide for the ever-rising number of needy families in the Fairfield area. Our community is incredibly grateful for your continued support.

RICHARD GREEN

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I congratulate Richard Green for being named as a nominee for The Centre for Volunteering's 2020 Volunteer of the Year Awards. Richard is the Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club's Director of Junior Activities. In this capacity, Richard is responsible for all nippers and junior events that take place on a weekly basis during the summer beach season. I am told that Richard volunteers for a total of 600 hours per year, which is the equivalent of 25 days—a huge achievement. Richard is one of many hundreds of volunteers at Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club who are on the beach week in, week out. They wear the red and yellow uniform with professionalism and work so hard to keep beachgoers—both locals and visitors—safe. Congratulations again to Richard Green for being named as a nominee for the 2020 Volunteer of the Year Awards.

TOONGABBIE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)—Toongabbie Public School is well known throughout the City of Parramatta for its dedicated teachers and students who are always striving to learn. Toongabbie Public has served the local community since 1886 and currently educates 604 students from Old Toongabbie and parts of Constitution Hill and Toongabbie. I acknowledge the terrific 2020 school captains Tiana Fuller and Jake Pokino and school vice-captains Cooper Fakafanua and Charvi Voola. I also acknowledge the great school leaders assisting the captains including Lily Briffa, Zoe Diasinos, Breanna Galea, Matthew George, Jaynish Kogularajah and Isaac Street. I thank the Toongabbie Public School P&C for its assistance this year to the students and staff

of the school. I acknowledge P&C president Trevor McNeilly, vice-presidents Rebecca Elson and Michelle Massey, secretary Brooke Arslan and treasurer Jennifer Tucker. I thank the awesome educators, support staff and office staff at the school led by principal Craig Brown. I wish Toongabbie Public School the best of luck for the rest of the academic year.

ANTI-RACISM PROTESTERS

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I recognise everyone in my electorate who is taking action in support of Black Lives Matter and protesting racism—both locally and abroad, on social media and in person. The people of the electorate of Balmain steadfastly reject racism. We believe in multiculturalism and we celebrate diversity. The story of police brutality in the USA is a tale of systemic racism, discrimination, and injustice. There is a dreadful familiarity to this story because of our treatment of Indigenous Australians and the horrifying rate at which our First Nation's people are killed in police custody. My community stands in solidarity with George Floyd, with his family and with our First Nation's people, many of whom have suffered similar fates. We must speak up against the racism and against the economic injustices that make it impossible to truly equalise our society. It is also incumbent on all of us to listen; to listen to people of colour, to hear their stories and their pain. I recognise all the local residents of my electorate who will join protests and actions against racism this week. I encourage them to do so with their own safety and with the safety of our community in mind.

COMMUNITY BUILDING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM APPLICANTS

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I offer my congratulations to the 13 successful Community Building Partnership program applicants for 2019 in the Wagga Wagga electorate, including: Cancer Patient's Assistance Society of NSW (Can Assist); Mangoplah District Sports & Community Development Fund; Australian Red Cross Society; Riding for Disabled Association (NSW); the Scouts Association of Australia New South Wales Branch; the Girl Guides Association of New South Wales; Tumut Racecourse Land Manager; Wagga Wagga Combined Hockey Association; Wagga Rugby League Inc.; Tumut and District Historical Society Inc.; East Wagga Koorringal Football and Netball Club Inc.; Kurrajong Waratah; and Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney. These organisations were awarded a share of \$300,000 to help develop fresh infrastructure that would benefit their communities. I am looking forward to seeing how these projects make a real difference to residents, through participation, inclusion and development.

AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)—I congratulate Team Nandin, a research team from ANSTO who won a worldwide challenge that consisted of inventing a concept for a new type of workstation that minimises the risk of COVID-19 spread and contamination. The challenge named "Future of Work" was held by the Australian Computer Society, and asked innovators to design ways to make a shared workspace safer. Nandin and ANSTO researchers won the challenge with their concept "U Space", which consisted of a workstation that reduced contamination risks in shared workplaces. U Space was a clever idea that took out the challenge because it was deemed a clean, smart workstation, and if combined with a mobile application, would minimise the risk of the spread of COVID-19 and other viruses of the future in the workplace. U Space has the potential to be used in the 20 per cent of shared workplaces around the world. How fantastic! Once again, I congratulate the team at ANSTO for winning this challenge, and hopefully we will be seeing U Space workspaces in the post-COVID-19 world.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 17:28 until
Wednesday 3 June at 9:30.**